ETHN 100A: Theoretical Approaches

Working/Shifting Draft

Theme: Building Anti-Colonial and Abolitionist Practices

Fall 2022

“So it is better to speak / remembering / we were never meant to survive.”
--Audre Lorde, “A Litany for Survival”
Please note that this course is hybrid.

Our class meetings will be held hybrid, that is, on Tuesdays we will meet in person and on Thursdays, over Zoom. You must be present in each class (in-person on Tue and over Zoom on Thurs).

The pandemic and teaching arrangements made by universities across many parts of the world, while still remaining hostile toward differently-abled people, has allowed us this opportunity to continue working and being there for students and each other without making ourselves sicker. Because of my health situation, this is the arrangement I have with the Department for the current academic year. If you have concerns about this course being hybrid, please consider other Ethnic Studies courses as options.

Please note that it is mandatory to wear your mask in class. This is a requirement from UCSD and if at any point in the quarter, this requirement is dropped, I still request you to continue wearing your mask in our class meetings on Tuesdays.

Course Description

The pandemic is not over; neither the viral nor the structural ones of anti-Blackness, anti-indigeneity, casteism, capitalism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, racism, heteropatriarchy and other structures of violence keeping white supremacy intact. As people in the throes of these multiple calamities, this course draws on the tools—and
the spirit—of decolonial, abolitionist, antiracist, and other global liberationist movements to imagine and enact other ways of being and living and thriving. Rather than using the words “other ways of being,” we will, in grounded ways, and with humility examine practices that can help us live in the context of multiple colonialities and subjugation of knowledges of Indigenous, Black, racialized and Dalit people. In the latter part of this course, we will examine the conditions and possibilities of solidarities and networks amongst Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Dalit and all other marginalized communities. Reflecting intersectional, feminist and queer analyses, the course treats categories such as race, class, gender, caste, and sexuality as robust analytics for critically theorizing and enacting alternative lives and times. Ethnic Studies is situated at the nexus of multiple insurgent and continually marginalized academic fields such as Indigenous Studies, Black Studies, Latinx Studies, SWANA, Asian American Studies, American Studies, Women and Gender Studies, Queer Studies, Disability Studies, and more recently Dalit/anti-Caste Studies. Informed by critiques from several theories from aforementioned fields, we will study some interdisciplinary projects.

Learning Goals:

1. Identify a reading’s central argument/thesis and situate it within the larger theoretical and political discussions in which it makes an intervention.
2. Read across texts in order to identify the convergences, divergences and contradictions between different projects and approaches.
3. Critically analyze power and inequality in a comparative, intersectional, and global framework.
4. Communicate complex ideas effectively and engagingly.

Office Hours: My official office hours are on Wednesdays 11:00-12:00pm PST over Zoom. Video is not required (I’m happy to use voice or chat only, just let me know in advance). If this time doesn’t work for you, please send me an email so we can find a better time that works for both of us.

Required Text: There is no textbook or course reader for this course. All the readings have been made available to you through Canvas. Please bring your reading to every class (whether on your laptop/tablet or hard copy).
If you have any issues with accessing course readings by the first class, please email me ASAP.

**Grading Rubric:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>95-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>85-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-84</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>75-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-74</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
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**Readings and Lecture Schedule:**

Please note that I reserve the right to change readings for any class meeting. However, at least one-week notice will be given to you, and announcements will be made in class and sent over Canvas to notify you of any such changes. Films and YouTube clips shown in class might not all be on the course outline but you will know their names and have links on a weekly basis (if and when we watch anything in class). Not all weekly readings will be lectured on and discussed in same detail. However, I still expect you to do all the required readings every week.

