

MIT 3935G: WINTER 2022
Race, Class and Social Power

Race is the modality in which class is lived. It is also the medium in which class relations are experienced. This does not immediately heal any breaches or bridge any chasms. But it has consequences for the whole class.

Stuart Hall, *Policing the Crisis*



Professor: Dr. Warren Steele E-mail: wsteele@uwo.ca

Office: On Zoom. Office hours: By appointment.

Lecture: Lectures are online until the end of January. See the Lecture Content section for details.

Required Texts: Catherine Liu, *Virtue Hoarders*; Gene Yang, *American Born Chinese*

Description: This course is about race and class, racism and antiracism. Topics include settler-colonialism, xeno-racism, Islamophobia, free speech, and the politics of poverty and mass incarceration in the age of liberal tolerance.

Evaluation: Reading Response 20%; Midterm 20%; Final Essay 30%; Weekly Call and Response 15%; Weekly Reflection Forums 15%

Lecture Content: Lecture material will be online until the end of January. After which we will move to the following schedule barring extraordinary circumstances due to the pandemic: SEB 1056, Tuesday 1:30-4:30. Until then, I will communicate my thoughts in writing and post them to OWL every Tuesday morning until we return to the classroom, and will host a synchronous session on Zoom from 1:30-3:30 every Tuesday for those who've read the week's lecture material. These are not drop-in meetings. Think of them as classes in which you have the opportunity to gain greater clarity through group discussion. Each Zoom session will start at 1:30. If no one logs in by 1:40, I will end the meeting.

Call and Response: At midnight on Monday of each week I will ask you a question or series of questions in the Weekly Call and Response OWL forum. *You will have until 5:00pm that day to respond. After which the forum disappears.*

You don't have to do this every week, *but you must do this at least eight times during the term.* The point of this exercise is to answer at least one of the questions posed. This is not an essay assignment, nor is it a reflection exercise like the Weekly Reflection Forums, it is a call and response assignment designed to mimic the kind of discussion we would normally have in class. The point is to compel you to think about something you haven't thought about before, and to do so in a short span of time, so please don't worry about saying the right thing.

This will provide me with a working knowledge of what you know and help me craft the weekly lecture on the basis of your answers. That means the less researched your answers are the better it is for me. Also, your answers don't have to be long. A short paragraph will do.

Weekly Reflection Forums: Think of this assignment as the inverse of the Call and Response, insofar as its designed to encourage *reflection* about what you learned that week. As such, each post to the Weekly Forums on OWL is best done at the end of the week once you've done the readings and reviewed the lecture material. *You must post to the Weekly Forums at least eight times about the class readings and/or lectures.* Weekly Forum posts are time specific and are marked on a pass/fail basis. Only one post per week counts toward your final grade. These posts must be honest and substantial attempts to engage with the content of the course, or with other students about the content of the course. Simple indications of agreement or disagreement are not good enough. You must engage or discuss the material in a manner that requires you to think about it seriously, and to explain your thoughts clearly and politely. Each forum will open at midnight every Wednesday and close at 11:55pm the following Friday. So, if during the week on 'Whiteness' you want to post your thoughts about the readings, or about something said in the lecture, you have from 12:00am Wednesday until Friday at 11:55pm to post your thoughts to the 'Whiteness' forum. After that, the 'Whiteness' forum will close. The next one will open the following Wednesday.

Having said that, you can post whatever you wish, in whatever style you wish, *so long as you reflect seriously on what we're discussing.* There is no word

requirement, you don't have to make an argument, and there's no need to prove anything or provide citations. The point is to keep the conversation going by compelling you to post your thoughts, and to respond to those of your classmates as best as you can. It's not about having the right answer. It's about engaging with the material, and your peers, and learning from both in the process.

Reading Response: This is a written component. It is comprised of one reading response due before the midterm exam. One question will be handed out each week from Sept. 21 to Oct. 11. You will choose which question you wish to respond to. This assignment will require you to generate a short piece of writing (1500 words, double spaced, 12-point font). You will have one week to complete the assignment. Your success is based on (a) completion of the exercise, and (b) on what the exercise demonstrates about the depth of your understanding. You must submit your response through OWL Assignments. Late assignments will not be accepted without academic accommodation or valid excuse. This assignment is worth 20% of your final grade.

Midterm: The midterm exam may be asynchronous and online. If so, it will be conducted through OWL Tests. Regardless, the format of the exam, as well as what's expected and when, will be communicated one week prior to the exam date. The date, *though tentative*, is the week of March 1.

Final Essay: Essay topics will be posted to OWL one month before the April 5 due date. All essays will be submitted electronically through OWL Assignments.

SRAs: Students will submit work within 48 hrs when claiming an SRA for a written assignment. In the case of tests and midterms, these will be written at the next possible date, usually within one week.

