

Dr. Thomas Auxter

PHM 3127 MWF 9:35-10:25am

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Office hours: MW 12:45- 1:45pm

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PHM 3127 Race and Philosophy

Spring 2021

In this course, we take a critical approach to the study of race. We examine race and racism from the perspectives of those who have suffered from racist policies and behaviors. We ask how it is possible to overcome racism in a comprehensive way --establishing racial justice as a program for action.

The United States has been the scene of racist policies and behaviors for more than four centuries, since 1619. It is “the original sin” of the nation, which was written into the Constitution in 1789 and enforced in various ways. Although the forms of racism have changed often throughout this history, the institutionalization of racism has never been eradicated or even substantially reduced, since slavery was abolished.

What are the international dimensions of racism? How has colonization of Africa and the Caribbean reshaped the world? How have racist laws and social practices been established so that Europeans and their descendants dominate and dictate policy? How have expectations of ways of life been refashioned so that the image of Europeans is always visible?

What is it like to exist under an apartheid regime in South Africa? What is it like to experience economic and social repression so extreme that a worse scenario cannot be imagined? How does life in the United States differ? How is life in the United States the same?

How is racism in India maintained and perpetuated? Why did Martin Luther King, Jr. go to India to see what life was like? What did he learn from Gandhi about the struggle against racism? What is the power of nonviolent struggle? What are the limitations? What are the lessons to be learned by comparing the United States with India?

What forms does the struggle against racism take in Europe? What lessons are to be learned by comparing forms of racism in the United States and Europe?

What would it take to recognize the dimensions of racism in social, political, and economic spheres? What would it take to eliminate racism and establish institutions that bring about racial justice?

We will search for answers to these questions in readings and in classroom discussion.

Requirements: There will be a midterm essay test (due 2/17 at 11:59pm) and two essays written in the final examination (due 4/27 at 11:59pm). Each essay will count as one third of the grade. The essays are take-home exams, with questions given to students at least ten days before essays are due. Students are expected to attend class.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Details about grading policies and scale, as well as course policy, can be found at the end of this syllabus. Students are also invited to visit the Canvas site to familiarize themselves with details concerning grading and course policies. Grades and comments on graded work will be available only on the Canvas site.

Communication requiring confidentiality is restricted to Canvas.

Texts:

Steve Biko, *I Write What I Like*

Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*

Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?*

W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (online: The Project Gutenberg EBook)

Linda Martin Alcoff, *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self* (Online)

NOTE: The last two texts (above) are available online – free to students.

Books and Readings on Reserve in Library West:

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

Lewis R. Gordon, ed., *Existence in Black: An Anthology Of Black Existential Philosophy*

Ibram X. Kendi, *How to Be an Antiracist*

Martin Luther King, Jr., *A Testament of Hope*

“Nonviolence: The Only Road to Freedom”

“Showdown for Nonviolence”

“The Ethical Demands for Integration”

“A Time to Break Silence”

“Letter from Birmingham City Jail”

Isabel Wilkerson, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*

Thomas Auxter, "Abolishing Apartheid"

"Justice for Farm Workers"

"African Philosophy: A Bibliography"

Readings:

January

11 Introduction

13 Steve Biko, "Let's Talk about Bantustans," *I Write What I Like*, pp 80-86

15 Steve Biko, "The Righteousness of our Strength," pp 120-137

18 Martin Luther King, Jr. – Holiday

20 Steve Biko, "Black Souls in White Skins?," pp 19-26

"We Blacks," pp 27-32

22 Steve Biko, "The Definition of Black Consciousness," pp 48-53

25 Steve Biko, "White Racism and Black Consciousness," pp 61-72

"Fear – an Important Determinant in South African Politics," pp 73-79

27 Steve Biko, "Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity," pp 87-98

"On Death," pp 152-153

29 Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, "Foreward" by Kwame Anthony Appiah, pp vii-x.