**Course Assessment Scheme:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Assignment</th>
<th>Weight/Percentage</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Class Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Beauty/Survival/Freedom Assignment</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Oct 7th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Description of Course Assessment:

**[Note: Please read this section extra carefully to make sure you do not miss out on any of the guidelines]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Precis Assignments I and II</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Theoretical Framework Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Dec 7th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Active Class Participation Report</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Dec 2nd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1. 20% Class Participation (Class meeting attendance, Discussion board, and group participation)

**Due Date: Ongoing**

*Please note that sometimes my lectures will focus on close readings of assigned texts, but they will often exceed the readings, as in, I will emphasize or introduce concepts you need to know but which are not necessarily in your assigned readings.*

Class participation is mandatory. On those Thursdays when you cannot have your video on during our class meetings, I especially encourage you to participate by typing your comments/ongoing reflections in the chat window on Zoom. In group work, you are all expected to participate and take turns being the note-taker and facilitator.

Class participation means contributing meaningful comments and asking relevant questions. It is about the quality of participation, which will be reflected through whether you come to class prepared with your ideas and questions from the readings. The length of your comments, or the frequency of your participation without strong substance will not necessarily be helpful. In short, talking a lot or taking up space in class without a substantial contribution is not necessarily encouraged. If you are an introvert, and feel shy to talk in class, please know that we will also do small group
discussions. I also encourage you to come see me during my office hours over Zoom. That way we can talk one-on-one and I can better answer any and all your questions, go over concepts/readings, and even help you with your written assignments. Coming to my office with relevant questions also shows me that you are engaging with the course material.

Please note that there will also often be **weekly in-class writing or group discussion assignments**. These might be at the beginning of my lecture, in the middle or towards the end. I will usually ask you to respond to a broad question based on the weekly readings or a video we watch in class.

### 2. Beauty/Survival/Freedom Assignment 15%

**Due Date: Oct 7th at 5 pm**

Option A: Write a poetry focused on the themes of beauty, survival and freedom; Your poetry should be reflective, and focused on the socio-political discussions we are having in this class. Your poetry should be 20 lines maximum, though longer poems with substance are welcome.

Option B: From your everyday surroundings, take a picture that you find reflective or exemplary of beauty, survival, and freedom as discussed in our classes. Write a 500-word rationale explaining your choice and what the picture means to you. The picture must be original, that is, it must be taken by you and cannot be from the internet or any magazine.

### 3. Précis Assignments I & II 30%

**Due Dates: Oct 21st & Nov 18th at 5 pm**

Writing précis (literally means “cut short”) forces you to read purposefully. The goal is to communicate the main thesis and the major points in the most succinct form, which will make it easier to synthesize and compare it with other works at a later time. An effective précis retains the logic, development, and argument of the original reading, but in much shorter form.

Important: Write concisely: choose your words carefully and arrange them skillfully in order to get the maximum amount of meaning into the minimum space.
For this assignment, please turn in a 350-400 word précis of Chandra Mohanty’s “Under Western Eyes” article (due Oct 21st) and Cheryl Harris’ “Whiteness as Property” article (due Nov 18th) that addresses the following:

- What is/are the piece’s main argument(s)?
- Into what debates does the piece intervene, how and why, and for what ends?
- Which disciplinary or theoretical conventions does the author employ and why?

Be sure to write in direct, assertive language, and entirely in your own words.

4. Theoretical Framework Paper

Due Date: Dec 7th at 5 pm

The theoretical framework paper is not a research paper. Rather, it is a critical analysis of the existing published research on a specific topic of your choice, which will serve as a jumping off point for further research. Your topic should be an area of research interest, rather than a specific research question. Your task is to identify, summarize, synthesize, and assess the relationship among different projects and approaches, and relating this research to your topic. The purpose of the assignment is for you to familiarize yourself with the research published on your topic in order to position/situate your project relative to other work. The total number of texts referenced should not be fewer than ten, although students may focus their paper on an in-depth examination of 4-6 key texts.

Length: 2250-2500 words (8-10 pages double-spaced).

5. 5% Active Class Presentation Report:

Due Date: 12/02

You are required to submit a self-assessment report recommending a participation grade or yourself in the last class meeting. Remember participation is worth 20% of your final grade. If there is a big discrepancy between our evaluations of your participation, I will contact you. If you do not submit your self-assessment report, that
will also be counted as your failure to fully participate in the course and you will lose this 5%.

