

| eng 615: theories of coloniality

semester | winter 2021
time | r 5:00-8:00pm
location | zoom

professor | dr. josé m. cortez
email | jmcortez3@uoregon.edu
office | 319 PLC
hours | t/r 12:00-1:00 & by appt.

course description

this course will offer a critical overview of three of the most pivotal theoretical concepts within critical theory over the last forty years, including coloniality, subalternity, and decoloniality. it will provide students with the background, disciplinary stakes, and seminal readings in foundational theoretical debates over coloniality in recent Latin Americanist thought. informed by readings in Latin American cultural studies, postcolonial studies, and subaltern studies, the course will offer not only a critical examination of still-pervasive categories like hybridity, border, and transculturation, but will also interrogate the continuing vitality of hegemony, colonial difference, and resistance as concepts to account for contemporary neoliberal conditions. course requirements include weekly response assignments, active participation, individual presentations, and a final essay.

required texts

all required readings will be available on Canvas

grading and assessment

class attendance & participation	15%
response papers	30%
seminar paper	40%
presentation	15%

class attendance & participation—15%

attendance is mandatory. please show up to seminar on time. discussion and participation in class are also mandatory. it is therefore important that you come to class prepared, **with a printed copy of the assigned reading**, and ready to contribute to discussion on the assigned texts.

response papers—30%

response papers provide a venue for you to explain what you've read to yourself and others. this is the first step in working with and eventually producing theory. each week, i'd like you to post a response to the assigned reading, again, as a way to begin digesting and mapping out ideas. think about response papers as the very first, very early drafts of some writing that might eventually make it into your seminar project, your dissertation project, or an article. response papers will be graded on a pass/fail basis. to receive full credit, your response paper needs to:

- 1) address the reading
- 2) be at least 500 words
- 3) present a claim with at least two paragraphs that support this claim
- 4) use at least 2 quotations from the text to support a claim
- 5) be posted to Canvas by 11:59pm on Sunday before class (i want us all to be able to read them before seminar on monday)

seminar project—40%

i typically advise students to craft seminar projects that will culminate toward examinations and dissertations. as such, i often advise students to create a project that, for example, traces a critical category from the course into your own interests and field of study. you will choose a topic, but it will be grounded in the material and themes of the course. we will talk in great detail about how to write a seminar paper and what will be expected, and we will meet individually twice during the semester to discuss your ideas. i would like to see between 10-15 pages. due 12.07.18.

presentation—10%

on the last day of the course, you will present your seminar project to your peers.

course policies

technology

please use your computer only in ways that are related to class activities. please put your mobile phones away unless you are using them to take notes.

respectful conduct

seminar can be a wonderful intellectual space for you to experiment with ideas. still, reading theory is very difficult. formulating questions about sensitive topics is very difficult. engaging both tasks alongside your peers can be daunting.

cultivate a culture of intellectual rigor. challenge and dialogue with your colleagues. expect each other to produce unending conversation. but be good to each other. we all enjoy different forms of privilege, but we all have blind spots, too. cultivate a seminar space that is both demanding and nurturing.

i will promote difficult and sometimes spicy discussions, but i will not tolerate disrespectful or inappropriate behavior.

course schedule

- week 1 | **1.07 introductions**
- week 2 | **1.14 beginnings**
 Freyre: “The Masters and the Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization”
 Vasconcelos: *La Raza Cósmica*
- week 3 | **1.21 beginnings**
 Martínez: *Genealogical Fictions*
- Week 4 | **1.28 The Formation of Latin American Subaltern Studies**
 LASS Founding Statement
 Dussel: “Eurocentrism and Modernity”
 Quijano: “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America”
- week 5 | **2.04 subaltern studies**
 Guha: “The Prose of Counter-Insurgency”
 Guha: “Chandra’s Death”
- week 6 | **2.11 subaltern studies**
 Spivak: “Can the Subaltern Speak?”
 Spivak: “Deconstructing Historiography”
- week 7 | **2.18 The Exhaustion of Difference**
 Williams: “The Subalternist Turn In Latin American Postcolonial Studies, or, Thinking in the Wake of What Went Down Yesterday”
 Hernández: “Embodied Forms of State Domination, Gender, and the Camp Grant Massacre”
- week 8 | **2.25 Silence**
 Acosta: “Contingencies of Silence: Subalternity, the EZLN, and the Accounting Speech in Latin America”
 Acosta: “Hingin on Exclusion and Exception: Bare Life, the US/Mexico Border, and *Los que nunca llegarán*”
- week 9 | **3.04 Assent**
 Lyons: *X-Marks*
- week 10 | **03.11 X**
 Chandler: *X: The Problem of the Negro as a Problem for Thought*