Course delivery with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic: Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 landscape may necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

When deemed necessary, tests and examinations in this course will be conducted using a remote proctoring service. By taking this course, you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide personal information (including some biometric data) and the session will be recorded. Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including

technical requirements, is available on Western's Remote Proctoring website at: <https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>

In the event that in person classes resume students will be expected to wear triple layer non-medical masks at all times in the classroom as per university policy and public health directives. Students who are unable to wear a mask for medical reasons should seek accommodation through Accessible Education. Students are expected not to eat or drink while in class to ensure masks stay in place. Students will be able to eat and drink outside of the classroom during scheduled breaks.

Late Papers: Late assignments will lose 2% per day, unless the student has a documented medical or family emergency. Thus, a request for an extension may be granted for a legitimate reason, but such requests must be made at least one week before the due date of the paper in order to be considered.

Grading: Elective courses have no class average requirement. Removing the mandatory grade range from elective courses gives truly outstanding students an opportunity to excel while granting the faculty greater freedom in the instruction of such courses. At the same time, FIMS remains committed to rigorous academic standards, and to grading practices that give high marks only for high quality work. To this end, FIMS undergraduate instructors mark according to the Guidelines to the MIT Grade Range, using the full range of marks available. Please consult these Guidelines to see the standards work is expected to meet. The form can be found on WebCT OWL with the rest of the relevant course material.

Plagiarism: University Senate regulations state: "Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offense Policy in the Western Academic Calendar)." The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.

Prerequisites: University Senate regulations state: "Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites."

Academic Consideration for Missed Work: Students absent from class due to illness, or potential illness, may access the weekly PowerPoints via OWL.

Students who are seeking academic consideration for missed work during the semester may submit a self-reported absence form online provided that the

absence is 48 hours or less and the other conditions, specified in the Senate policy are met. For more on this policy see: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf

Students whose absences are expected to last longer than 48 hours, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (work is worth more than 30% of the final grade, the student has already used 2 self-reported absences, the absence is during final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a Student Medical Certificate (for illness) or appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds).

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors within 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or delaying the submission of work and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances. Students who have conditions for which academic accommodation is appropriate, namely disabilities or ongoing or chronic health conditions, should work with Accessible Education to determine appropriate forms of accommodation.

Religious Accommodation: Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counselor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. For more refer to: <http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

Privacy: We adhere to an Ontario Provincial Government privacy legislation known as "FIPPA" (Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act). As such we cannot email you a grade or discuss a case with you via the internet unless we know it is you. As such, we will only answer UWO emails.

N.B.: The schedule is subject to change.

SCHEDULE

Jan. 11

Liberalism

Readings: Alex Nichols, "You Should be Terrified..."

LA92 (2017)

Jan. 18

Settler-Colonialism

Readings: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *A Knock on the Door**

Jan. 25

Whiteness

Readings: Barbara Fields, "Slavery, Race, and Ideology in the USA"; Julia Halej, "White, but not Quite"

Feb. 1

Private Property

Readings: Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations"; Touré Reed, "Between Obama and Coates"

The Pruitt-Igoe Myth (2011)

Feb. 8

Class

Readings: Catherine Liu, *Virtue Hoarders*

Citations Needed, Episode 91

Feb. 15

Neoliberalism

Readings: Walter Benn Michaels, "The Political Economy of Antiracism"; Adolph Reed Jr., "Antiracism"

Chapo Trap House, Episode 428

Mar. 1

Midterm

Mar. 8

Racecraft

Readings: Barbara and Karen Fields, "Beyond Race Relations" and "How Race is Conjured"

The Rachel Divide (2018)**

Mar. 15

Subjection

Readings: Judith Butler, from *The Psychic Life of Power*; Gene Yang, *American Born Chinese*

Mar. 22

Islamophobia

Readings: Arun Kundnani, “The Lay Ideology of US Empire” and “The Myth of Radicalization”

Citations Needed, Episode 31

Mar. 29

Antiracism

Readings: A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin, “The Freedom Budget”; Eleni Schirmer, “Vision for the Future”

Apr. 5

Socialism

Readings: Mark Fisher, “Exiting the Vampire’s Castle”

**Chapters 1-3, including Introduction.*

***Netflix*

NOTES FROM THE FIMS DEAN'S OFFICE

Winter 2022

Rights and Responsibilities

The conditions governing a student's ability to pursue their undergraduate education at Western are ratified by Senate and can be found on the Academic Policies section of the University Secretariat:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism

Students must write their essays and assignments, including take-home exams, in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. All papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software Turnitin under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system.

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment

for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- during exam periods,
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are NOT met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate or equivalent documentation, if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact the FIMS Undergraduate Student Services Office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see [Policy on Academic Consideration For Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#) and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

In the event of a Covid-19 resurgence, it is possible that different procedures may need to be put in place on short notice.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Academic Calendar](#).

Grading at FIMS

- Normally, first year courses required for entry into an MIT or MPI module (MIT 1020E and MIT 1025F/G) are expected to have a course average between 68-72%.
- Normally, second year required courses (MIT 2000, 2100, 2200, 2500) are expected to have a course average between 70 and 75%.
- Normally, third year required courses (MIT 3000, 3100) are expected to have a course average between 72 and 77%.