**Week 0: Introduction to the Course**

Thurs 09/22: Introduction to the course and its vision *(Remote)*


- Handout by Professor Roy Pérez on Reading Theory (on Canvas).

**Week I: Ethics of Reading/Engaging at The End of the World**

Tue 09/27 & Thurs 09/29:

- Audre Lorde, “*Poetry is not a Luxury* (pp.7-11)”. 1985.

**Week II: Ethnic Studies and Interdisciplinarity**

**Beauty/Survival/Freedom Assignment Due on Friday, October 7th at 5 pm on Canvas**

Tue 10/04 and Thurs 10/06:

• Video: Ron Espiritu. TedxTalks: Why Ethnic Studies Matters (please view before Tuesday’s class).
• Video: Native Studies in the Apocalypse: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z56AVA_MxUE (please view before Thursday’s class)

Week III: On Refusals and Ghosts

Tue 10/11 and Thurs 10/13:

• Linda Tuhiwai Smith. Decolonizing Methodologies, Introduction and Chapter 1.

Week IV: On Power and Knowledge

Precis I on Chandra Mohanty’s article due on Friday, October 21st at 5 pm on Canvas

Tue 10/18 and Thurs 10/20:


**Week V: Critical Indigenous Theory, Indigeneities, and Settler Violence**

Tue 10/25 and Thurs 10/27:


**Week VI: Review and Library Workshop**

Tue 11/01: Review & Catch-up
Thurs 11/03: Mandatory Library Workshop on Research (Location TBA)

**Week VII: Affect (and) Theory**

Tue 11/08 and Thurs 11/10:


Week VIII: Structures of Racial Capitalism

Precis II on Cheryl Harris’s article due on Friday, November 18th at 5 pm on Canvas

Tue 11/15 and Thurs 11/17:


Week IX: Challenging Racial & Colonial Unknowing

Tue 11/22 and Thurs 11/24:


Thurs 11/24: Thanksgiving Holiday

Week X: Review

Tue 11/29 and Thurs 12/01:

Tue: Review (Over Zoom)
Thurs: No Class
Important Procedures and Rules:

**Classroom Decorum/ Zoom Camera Etiquette:** Zoom has presented a number of new questions about camera and audio etiquette. My position is that when we Zoom, I’m a guest in your home (and you’re a guest in mine). Moreover, we’re all dealing with all kinds of unpredictable circumstances and improvising as best we can, so I believe it’s important to be flexible and lenient with one another in general. That said, when you have your camera on, I would appreciate it if you would adhere to this short list of three requests that I think are basic and reasonable:

- **Please mute your mic when you are not speaking to help reduce distracting background noise.** This is important for people like me who have ADHD and are easily derailed by sound. Feel free to unmute or text chat at any time to join discussion. Turning on your camera is always optional, never required.
- **Please do not appear nude on camera.** This can be a form of sexual harassment and potentially a Title IX violation.
- **Avoid obvious use of drugs on camera.** My primary concern is triggering people who have experience with addiction. What you do off camera is not my business.
- **Please do not record any class meeting.** This is absolutely prohibited.

Students are always expected to be respectful of their classmates and professor in discussions, lectures, and their writing. Please never resort to personal attacks in class discussions. *Racist, anti-Black, anti-Muslim, heterosexist, homophobic/queerphobic, transphobic, racist, Islamophobic, xenophobic, ageist, ableist, and any other hateful or oppressive speech will not be tolerated and you will be asked to leave the classroom and the situation will also be reported to the Chair of Ethnic Studies and of your home department.*

**Accessibility:** Our institutions are ableist. Sometimes even those of us who live at intersections of various systems of oppression the world lists as our dis/ability, we don’t often know how to live better in this world. In that spirit, please help me support you better. If you have a medical condition or specific physical and/or learning needs, please feel free to speak with me individually so that we can make the necessary adjustments to support you participate fully and successfully. If you prefer to be called by a different name or recognized as a gender other than the one in the University enrollment record, please let me and your other colleagues know.
An important aspect of making our classroom inclusive and accessible to us all is working with the principles of kindness and forgiveness. I hope we can hold each other accountable to these principles.

