Topics in Political Theory (Privilege and Race in Global Perspective)
POL381H
Winter 2019

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Office hours: Wednesdays 12-2pm

Class Meetings: SS2127, Mondays, 2-4pm

Course Description:
Critical Race Theory (CRT) has emerged as a profoundly impactful field of study, whose influence has travelled far beyond its original grounding in legal studies in North America. It has spawned a host of “response” subfields that adopt CRT methods and orientations, but seek to identify the particularities of positionings beyond the distinctly racial focus of the field. It has also developed alongside studies of Whiteness and privilege, particularly intersectional and contextual understandings of privilege. However, much of the academic and policy focus of CRT and its offshoots still makes reference to racial identity structures common to the US context. This course will consider how notions of race and privilege “travel” and how they have developed and functioned in contexts outside of a White/non-White categorization.

We will review arguments that seek to situate “Whiteness” globally, as well as other localized iterations of ascriptive privilege, trying to identify particular dynamics and mechanisms of privilege, including its nested nature when moving from the local to the global. Similarly, we will look at how colonial histories and ongoing settler-colonial occupations have shaped identities and the relationships between them in specific places. In doing this work, we will also study the ways in which theoretical formulations of race map on to (or don’t map on to) categories such as indigeneity, caste and ethnicity. This will help us to identify ways in which CRT’s insights can be useful in understanding identity privilege elsewhere, as well as the ways in which studies of privilege in other places can help inform broader academic and policy discussions on addressing privilege and its accompanying effects.

Course Readings:
All required course readings are available online, either as copyright-compliant postings on the course Quercus site or as links to the University of Toronto Libraries electronic collection. Hard copies, where relevant, will also be available at Robarts Library. You are responsible for completing all readings by the dates indicated on the syllabus. The additional readings are optional but strongly encouraged. I also strongly encourage you to look at several of the class discussant responses each week as they are posted by your fellow students.

Course Requirements
Class Participation (15%): This portion of your grade is based on your overall participation in class discussions as well as the completion of occasional in-class writing responses. I recognize that not everyone is comfortable speaking regularly in class, although we will frequently use small group discussions and other activities to facilitate broader class conversations. As such, I will take into consideration other forms of participation, including discussions with me during office hours and over email. However, it is very important that you attend class regularly and maintain contact with me in order to ensure that you are meeting my expectations regarding course participation.

Class Discussant (15%): Each student must sign up to be a discussant at three class sessions during the course of the term. (Sign-up will be online and must be completed by the second class.) For each
discussant session you are expected to read all assigned readings closely (it is recommended that you also read the additional readings) and write a 500-800 word critical response. This is NOT a summary of the reading, but should include reflection on what the readings make you think about and could include questions about the readings that you wish to pose to the class, as well as your provisional responses to those questions. Each of these response papers must be posted to the course page no later than 12pm the day before class. These papers do not have to be fully developed essays, but they should demonstrate to me that you’ve prepared for the discussion and considered some of the implications of the reading(s). You do not have to prepare a formal presentation for class. Note that discussants are discussion leaders; I still expect all of you to have read the assigned readings and a selection of other students’ response papers and to be prepared to participate in our discussions.

Essay Questions (30%): Each student will submit responses of 1,500-2,000 words to essay questions two times throughout the term. All students will respond to the first essay option (due on Quercus before class on Week 4) and can then choose another essay option (due on Quercus before class on Weeks 6, 9 or 12). Sign-up will be online and must be completed by the second class. While these are not formal papers, I do expect a level of organization and clarity of argument that is different than the more personal reflection that characterizes the Class Discussant responses. It will usually be appropriate to cite something from the relevant readings (and you are welcome to use additional sources); you may use any standard citational style but you must be consistent.

Final Exam (40%): The final exam will be a mixture of short answer definition and explanation questions and longer comparative and exploratory essays. It will draw on all the required readings from the course. The exam will take place during the April exam period.

Course Policies:
Late Work/Make-up Exams
If you are unable to complete an assignment by its scheduled date for a valid reason, you must inform me before the due date and we will make alternate arrangements. All late work will be penalized at a rate of 2% per day of lateness.

Accessibility Policy
Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Accessibility Services Office as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations.

Attendance Policy
You are responsible for all of the information that is presented and discussed in class. If you have to miss class for any reason, please notify me in advance. I also recommend that you ask someone in class to share their notes for that day with you, since I will not be able to provide you with an update on what we covered in class.

Grading Policy
I will be happy to discuss any grades that I give on assignments. I will do my best to communicate the criteria I’ll be grading on in advance but please ask questions if you are confused. If you feel that I have made an error, you can take it up with me through the following procedure (Please note that I will only discuss issues with grading during the 7 days after the assignment has been handed back):
1. Wait a minimum of 24 hours after receiving your grade to contact me.
2. Put in writing the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the grade.
3. Bring the assignment/exam and your written statement to my office hours to discuss.
Academic Integrity:
Cheating and plagiarism are offenses against academic integrity and are subject to disciplinary action by the university. Plagiarism is copying someone else’s work and presenting it as your own (by not attributing it to its true source). If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me. I take this matter very seriously and will NOT tolerate plagiarism. Let me stress again: if you are unsure about how to properly cite an idea, please ask me. Your Essay Questions will all be submitted using turnitin.com; if you would like to request an alternate method of submission, please let me know and we can arrange this.

Course Readings:

Week 1 (Jan 7):

Required Readings

Week 2 (Jan 14): Starting Points I: Race, Critical Race Theory and Privilege

Required Readings


Additional Readings


Week 3 (Jan 21): Starting Points II: Intersectionality, the Racial Contract and Racial Capitalism

Required Readings


Additional Readings


**Week 4 (Jan 28): Colonial Constructions of Race**

**Required Readings**


**Additional Readings**


(**First Essay Question due date**)

**Week 5 (Feb 4): Exploring Localized Privileged Identities**

**Required Readings**


**Additional Readings**

Week 6 (Feb 11): Race in Latin America

Required Readings

Moreno Figueroa, Mónica G. and Emiko Saldívar Tanaka. 2016. "‘We are Not Racists, we are Mexicans’: Privilege, Nationalism and Post-Race Ideology in Mexico." *Critical Sociology* 42 (4-5): 515-533.

Additional Readings


(**Second Essay Question due date**)

**Please Note: No class on Feb 18 for Reading Week**

Week 7 (Feb 25): Whiteness Outside of the Americas

Required Readings


Additional Readings


Week 8 (Mar 4): Indigeneity and Settler Colonialism

Required Readings
Kauanui, J. Kēhaulani. 2016. “‘A structure, not an event’: Settler Colonialism and Enduring Indigeneity," *Lateral 5.1.*


Additional Readings


**Week 9 (Mar 11): Indigeneity as Privilege**

**Required Readings**


**Additional Readings**


(**Third Essay Question due date)**

**Week 10 (Mar 18): Caste and Privilege**

**Required Readings**


Additional Readings


**Week 11 (Mar 25): Ethnicity and Privilege**

**Required Readings**


**Additional Readings**


**Week 12 (Apr 1): CRT and Beyond**

**Required Readings**


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**Additional Readings**


(**Fourth Essay Question due date**)