

SYLLABUS

MALS 600 D1: Interdisciplinarity and Diversity

Fall 2021

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Course Description: MALS 600 Interdisciplinarity and Diversity (3 credits) (Prereq: admission to graduate study at CCU). Interdisciplinarity and Diversity. Course explores one or more topics of contemporary or historical significance. Students discuss, evaluate, and integrate the perspectives of individuals from diverse backgrounds. F.

Course Topic: This semester we will explore race, gender, and sexuality in contemporary and historical context through close reading and discussion of texts from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Prior to examination of these topics we will discuss historical and contemporary definitions and applications of disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity.

Course Instructional Objectives:

1. Become acquainted with definitions of interdisciplinarity.
2. Understand the relationship between interdisciplinarity and diversity.
3. Engage in case studies involving interdisciplinarity.
4. Acquire advanced research skills and electronic database tools.
5. Work through the preliminary research stages of an individual project.
6. Develop integrative writing and presentation skills.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of issues and sources in interdisciplinary studies and in multiple disciplines.
2. Evaluate, synthesize, and present information.
3. Apply methods and perspectives from multiple disciplines to the analysis and evaluation of contemporary social issues.
4. Reflect on the ethical implications of disciplinary and interdisciplinary-based knowledge and actions.
5. Apply and communicate insights from different disciplines to the discussion of race, gender, and sexuality.

Grading Procedures: (see below for details)

Weekly Reflections (10)	(40%)
Intellectual Biography	(10%)
Class Participation	(20%)
<u>Final Project</u>	<u>(30%)</u>
Total	100%

Grading Scale:

A	90—100%
B+	88—89%
B	80—87%
C+	78—79%
C	70—77%
D+	68—69%
D	60—67%
F	0—59%

Course Policies:

Absences: This is a distance learning class, so failure to complete any assignment will be considered an absence. We will schedule one two-hour Zoom meeting per week based on the availability of the students and instructor. Because attendance is crucial to progress in the course, failure to make a class meeting without contacting the professor in advance or as soon as possible with a documented excused absence will result in your grade being lowered by a full letter grade, i.e., an A will become a B. Thus, failure to show up for three meetings without contact and/or documented excused absences will result in the failure of this course, per University policy (<https://www.coastal.edu/policies/pdf/acad-sena%20129%20class%20attendance%208.2016.pdf>). Please see the LiveWell@Coastal program (<https://www.coastal.edu/livewell/servicesprovided/>) and Counseling Services (<https://www.coastal.edu/counseling/>) for matters both personal and academic that may prevent you from completing your course responsibilities.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity involves honesty in learning and in teaching, and it is an integral part of this course. I am deeply convinced that integrity both on my part as an instructor and on your part as a student is an essential part of any true educational experience. The success of this course depends on it. I believe that the principles of academic integrity require that we do what is necessary to make this class a worthwhile learning experience and that we treat everyone involved with respect. It is critical that you always do your own work in order to learn the material in this course.

Citations/Referencing: One aspect of academic integrity involves student research. When consulting printed or electronic sources, bear in mind that ANYTHING (ideas, structure, organization, information, statistics, phrases [3+ words], etc.) that you incorporate into your work must be properly cited, even when you are not quoting the sources directly. In this course, we will be using the **Harvard Style** of referencing, a variation on the Author-Date style that uses in-text citations. If you have questions about appropriate methods of citation, consult the instructor or these online resources: Quick Guide to Harvard Format via Mendeley (<https://www.mendeley.com/guides/harvard-citation-guide>) and Imperial College London's Worksheet (<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/library/public/harvard.pdf>).

Communication: The best way to reach me outside of class and office hours is via email at gschmidt@coastal.edu. Please allow 24 hours for my response. If you have not heard from me after 24 hours, then please resend your email. Emails have been known to get lost or waylaid. Feel free to contact me via phone or Microsoft Teams during my office hours, e-mail me to arrange a more convenient meeting time, or simply call me on my office phone at 843-349-2741 (calls will be forwarded to my cell phone).