**Academic integrity:** Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at UCSD. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the UCSD degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement, and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Familiarize yourself with UCSD’s academic integrity policies at [http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu](http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu). Please familiarize yourself with the website, policies, and also your rights as students.

**Policy on Children in Class:** [The following section has been gratefully adopted with permission from Dr. Melissa Cheyney’s syllabus]

1) All exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the breastfeeding relationship. You and your nursing baby are welcome in class anytime.

2) For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving him or her with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.

3) I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.

4) In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.

5) Finally, I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have finally gone to sleep. The struggles of balancing school, childcare and
often another job are exhausting! I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all student in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance.

**Correspondence Policy:** Email is the best way to get in contact with me. I will reply to email inquiries from students within 24 hours except for on weekends when it might take longer. If you do not receive a reply within this period, please resubmit your question(s). Each email message must include in the subject line the course number and a tagline related to your concern. Please always use your given first and last names on record in email communication. **If you have already talked to me about using another name, you can use that name in your emails. Your email must contain a concise and clear statement of purpose.** Please treat emails as you would any other professional communication. Emails that ask questions already answered in the course syllabus or website (e.g., “how much is assignment X worth”) will not receive a response. All general questions about the course that are NOT addressed on the syllabus and course website should be asked in class. But if you must email, please keep your questions short and clear. Emails that do not follow these guidelines might not receive a prompt response. Please do not ask me to explain readings or concepts over email. My office hours and our class time is the best time to ask such questions. **Please always be respectful in all your communication with your classmates and me, whether in class, during office hours, or over email.**

**Late assignments:** You are expected to complete assignments on time. Students who cannot turn in the assignment on time due to a reason beyond their control (e.g. illness, death, accident) may request special consideration.

**Assignment Re-grading:** I will make sure that my comments on your assignment and test are self-explanatory. I understated that you have worked hard on your assignment/test but I/we grade based on what I receive. I strongly advice that you wait 24 hours after receiving your grade. Carefully re-read your assignment, all assignment guidelines and marking schemes and the grader’s comments. You have **one week** after receiving a mark to appeal it. Please note the following:

a. Your request for remarking must be accompanied by your concerns clearly outlined in a separate document attached with your assignment. You must explain to me why you would like us to re-grade your test. Your reasons must be clear and logical. Please
hand in the hard copy to me in class. b. Please consider the possibility that upon re-grading, your mark might actually decrease.
c. Please give me one week for re-grading and getting back to you.

**Some Important Websites and Resources:**

1) CARE at the Sexual Assault Resource Center: http://students.ucsd.edu/sponsor/sarc/
2) Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination:
https://ophd.ucsd.edu/about/index.html
3) Undocumented Student Service Center:
http://students.ucsd.edu/sponsor/undoc/?_ga=2.78696919.2115777679.1537212828-753919910.1537212760
4) Office for Students with Disabilities:
http://students.ucsd.edu/well-being/disability-services/index.html
5) **The Writing Hub** - Need help with a writing project or assignment? Want to talk through your ideas or get a second opinion on whether your writing is clear, logical, and well-supported? The Writing + Critical Expression Hub (“Writing Hub”) can help!

Located in the Geisel Library, the Writing Hub offers UC San Diego students free one-on-one help with any writing project—from cover letters to lab reports, research papers to grant proposals. Visit the Writing Hub to meet with a supportive, well-trained peer writing mentor who will help you gain perspective on what works and what can be improved in your writing.

**The Writing + Critical Expression Hub | writinghub.ucsd.edu | writinghub@ucsd.edu**

- **What?** Free help for writers
- **Where?** Geisel Library, lower level west (part of the Teaching + Learning Commons)
- **When?** Sunday-Friday, including evenings; see writinghub.ucsd.edu for hours.
• **How?** Book appointments at https://ucsd.mywconline.com