

Whiteness Studies: Identity and Inquiry

CES 104; Spring 2020

***We have moved fully online instead of meeting 11:30-12:20 M-TH**

Instructor: Dr. Croix Saffin

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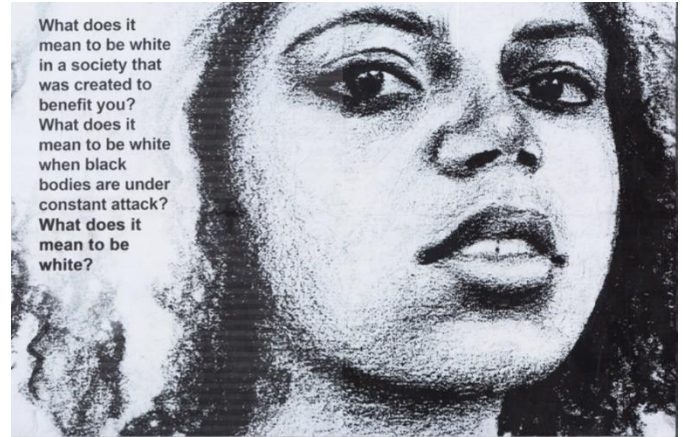
Office Phone: (425) 564-2161

Office Location: A100-E

Office Hours: M-Th 8:30-9:20 and by appointment

Course Introduction:

Welcome to Whiteness Studies! I look forward to working with you this quarter and sharing with you my passion for this growing and vital field of study. My hope is that this class encourages you to think differently about yourself, whiteness, race, racism/white supremacy and gives you some tools to work toward becoming actively anti-racist.



In the United States conversations about race are equated with conversations about people of Color and race is treated as something that people of Color (and only people of Color) 'have' or belong to. But white is also a racial category and part of the perpetuation of racial inequality is that we act like it is not. The purpose of this course is to make whiteness visible. We will investigate what whiteness is and what does it mean to be white. We will examine the formation of whiteness in the US, who counts as white and how this changes historically. We will critically interrogate why whiteness is invisible to so many white people, what white privilege is, and how whiteness operates (yes – even by good, progressive “woke” liberals) to maintain white supremacy. Finally, we will consider what it looks like to engage in anti-racist practice/activism today.

Required Texts:

What Does it Mean to be White? Developing White Racial Literacy. Robin DiAngelo. Peter Lang Publishing: 2016.
ISBN: 978-1-4331-3110. E-book or print text is fine.

Structure and Online Learning:

I want to acknowledge that the vast majority of you did not intend to sign up for an online class and due to this pandemic, we are all having to make some major adjustments. Thank you for remaining in this course (despite the change in modality) - I am here to help you and we can all work together to help navigate this class and get through this.

My expectation and recommendation for successfully getting through this class given the new modality is treat this class as if you were taking it in person. What I mean by that is you need to be “showing up,” doing work, reading, and engaging in the course every day. We were supposed to be meeting every day from 11:30-12:20. Dedicate that time daily to working on course content. If you were meeting face-to-face, you would also be having homework outside of that class time, so plan on and schedule when you would be doing that work. You should plan to budget and spend around 1-2 hours PER DAY to work on your assignments and be engaged in the class.

Learning and Course Outcomes:

After participating, discussing, and completing this course, a successful student will demonstrate:

- Analyze how whiteness is socially, politically, and legally constructed in the U.S.
- Investigate and reflect upon how white privilege is institutionalized in American society

- Identify the ways whiteness shapes one's everyday experiences
- Understand how whiteness is perceived from a global perspective

General Course Expectations:

In order for us to have a successful, respectful, open, engaging, and cooperative learning environment, we all need to have a common understanding of what positively contributes to our overall class dynamics and what hinders and hurts it. The following are some of the basic expectations that serve as the foundation of our class.

What you can EXPECT OF ME as your instructor:

Preparation: My goal is for you to learn and succeed in this class. I have invested a lot of time preparing, structuring, organizing, and designing this course site with hope that the materials and assignments will enhance your learning.

Promptness: I commit to returning your work to you in a timely, reasonable fashion (my rule is you will get all work returned in 7 business days, although the vast majority of work is returned sooner than that). I will respond to your questions and emails promptly as well (usually within 24 hours).

Availability: I am available to you should you desire help. If you live in the area, I encourage you to come to my office hours whenever you have a question or concern, and I encourage you to advocate for your own needs. During my office hours, I will also be logged on to Cranium Café (a Skype-like system linked in Canvas) where we can video chat. If my office hour time does not work, we can schedule an appointment, video chat, or phone conversation that fits both of our schedules. Just email me and we can set something up.

Quality Work: I want you to succeed in this class (as well as in school in general!) I will have high expectations for you and know that will be the right support and help (if it is needed) that you can and will succeed. I will do my best to provide you with that support. I also will work very hard to make this class as successful as possible by choosing course materials and assignments that are interesting and engaging and striving to bring my best to this course.

