

## **Race, Class, & Gender (PHIL 204)**

**Towson University Fall 2020**

**T/R 3:30- 4:45 pm**

**Instructor:** Cara Cummings

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### **Course Description**

#### Catalog Description

Social and political philosophy; contemporary American ideas of race, class, and gender, with a focus on their interrelatedness. Gen Ed II.C.3 or Core: Diversity & Difference.

#### Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to expose students to a variety of topics from across academic philosophy. Some questions we'll discuss include: Are there such things as races? How many sexes are there? What does it mean to be a woman? What effects on masculinity does pornography have? What could we be doing to stop human trafficking? What is it like to be a poor student at an elite institution?

#### Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will have had an introduction to philosophy. They will also learn to construct and assess arguments for philosophical positions. Doing so will strengthen their critical thinking skills in all disciplines and even outside of academic life.

### **Course Requirements**

There will be a short 3-page paper (worth 25% of the final grade), and in-class group presentation (worth 30%), and a final 5-page paper (worth 35%). Participation and attendance will account for the final 10%.

Short Paper: Due October 9<sup>th</sup>

Presentation: In class Week 12 or 13

Final Paper: Due December 11<sup>th</sup>

Guidelines and instructions for each assignment are available on blackboard.

## Policies & Procedures

### Grading

A: 93.6-100 A-: 90-93.5 B+: 86.6-89.9 B: 83.6-86.5 B-: 80-83.5 C+: 76.6-79.9 C: 70-76.5 D+: 66.6-69.9 D: 63.6-66.5 F: 0-63.5

### Late Work

Late assignments are penalized at a rate of one letter-grade increment per day late (e.g., a B+ becomes a B- on a 2-day-late paper), up to one week. Assignments that are more than a week late will receive a zero. Deadline extensions are granted only in exceptional, *documented* circumstances, and at the discretion of the instructor.

### Absences

You are allowed two unexcused absences before they will begin to affect your grade. Not counting the first week, we have 27 scheduled meetings. Your grade will be determined by dividing the number of times that you are in class (not counting the first week) by 25 (maximum 100%). See Towson's absence policy for what counts as an excused absence at [www.catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/class-attendance-absence-policy](http://www.catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/class-attendance-absence-policy).

The exceptional circumstances presented by the COVID pandemic create the potential for additional flexibility in qualifying absences as excused. Such extenuations might include: absences related to extended illness, quarantine, caring for family members, childcare (and support of children's online learning) due to school closures, or urgent job concerns related to financial need, emergency situations, or food insecurity.

Students requesting an excused absence must provide documentation to the instructor two weeks prior to the scheduled absence when known in advance or as soon as possible when not known in advance. Absences that do not fall into any of the above categories are unexcused.

### Emergency Closure Policy

Conditions on campus sometimes force the university to close. Should this occur, I will send a message to your Towson e-mail addresses that explains any revisions to our schedule and assignments. The university's website ([www.towson.edu](http://www.towson.edu)) and the main University phone number (410-704-2000) state when conditions on campus force the university to close. To have text message alerts regarding campus closings sent to your cell phone, visit: <http://www.towson.edu/adminfinance/facilities/police/campusemergency/>

### Students with Disabilities

This course is in compliance with Towson University policies for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with Disability Support Services (DSS), 7720 York Road, Suite 232, 410-704-2638 (Voice) or 410-704- 4423 (TDD). Students who suspect that they have a disability but do not have documentation are encouraged to contact DSS for advice on how to obtain appropriate evaluation. A memo from DSS authorizing your accommodation is needed before any accommodation can be made.

### Academic Integrity

The University's Academic Integrity Policy is published in the Towson University Undergraduate Catalog and is available online at the web site of Student Affairs located at <https://www.towson.edu/studentaffairs/policies/>. Academic dishonesty specifically includes acts of plagiarism, fabrication and falsification, cheating, abuse of academic materials, and multiple submissions. Especially note that students may not re-use research papers or work submitted in previous or other classes, this includes group projects, or work performed by someone else. Academic dishonesty is unacceptable. The penalty for such dishonesty is a grade of 0 for the assigned work, possible failure for the course and the submission of a letter to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

### Incompletes

An 'I' grade may be granted towards the end of the term, but only for verifiable medical reasons or for documented circumstances beyond the control of the student. This grade will not be granted if the student does not meet either of these criteria. The 'I' automatically becomes an 'F' at the end of the next full semester unless changed by the instructor because missing coursework was completed. If the conditions for granting the original incomplete verifiably persist, the instructor in consultation with the chair of the department may extend the 'I' grade for a period not to exceed an additional regular semester.