Elective courses and 4th year seminars have no recommended course averages.

Support Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwo.com/mentalhealth/>

SUPPORT SERVICES – LINKS

Office of the Registrar:

www.registrar.uwo.ca

Mental Health

Support:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>

Accessible Education:

http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html

Accessibility

Information:

www.accessibility.uwo.ca/

Writing Support

Centre:

<http://writing.uwo.ca/>

Learning Skills

Services:

<https://www.uwo.ca/sdc/learning/>

Academic Learning and Support for Online Learning:

<https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/types/academic-and-learning-support.html>

Indigenous Services:

<https://indigenous.uwo.ca/>

Western International:

<https://international.uwo.ca/>

Career Centre:

<http://careerexperience.uwo.ca/>

Appendix A: Suggested Grade Ranges in MIT, MPI and MTP

Guidelines to the MIT Grade Range

These guidelines are benchmarks, and are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. As well, competency in English language usage (including spelling and grammar) may be taken into account in the assignment of grades by individual instructors. Note that the 70-79 grade range is broken into two divisions, as this is the grade range into which a large number of students fall.

90-100 (Outstanding, A+)

The report shows sparkling originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the writing and background research is exemplary.

80-89 (Excellent, A)

The report shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic; it gets to the heart of the matter with comments and/or questions. It is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing makes the report immediately understandable. Mastery of complex material and ideas is demonstrated. The report is of appropriate length, while preserving the priorities and emphasis of the material, so that the result is meaningful, not simplistic.

75-79 (Very Good, B+)

The report shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The topic is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. The analysis is organized around focal points and the argument is easily followed. The report demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material.

70-74 (Good, B)

The report shows an attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The topic is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. The analysis is organized around focal points. The report is generally well written and well argued.

60-69 (Competent, C)

The report demonstrates adequate comprehension of the topic. The report is on topic and is a reasonable summary of material covered in the course, but goes no further. Facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the report.

50-59 (Marginal, D)

The report shows less than adequate comprehension of the topic and of the material covered by the course. The report is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the report.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)

The report demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. The material is disorganized and unintelligible. The report clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment.

Appendix B: Guidelines of Academic Appeals for FIMS Students

Grounds for Appeal:

The Faculty of Information and Media Studies does not view the appeals process as an opportunity for students to solicit a second opinion on a grade assigned to a particular piece of work. Appeals must pertain to the final grade in a course, and will only be entertained if sufficient grounds for appeal can be met, including: medical or compassionate circumstances, a defect in the evaluation process, bias, inaccuracy or unfairness.

Stages in the Appeals Process:

The first stage of the process is a discussion of the disputed grade with the appropriate Teaching Assistant (if applicable), and subsequently, the course Instructor. For grades assigned to individual assignments, essays, lab reports, projects and tests completed throughout the term, the student first must appeal to the Teaching Assistant or Instructor of the course, within three weeks of the date on which the Instructor or Teaching Assistant returned the assignments to the class. The Appeals Committee will not hear any further appeals about the final grade in any course unless this first step has been taken.

If completion of the first stage has not resolved the matter, the student may appeal the final grade in the course to the FIMS Appeals Committee. Appeals of final grades must be **within the time frame indicated in the Undergraduate Calendar.** It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the appeal is submitted within the deadline. The student shall submit a formal letter to the FIMS Appeals Committee outlining the grounds for the appeal, the remedy sought and relevant materials including the information about when and with whom (Teaching Assistant and/or Instructor) the student met, as described in Stage 1. If the appeal involves a request for work to be regraded, the original marked work and a clean copy (if possible) must be included. If the appeal is commenced once the deadline has passed, it will not be considered either by the Appeals Committee or by the Associate Dean.

The FIMS Appeals Committee has the discretion to determine whether the grounds for appeal have been met.

If the Committee deems that the reasons for the appeal are not legitimate, the Associate Dean will be informed. The appeal will be terminated and the student will be informed.

If the Committee decides that the grounds for appeal have been met, the following steps will be taken:

1. the course Instructor will be shown the appeal letter and offered an opportunity to make a written response;
2. if work is to be regraded, a reader will be appointed who is competent in the area in question and was not involved in the assignment of the original mark. The reader will consider the work in question and will arrive at an independent evaluation. If there is a large discrepancy between the original mark and the regraded mark, a second reader may be appointed by the Committee. **If the appointed reader(s) arrive at a grade within five marks of the original, the original grade will stand.**

The FIMS Appeals Committee will review the evidence and will make a recommendation on the case to the Associate Dean Undergraduate.

The Associate Dean Undergraduate will consider the recommendation from the Appeals Committee, and will make a decision. The student and the instructor will be notified promptly and in writing by the Associate Dean of the decision and of the change in grade, if any. Within the Faculty of Information and Media Studies, the Associate Dean's decision on the matter is final.

Further appeals are possible under certain circumstances to the Senate Review Board Academic (for Undergraduate students) or to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (for Graduate students) but the student should carefully consult the guidelines regarding such Appeals.