Honesty, Integrity, and Fairness: I will present information that is grounded in social-science research and will do my best to answer questions based on my understanding of that research and information. If there is something that I do not know, I will let you know that I do not know it. If there is something that is my own personal opinion about something, I will let you know that this is *my* perspective and what *I* think about the matter. Your grade will be based upon what I detect that you have learned about sociological content, not on my personal thoughts about you.

Respect and Inclusion: I believe everyone in our class has the right to feel welcome and safe from personal attack and thus I will listen to you and be constructive and thoughtful in my comments, even if we disagree.

What I EXPECT OF YOU throughout the quarter:

Preparation: You should be looking at what is due each week early in the week and planning your workload accordingly. You should be checking Canvas (including the Calendar) regularly.

Promptness: You should comply with all due dates, as **I do not accept late work. All assignments are due at noted times on the listed due date...NO EXCEPTIONS (that includes computer problems).** I highly recommend that you plan to turn in your work early. I can open most formats (word, PDF, etc.) but cannot open PAGES files (so convert to a different format). Submit your work to me by uploading through the Assignments pages on Canvas. **It is your job to get your work in on time.**

Availability: You should be logging in and working on assignments **5 days per week and planning to spend 1-2 hours per day on course work.** You will not be required to be online at a certain time or day for this course. However, you will see that I have set all assignments up each week to be **due on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.** The reason I am doing this instead of just having everything due each Sunday at 11:59 is because I have found in my many years of teaching

and experience that students wait until the last possible day (or the weekend), they get overwhelmed by the amount that is due, and the result is lots of missing assignments, poor grades, and disengagement with the class.

Quality Work: When participating in any component of this course, your comments should indicate to me that you have read and understand the course material. Some students wrongly assume that they can simply "wing it" in this class and still receive a high grade. This class is not based on opinion – it is based on sociological research, data, concepts, theories, and analyses.

Honesty, Integrity, and Fairness: This means no cheating and no plagiarism. If you cheat/plagiarize, you fail. No excuses will be taken into account. Your work must be your own, except when asked to work with other students. Furthermore, you are required to acknowledge if you have borrowed any ideas, terms, or phrases, even if you have borrowed from a classmate OR from the Newman book. Please do not copy and paste material from google, wikipedia or any other website into your assignments, as this is a severe form of cheating (that is very easy to catch, by the way). If you have any hesitation, or if you are in doubt about one of these issues, feel free to ask me.

Respect and Inclusion: Disrespectful attitudes toward me or others will not be tolerated.

Students with Disabilities:

The Disability Resource Center serves students with disabilities. Common disabilities include physical, neurological (e.g. Autism, ADD/ADHD), and mental health (e.g. depression, anxiety). If you are a student who has a disability or if you think you may need accommodations in order to have equal access in your classes, programs, activities, and any other services, please contact the DRC. If you require assistance in an emergency, please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan for while in class and contact the DRC to develop a safety plan for while you are elsewhere on campus. The DRC office is located in building B Room 132. You can contact the DRC by stopping by the office at B132, calling our front desk phone number (425) 564-2498, emailing drc@bellevuecollege.edu. Deaf students can reach us by calling TTY: (425) 564-6189, or by Skype (account name DRCatBC). For more information about the services we offer, including our Initial Access Application, visit our website at Disability Resource Center (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc>).

Reasonable Accommodations for Reasons of Faith and Conscience:

Students who will be absent from course activities due to reasons of faith or conscience may seek reasonable accommodations so that grades are not impacted. Such requests must be made within the first two weeks of the course to the office of the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs (see Bellevue College Policy 2950 (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id2950/>)). In the event you feel you are being discriminated against based on faith or conscience, you may refer to the procedures outlined in the college's Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Policy 1440P (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-1440p/>).

Note about Communicating:

If at any point throughout the quarter you are confused or unclear about the expectations of the course, course material, a grade you received, or any other matters, I strongly encourage you to email me. It is my goal that all students succeed in this course; but, I can only help you if you meet me half way. Furthermore, if you are having personal problems or other issues going on outside of school, please let me know. I recognize that we all have lives outside of school, and am very willing to work with students, but I can only do so if I know there is a problem!

Grading:

Final grades are based on **five major categories**. (1) Notes on the Readings and Lectures, (2) Reflection Papers, (3) Film Questions/Reflection, (4) Discussion Boards, and (5) Exams. Each of these elements is awarded a specific number of points:

Notes:

Notes on Readings (16 at 15 points/each)	240 points
Notes on Lectures (7 at 10 points/each)	70 points

Reflection Papers:

Reflection Papers (3 at 30 points/each)	90 points
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Film Questions/Reflection

15 points

Discussion Boards:

Small Group Discussion Board (9 at 20 points/each)	180 points
Video chat with me (1 st 2 weeks of quarter)	10 points
Introductions/Getting to Know Your Peers Discussion	15 points

Exams:

Exams (2 at 100 points/each)	200 points
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TOTAL

820 points

The following are the letter-grade equivalents to the course points:

