PHILOSOPHY OF RACE PHIL 3623.22750

SPRING 2019

Instructor: Lawrence E. Ware
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Course Description:
What is "race"? Is it a valid biological category? Is it a valid census category? What is the relationship between the continued use of racial categories and the persistence of racism? Is race central to one's subjectivity, or sense of self? What race is a mixed race person? How should questions of racial identity be decided, and by whom?

This course will explore the philosophical assumptions behind concepts of race, and the political effects of racial identities. However, this will not mainly be a course on the ethics of race, but on the metaphysical legitimacy and social reality of racial designations, and their political effects.

Because of the variability of these issues across different cultures, we will mainly draw from readings about the United States focusing on white, African-American, Latina/o, American Indian and Asian American racial categories.

Prerequisites: None

Course Procedure:
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Course Requirements:
Policy on Attendance and Participation: Philosophy is a method of question- and-answer by which one investigates the deepest puzzles of life’s existence and meaning. Since this investigation will be a class effort and a group discovery, students are expected to attend class lectures, discussions, and debates; attendance will be taken every class. Moreover, students are expected to engage in class activities and to bring to class questions and concerns from the readings and topics being dealt with. The instructor will excuse an
absence for a doctor’s appointment, an athletic event, or family emergency with a note, but after two unexcused absences a student’s attendance/participation grade will drop 7 points per missed class. There will also be group assignments that will contribute to participation points. Attendance and Participation is worth **100 points**.

There will be two take-home essay exams. Students will have one week to complete each exam. Each take-home exam is to be 7-10 pages in length and **critical**. By critical I mean that the student will respond the questions posed on the exam by analyzing the problem posed in the question and presenting and defending a clearly defined **thesis** in response. Students are encouraged to discuss their critical exam responses with me prior to turning them in. Each exam taken is worth 100 points each for a total of **200 possible points**.

There will also be four short exposition papers that will serve to keep students current with the readings in the course. The papers are to be about 1-2 pages in length. I will give feedback on how to improve the student's writing when requested. Each of these assignments is worth 50 points for a total of **200 points**.

**Total of 500 points possible**

**Policy on Late Work:**
Timely submission of the take home exams and the exposition papers and completion of the in class presentation is required for successful completion of the course. Late exams will not be accepted unless there is a legitimate reason provided by the student and I accept those reasons. If you think you will not turn in the exam on time, you must discuss the situation with me **before** the due date and I must approve the late exam. If you miss the due date or I do not accept your reason as legitimate, you will receive a grade of ‘0’ for the exam. Additionally, a late exam will be subject to a 5 point per day deduction from the grade on the exam. Late exposition papers will not be accepted. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**