Moodle: Familiarize yourself with Moodle and check for any information posted on the course Moodle site.

Students with Accessibility Concerns or Disabilities: I am committed to providing equal opportunities to participate in and contribute to this course. Moreover, Coastal Carolina University is committed to equitable access and inclusion of individuals with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Individuals seeking reasonable accommodations should contact Accessibility & Disability Services (843-349-2503 or <https://www.coastal.edu/disabilityservices/>). While the Americans with Disabilities Act indicates "title II and title III entities must permit service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas where members of the public are allowed to go," classroom accommodations may or may not include emotional support animals.

Main Course Readings: You are required to complete the readings for each class as assigned in the syllabus PRIOR TO OUR WEEKLY ZOOM MEETING. It will be most beneficial to you to also bring your marked-up readings to the meeting—your own personal notes and annotations—and such active reading practices are expected of graduate students.

Required texts for purchase: The first two are available in the CCU Bookstore or can be purchased from a different vendor using the ISBNs provided.

Tenaya Darlington’s novel is not available in the bookstore, so I suggest purchasing it from Amazon or another vendor.

The required film can be rented (streamed) from Amazon.

- Repko, Allen F. et al (2020). *Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies, 3rd Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN: 9781544379401
- Alice Walker. *The Color Purple*. ISBN: 978-0143135692
- Tenaya Darlington. *Maybe Baby*. (Available on Kindle from amazon.com for \$1.99)
- *Get Out* (Film, Director Jordan Peele)

Course Assignments: In a typical graduate course that meets once a week, expect to read around 200-250 pages per week, roughly a whole book for each class. This course, however, usually has a lower page count each week in order to focus on close readings of the texts and additional research activities (both individually and in small groups). Therefore, there are few reasons why one cannot complete the entirety of the assigned readings each week, and such reasons should be discussed with the instructor in advance or as soon as possible.

Keep in mind, too, that dates are **non-negotiable** unless you contact the instructor immediately in the case of a documented excused absence. If accepted, late assignments will be subject to penalties, typically a full letter grade reduction for each 24-hour period beginning at the end of the class in which it is due. Additional information about each assignment will be given in class, posted on Moodle, and/or sent via email.

Weekly Reflections (40%): A 2-3 page (600-900 word) double-spaced reflection will be due at the beginning of class each week that there is an assigned reading. The reflection needs to include key points of interest for the upcoming class, while providing a concise summary of the reading(s). Imagine you are leading class discussion for the evening: identify the key “take aways” from the reading assignments, pose relevant questions to the class, and make connections to other texts and discussions. Questions for reflection might include the following: What is the most important insight you take from the reading? What questions do you have to bring to the group for further discussion? What appear to be the disciplinary perspectives and assumptions employed by the author? Is there anything about the text that suggests an interdisciplinary approach? How does the author’s position, argument, and methods compare/contrast with those of other authors on the topic that we have read?

Class Participation (20%) . You are expected to contribute actively to discussion of the texts during our weekly Zoom sessions. Your comments should demonstrate not only that you have read the materials but that you have thought deeply about them and have formulated ideas and questions to bring to the entire group.

Intellectual Biography (10%): You write a three-paged, double spaced intellectual biography for a potential faculty mentor/advisor. You will need to describe disciplinary backgrounds and their type of thinking based on course materials. Additional directions will be given in class.

Final Project (30%): You will complete the preliminary research stages on a topic of your choosing, including writing a prospectus, finding sources, and completing an annotated bibliography. You will be responsible for selecting one journal article about your topic for the class to read and discuss; you will submit the article to the instructor two weeks in advance of your chosen week and prepare discussion questions in advance for the class.

Course Schedule: The content of this course, including assignments and readings, is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion as deemed beneficial to the learning process. As changes are made, the instructor will promptly notify the students and post them on Moodle.