"Introduction," pp xi-xvii

February

1 Frantz Fanon, "The Lived Experience of the Black Man," pp 89-119

3 "The Black Man and Hegel," pp191-197

5 "By Way of Conclusion," pp 198-206

8 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, "On Violence," pp 1-15

10 Frantz Fanon, "On Violence," pp 15-30

12 Frantz Fanon, "On Violence," pp 30-45

15 Frantz Fanon, "On Violence," pp 45-62

17 Midterm due at 11:59pm

19 Paget Henry, "African and Afro-Caribbean Existential Philosophies," *Existence in Black: An Anthology of Black Existential Philosophies*, edited by Lewis R. Gordan, pp 13-26

22 " " " pp 26-36

24 Paget Henry, "Rastafarianism and the Reality of Dread," pp 157-164

26 W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, "Of the Sons of Master and Man," Chapter IX.

March

1 Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?*

3 "Where Are We?" pp 1-22

5 "Black Power" pp 23-70

8 "Racism and the White Backlash" pp 71-108

10 "The Dilemma of Negro Americans" pp 109-142

12 "Where Are We Going?" pp 143-176

15 "The World House" pp 177-202

17 Isabel Wilkerson, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent*.

19 " " "

22 " " "

24 Recharge Day – no class

26 Jorge Gracia, ed., *Latin American Philosophy for the 21st Century*, "Leopoldo Zea," pp 355-356.

29 " " "The Actual Function of Philosophy in Latin America," pp 357-368

31 " " "Identity: A Latin American Philosophical Value," pp 369-378

April

2 Linda Martin Alcoff, *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self*

"The Phenomenology of Racial Embodiment," pp 179-194

5 "Racism and Visible Race," pp 195-204

7 "The Whiteness Question," pp 205-226

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| 9 | “Latinos and the Category of Race,” pp 227-246 |
| 12 | “Latinos, Asian-Americans, and the Black-White Binary” pp 247-264 |
| 14 | “On Being Mixed,” pp 264-284 |
| 16 | “Conclusion,” pp 285-290 |
| 19 | Conclusion |
| 21 | Conclusion |
| 22 | Reading Day |
| 26 | Reading Day |
| 27 | Final Examination due at 11:59pm |

Note: The University asks faculty to post information about grading. Information about requirements for graded work and the criteria for evaluating graded work in this course follow. For information about the University grading scale, see below. – T.A.

Graded work and grading schema:

There will be a midterm essay test due on February 17 at 11:59pm and two essays written in a final examination due on April 30 at 11:59pm. The essays are take-home exams, with questions given to students at least ten days before essays are due. Each essay will count as one third of the grade.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING ESSAYS

CRITERIA FOR GRADING ESSAYS ARE AS FOLLOWS: CONSISTENCY, COHERENCE, COMPREHENSIVENESS IN RELATION TO SUBJECT MATTER AND UNIVERSE OF DISCOURSE, PLAUSIBILITY OF EXAMPLES AND COUNTER-EXAMPLES, AND ANTICIPATION OF OBVIOUS OBJECTIONS. AT LEAST TWO CLASS SESSIONS (ONE BEFORE THE MIDTERM AND ONE BEFORE FINAL EXAMS) WILL BE DEVOTED TO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE MEANING OF THE CRITERIA AND WHAT COUNTS AS MEETING THE CRITERIA.

The following grade scale will be used to assign final letter grades for the course. See UF grading policies for assigning grade points at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

| Grade Scale | Grade Value |
|-------------|-------------|
| 100-93=A | A=4.0 |
| 92-90=A- | A-=3.67 |
| 89-86=B+ | B+=3.33 |
| 85-82=B | B=3.00 |
| 81-79=B- | B-=2.67 |
| 78-75=C+ | C+=2.33 |
| 75-72=C | C=2.00 |
| 71-69=C- | C-=1.67 |
| 68-66=D+ | D+=1.33 |
| 65-62=D | D=1.00 |
| 61-60=D- | D-=0.67 |
| 59-0=E | E=0.00 |

STUDENTS CAN EXPECT MOST ESSAYS TO BE RETURNED IN SEVEN DAYS.

Course Policy:

- 1. Class attendance is required.**
- 2. Students will have an opportunity to raise questions at the beginning and end of each class.**
- 3. It is also permitted to ask questions during a lecture by raising a hand. This can be a request for clarification. It can also be to challenge a point that has been made.**
- 4. To communicate by email on most issues, contact tauxter@ufl.edu. To communicate regarding confidential issues, use Canvas.**
- 5. Policies on Academic Honesty, Assigned Work, Students with Disabilities, and Online Course Evaluation Follow:**

ACADEMIC HONESTY. UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of

honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class. Plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in a grade of "E" for the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows: "A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student." Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy.

ASSIGNED WORK REFLECTS THE CARNEGIE I STANDARD OF AT LEAST AT LEAST TWO HOURS OF WORK OUTSIDE OF CLASS FOR EACH CONTACT HOUR.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION. Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester. Students will be notified about specific times when they are open.