

# ETHN 163e

## Decolonial Theory



**Spring Quarter 2021**  
**MWF 2-2:50pm PST**  
**Location: Mande B - 104**

**Instructor:** Alexander D. Huezo, PhD

**Email:** [ahuezo@ucsd.edu](mailto:ahuezo@ucsd.edu) (include 'ETHN 163e' in the subject line)

**Office Hours:** Mondays 3-4pm + appointment

**Zoom Link for Hybrid Days:** <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/97351403528>

### Course Description

I. 'Decolonial' and 'decolonize' are buzzwords nowadays, trending in academic discourses and on social media platforms as hashtags. Where did these terms come from? Do people agree on what they mean? Why is everything being 'decolonized' all of a sudden? Wasn't some of that work already happening before we started seeing these terms? The first section of the course is dedicated to answering these questions. In doing so, we are committing to a 'critical' approach to decolonial theory. That is, we are not taking for granted that people across time and space, even people currently in this class, will understand decolonial theory in the same manner. It is up to you, drawing from what you have experienced and studied in your life, to make sense of decolonial theory for your own purposes.

II. What does it mean to decolonize \_\_\_\_\_? In the second section of the course, we will read and discuss the application of decolonial theory to different subjects. These examples should provide you with ideas for your final paper.

III. What is the end game of decolonial theory? What are we attempting to acknowledge and/or deconstruct and/or build with decolonial theory? The third section centers around the theoretical concept of the 'pluriverse' and reflects on how scholars can be of service to decolonial or anticolonial social movements

IV. The final section of the course answers the question: What am I going to do with decolonial theory? With a group or on your own, you will write and present a paper that applies decolonial theory to a subject of interest.

## Weekly Expectations

**Mondays – group discussions focused on readings and projects (agenda posted in Canvas)**

**READ/LISTEN TO ASSIGNED MATERIALS BEFORE EACH CLASS SESSION**

Wednesdays – lecture and class discussion focused on assigned readings

Fridays – lecture and class discussion focused on assigned readings

## Readings

You are not required to purchase texts for this course. All required readings – PDFs and links to articles or podcasts – will be available in Canvas in the modules for each week of the course.

## Communication

Reach out to me through **email (not through Canvas)** whenever you need to talk about ideas or concerns in this class. Make sure you read over the syllabus and any announcements carefully before you ask any questions.

*Follow proper email etiquette when sending me an email:*

- a) include **'ETHN 163e'** in the subject heading of the email
- b) provide a salutation (e.g., "Dear Alex" or "Hello Alex")
- c) end the email properly (e.g. "Sincerely", "Kind regards" ...etc.)

## Absences

**If you are feeling ill, please do not attend a live class session** (we all thank you!)

If you need to miss class because you have tested positive for COVID 19 or otherwise are not able to attend class:

- please provide documentation of your absence if you would like it to be excused
- there is no need to inform me that you will miss class unless it will be a sustained absence, or it is a day when you will be presenting to the class
- live class meetings (in person) will be recorded and available for viewing in the 'Media Gallery' in Canvas

## **Course requirements (100 points total)**

### Participation & Attendance (20 points)

- attendance will be taken randomly throughout the quarter
- make sure you actively participate in discussions to get full credit

### Weekly Discussion Questions (10 points = First 8 weeks x 1 point each + Week 10 worth 2 points)

- post a question that connects the week's readings
- directions in Canvas

### Reflections (20 points total = 2 x 10 points each)

- the reflections are individual submissions that require you to process the readings via your own lived experiences and understandings

### Abstract of Paper Proposal (10 points)

- may be submitted individually or as a group effort
- outlines what you will write about for the final paper
- articulates how your paper will build upon what we have read thus far

### Final Presentation (5 points)

- present an overview of your paper and get feedback on a draft of the paper from your peers

### Conference Paper (35 points total)

- apply decolonial theory to a topic of interest:
  - provide background on the topic of interest
  - explain what decolonial theory reveals about the topic of interest
  - articulate some clear takeaways from this analysis

## **Academic Integrity**

Each student is expected to abide by UCSD's Code of Academic Integrity. When submitting work, please use your own ideas or to credit/cite your sources when borrowing from others. If you have any doubts or questions about what counts as plagiarism, please consult UCSD's Academic Integrity Office (<http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu>) or talk to me in office hours.