Week & Topic	Reading(s)	Assignment(s)
Aug. 24 th Introduction: What is Interdisciplinarity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repko, Szostak & Buchberger, Chapters 1 and 2. • Immanuel Kant, “Answering the Question: What is Enlightenment?” (1784) (available in Moodle) • Michel Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?” (1984) (available in Moodle) 	
Aug. 31 st The Rise of Interdisciplinarity What is knowledge? What are the paths to knowledge?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repko, Szostak & Buchberger, Chapters 3 and 4. • Additional reading TBA 	Reflection #1
Sept. 7 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repko, Szostak & Buchberger, Chapters 5 and 6 • Simone DeBeauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i>, “Introduction” (1952) (available in Moodle) • Shulamith Firestone, “The Culture of Romance” (1970) (available in Moodle) 	Reflection #2
Sept. 14 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repko, Szostak & Buchberger, Chapters 7, 8, and 9 • Martha Nussbaum. Chapter 3 from <i>Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education</i> (available in Moodle) 	Reflection #3
Sept. 21 st Interdisciplinary Theme I: Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Franz Fanon, excerpt from <i>Black Skin and White Masks</i>. • Excerpt from <i>A Brief History of Everyone Who Ever Lived</i>, Ch. 5, “The End of Race.” (Available in Moodle) • Belle hooks: “Postmodern Blackness” (available in Moodle) 	Reflection #4 Intellectual Biography Due
September 28 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novel: Alice Walker, <i>The</i> 	Reflection #5

Interdisciplinary Theme I: Race	<i>Color Purple</i> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Henry Loui Gates, <i>The Signifying Monkey</i>, Introduction and Chapter 1 (available in Moodle) 	
Oct. 5 th Interdisciplinary Theme I: Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ta Nehisi-Coates, “The Case for Reparations.” Film: <i>Get Out</i> (Dir. Jordan Peele) Article on film TBA 	Reflection #6
Oct. 12 th Interdisciplinary Theme II: Sex/Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monique Wittig, “The Mark of Gender” (1985) (available in Moodle) Judith Butler, from <i>Undoing Gender</i>. Anne Fausto-Sterling, from <i>Sexing the Body</i>. 	Reflection #7
Oct. 19 th Interdisciplinary Theme II: Sex/Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Novel: <i>Maybe Baby</i> by Tenaya Darlington. Discussion with author and other panel members. 	Reflection #8
October 26 th Race/Sex/Gender Intersections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bonnie Thornton Dill and Ruth Enid Zambrana, “Critical Thinking About Inequality: An Emerging Lens” (2009) (available in Moodle) Gloria Anzaldua, “The New Mestiza Nation: A Multicultural Movement” (available in Moodle) 	Reflection #9 Submit tentative topic for final project along with proposed journal article for discussion
November 2 nd Interdisciplinary Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repko, Szostak & Buchberger, Chapters 10, 11, and 12 Excerpt from Katie Sutton, <i>The Masculine Woman in Weimar Germany</i>. 	Reflection #10
Nov. 9 th Capstone Presentations & Reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional Readings TBA 	Reflection #11
November 16 th	Discussion of journal articles selected for final projects.	
Nov. 20 (no class— Thanksgiving)		
Week after Thanksgiving	Capstone Presentations Submission of Final Project	

Late assignments:

Late submissions will be penalized at the rate of a 10% deduction per day unless you make arrangements with me IN ADVANCE for an extension.

Accessibility and Disability Services

If you need special accommodations, please contact the Accessibility and Disability Services Office in Laurel Hall. Their website is <https://www.coastal.edu/disabilityservices/>

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

This university, and this course, are bound by federal law to protect the privacy of your information. More information may be found here:

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 makes it illegal to discriminate in educational settings based on age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sex, veteran's status, or pregnancy. All faculty of CCU are mandated Title IX reporters. If you believe you are the victim of sexual harassment or crimes anywhere on campus or off, I can help you get the aid you need or you can contact the Title IX office directly. The Title IX office website is <http://www.coastal.edu/titleix/>