### Course Repetition

Students may not repeat the course more than once without prior permission of the Academic Standards Committee.

### Emergencies

Please refer to the following: Web Site: [www.towson.edu](http://www.towson.edu); Telephone: (410)704-2000. For TU Text Alert System Sign-up at [www.towson.edu/adminfinance/facilities/police/campusemergency/](http://www.towson.edu/adminfinance/facilities/police/campusemergency/)

### Copyright

My lectures and course materials, including, but not limited to power point presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. I am the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own use; however, you may not, nor may you allow others to, reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly whether or not a fee is charged without my express written consent. Similarly, you own copyright in your original papers and exam essays. If I am interested in posting your answers or papers on the course web site, I will ask for your written permission.

## **Reading Schedule**

All readings not linked here are available on blackboard.

### Week One: Race

8/25: Course Introduction (No Reading)

8/27: Charles Mills, "But What Are You Really? The Metaphysics of Race"

### Week Two: Race

9/1: Philip Kitcher, “Does ‘Race’ Have a Future?”

9/3: Frantz Fanon, “The Negro and Language” in *Black Skin, White Masks*

### Week Three: Race

9/8: Linda Martín Alcoff, “Racism and Visible Race” in *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self*

9/10: María Lugones, “Hablando cara a cara/Speaking Face to Face: An Exploration of Ethnocentric Racism” in *Making Face, Making Soul: Haciendo Caras*

### Week Four: Race

9/15: Gail Dines, “The White Man's Burden: Gonzo Pornography and the Construction of Black Masculinity”

9/17: Heather Gilligan, “Why Racism Is Terrible for Everyone’s Health” <https://daily.jstor.org/why-racism-is-terrible-for-everyone-health-care/>

### Week Five: Race

9/22: Endre Begby, “The Epistemology of Prejudice”

9/24: C. Thi Nguyen, “Echo Chambers and Epistemic Bubbles”

### Week Six: Gender

9/29: Sally Haslanger, “Gender and Race: (What) are They? (What) Do We Want Them to Be?”

10/1: Theodore Bach, “Gender is a Natural Kind with a Historical Essence” (Section V only)

### Week Seven: Gender

10/6: Simone de Beauvoir, “Prostitutes and Hetairas” in *The Second Sex*

10/8: Anne Fausto-Sterling, “Sex and Science: A Conclusion” in *Myths of Gender: Biological Theories about Women and Men*

### Week Eight: Gender

10/13: Christine Overall, “Sex/Gender Transitions and Life-Changing Aspirations” in *You’ve Changed: Sex Reassignment and Personal Identity*

10/15: Talia Mae Bettcher, “Trapped in the Wrong Theory: Re-Thinking Trans Oppression and Resistance”

### Week Nine: Gender

10/20: Susan Bordo, “Reading the Male Body”, in *The Male Body: Features, Destinies, Exposures*

10/22: Harry Brod, “Pornography and the Alienation of Male Sexuality”, in *Rethinking Masculinity: Philosophical Explorations in Light of Feminism*

### Week Ten: Sex

10/27: Cressida J. Heyes, “Dead to the World: Rape, Unconsciousness, and Social Media”

10/29: Jyoti Sanghera, “Unpacking the Trafficking Discourse” in *Trafficking and Prostitution Revisited*

### Week Eleven: Sex

11/3: Edited by Kamala Kempadoo, “Migration, Trafficking, and Sites of Work Rights and Vulnerabilities” in *Trafficking and Prostitution Revisited*

11/5: Melissa Farley, “Prostitution, Trafficking, and Cultural Amnesia: What We Must *Not Know* in Order to Keep the Business of Sexual Exploitation Running Smoothly”

### Weeks Twelve and Thirteen: Presentations

### Week Fourteen: Class

11/24: Julie Bettie, “Women without Class: *Chicas, Cholas*, Trash and the Presence/Absence of Class Identity”

Week Fifteen: Class

12/1: William Blake, "A Sentence Worse than Death"

12/3: Anthony Abraham Jack, "I Was a Low-Income College Student. Classes Weren't the Hard Part." <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/09/10/magazine/college-inequality.html>

Michelle, Goldberg, "Has Child Protective Services Gone Too Far?" <https://www.thenation.com/article/has-child-protective-services-gone-too-far/>