## **Learning Resources**

Writing Hub; Supplemental Instruction; Tutoring; Mental Health Services

## Community Centers

Learn about the different community centers on campus (Raza Resource Centro, Black Resource Center, LGBT Resource Center, etc.) <https://students.ucsd.edu/student-life/diversity/index.html>

## Accessibility

Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), which is located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall. Students are required to present their AFA letters to Faculty (please make arrangements to contact me privately) and to the OSD Liaison in the department in advance so that accommodations may be arranged. Contact the OSD for further information: <https://disabilities.ucsd.edu/> | [osd@ucsd.edu](mailto:osd@ucsd.edu) | 858. 534.4382

## Majoring or Minor in Ethnic Studies

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of interest yet do not realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, education, medicine, public health, social work, counseling, journalism, government and politics, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor, please contact: 858-534-3277 or [ethnicstudies@ucsd.edu](mailto:ethnicstudies@ucsd.edu) or visit [www.ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu](http://www.ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu).

### DISCLAIMER:

**THINK OF THIS SYLLABUS AS AN ORGANIC DOCUMENT THAT WILL INEVITABLY CHANGE THROUGHOUT THE QUARTER. ALWAYS CHECK FOR THE LATEST VERSION OF THE SYLLABUS IN CANVAS. DAYS HIGHLIGHTED IN BLUE WILL BE CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM.**

## I. DECOLONIAL?

Week 1	Introduction
Mon 3/28	Syllabus & Guidelines
Wed 3/30	"From a Native Daughter" (Trask 1993)

Fri 4/1	“New World Grammars: The ‘Unthought’ Black Discourses of Conquest” (Lethabo King 2016)
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<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Rupture &amp; Metamorphosis</b>
Mon 4/4	Discussion
Wed 4/6	“On National Culture” (Fanon 1963)
Fri 4/8	“Metamorphic Thought: The <i>Works</i> of Frantz Fanon” (Mbembé 2012)

<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Coloniality and the Decolonial Turn</b>
Mon 4/11	Discussion  Reflection 1 directions posted at 9am PST in Canvas
Wed 4/13	“Césaire’s Gift and the Decolonial Turn” (Maldonado Torres 2006)
Fri 4/15	“On the Coloniality of Being: Contributions to the Development of a Concept” (Maldonado Torres 2007)  Reflection 1 due by 11:59pm PST in Canvas

## II. DECOLONIZE? UNSETTLE?

<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Unsettling the Coloniality of Being</b>
Mon 4/18	Discussion
Wed 4/20	“Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument” (Wynter 2003, pp.257-303)
Fri 4/22	“Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument” (Wynter 2003, pp.303-337)

<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Self-Recovery</b>
Mon 4/25	Discussion
Wed 4/27	"The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism" (Nandy 1989)
Fri 4/29	"The Coloniality of Gender" (Lugones 2016)

<b>Week 6</b>	<b>De-Naturalization</b>
Mon 5/2	Discussion  Reflection 2 directions posted at 9am PST in Canvas
Wed 5/4	"Unruly Edges: Mushrooms as Companion Species" (Tsing 2012)
Fri 5/6	"Why Interspecies Theory Needs Indigenous Standpoints" (TallBear 2011)  Reflection 2 due by 11:59pm PST in Canvas

### III. SCHOLARLY OBJECTIVES

<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Pluriverse</b>
Mon 5/9	Discussion
Wed 5/11	"Decolonizing Western Uni-versalisms: Decolonial Pluri-versalism from Aimé Césaire to the Zapatistas" (Grosfoguel 2012)
Fri 5/13	"Pluriverse: Introduction for a World of Many Worlds" (Blaser and de la Cadena 2018)

<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Social Movements &amp; Strategies</b>
<b>Mon 5/16</b>	Discussion  Paper Abstract directions published at 9am PST in Canvas
<b>Wed 5/18</b>	“Social Struggles as Epistemic Struggles” (Icaza & Vásquez 2013)
<b>Fri 5/20</b>	“Notes on Becoming a Comrade: Indigenous Women, Leadership, and Movement(s) for Decolonization” (Dhillon 2019)  Paper Abstract Due by 11:59pm PST in Canvas

#### IV. APPLICATIONS OF THEORY

<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Final Paper Workshops</b>
<b>Mon 5/23</b>	Discussion
<b>Wed 5/25</b>	Workshop 1
<b>Fri 5/27</b>	Workshop 2

<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Final Paper Workshops</b>
<b>Mon 5/30</b>	No Class (Memorial Day)
<b>Wed 6/1</b>	Paper Presentations
<b>Fri 6/3</b>	Paper Presentations