Course Grade	Point Total	Course Grade	Point Total
A (92.5-100%) =	759 - 820 points	C+ (77.5-79.4%) =	636 - 651 points
A- (89.5-92.4%) =	734 - 758 points	C (72.5-77.4%) =	595 - 635 points
B+ (87.5-89.4%) =	718 - 733 points	C- (69.5-72.4%) =	570 - 594 points
B (82.5- 87.4%) =	677 - 717 points	D+ (67.5-69.4%) =	554 - 569 points
B- (79.5-82.4%) =	652 - 676 points	D (59.5-67.4%) =	488 - 553 points
		F (0-59.4%) =	0 - 487 points

Description of the 5 Grading Categories:

1. Notes on the Readings and Lectures: (310/820 points; 15 points each for Readings and 10 points each for Lecture notes – 38% of final grade)

For most assigned readings and lectures, you will need to submit notes about the content covered in that reading/lecture. Doing notes on readings/lectures are crucial for success in this class (and in college in general) – writing things down, summarizing, and synthesizing is a major stage in *how* we learn (a stage which many students tend to skip over!) The purpose of these notes is to:

- help you keep up with the readings (reinforcing good study habits/skills)
- help you to learn how to identify key points and themes from readings and put them in your own words
- help you to synthesize and process the information you are taking in to better learn the material

You will submit your notes on Canvas either in a Word document or if you prefer to hand write them, you can take a photo and upload (make sure your images are viewable). **You can use your notes on your quizzes and exams**, so it is in your best interest to do an outstanding job defining key terms, identifying major themes, and providing examples for yourself.

These notes are for you, to help you. Writing down the information you are reading helps you retain it – trust me, this is not busy work! On multiple occasions, I have compared grades between classes where there is the same content and assessments - the only difference is in one class I require notes and in the other I do not. The difference is staggering

(roughly a 10% difference in overall grades). These work. Do them. Do them well. Think of notes as easy points and an investment in a better overall final grade!

Notes can be as thorough as *you want*. You know how you learn best (better than I do), so if you are a student who needs to write more details, please take the time on these and do so. On exams, I am going to be assessing big picture ideas. I am never going to ask you statistics, the names of a particular person, a specific date, etc.

There is a minimum requirement but there is no maximum. The **minimum guidelines** are as follows and notes might follow this format:

YOUR NAME	TITLE OF ARTICLE/CHAPTER	DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A minimum of 3 main ideas or important points that are discussed <u>throughout</u> the reading (not just the beginning!) Think of these as the “big picture” themes of the reading – if you were going to tell someone what it was about, what would you say?• Then, list and define any key terms. I highly recommend putting these in your own words so you can understand what is being said and also coming up with an example!		

2. Reflection Papers: (90/820 points; 30 points each – 11% of final grade)

The purpose of these assignments is for you to go deeper with the content and personalize what is being talked about. These do not need to be completely formal, 5-paragraph essays but I do want to see some thoughtfulness/ engagement with the prompts and actual editing. These reflection papers should be approximately 2-3 pages, double-spaced and typed.

3. Film Questions/Response: (15/820 points– 2% of final grade)

During the week of our midterm exam, you will be asked to stream *The Great White Hoax* (a link will be provided with free access). I will either be asking you to provide your thoughts/commentary on the film or provide you with a set of discussion questions that I want you to answer about the film.

4. Discussion Boards (200/820 points - 24% of final grade)

Small Group Conversations (9 at 20 points each – 22% of final grade): CES classes are discussion-based. The purpose of discussion boards is for you to engage in virtual dialogue with your classmates about course content - to hear what your peers have to say, what their thoughts and opinions are on topics as well as talk about your own thoughts and opinions. I am setting you up in small groups of about 6-8 students. Your groups will remain the same throughout the duration of the quarter in order for you to build intimacy and connection with these classmates (and because race/racism is often such a difficult topic for many whites to discuss, my hope is that with consistent groups that you get to know some of your peers and thus can be able to open up, go deeper, be more honest). The reason I am breaking you up into small groups instead of having one large class discussion is because I have found that reading 36 posts by all classmates is way too much (and that most students don't!). So, I am trying to ease your workload. I have also heard from students that discussion boards can feel forced. I get it. However, I will also say that what you put in to discussion boards, you get out (meaning, if you simply treat this as busy work or a check box and do not attempt to *actually* engage with your classmates, that is what it will become). Show up. Talk. Connect. Ask questions. Try to make this meaningful!

For each small group conversation, I will provide you with a prompt. There will be a due date for your initial post about the prompt (and you will receive a grade of up to 10 points based on the quality of your initial contribution). You will also be required to respond to at least 2 of your other group members (and you will receive a grade of up to 10 points). Quality responses ask questions and deepen the conversation – this requires time and thought! Thoroughly reflect on and think about the point you are making. Clarify or expand on a relevant concept if important points are missing, vague

or incorrect; look at the issue from another angle or perspective; add pertinent information; ask a question that forces your classmates to think more in depth on the topic.

Video Chat with Me (10 points – 1% of final grade)

It is important to me that I get to meet you and you get to meet me. Video chats will be a quick 10-minute conversation between the two of us. I want to use these to check in with you, see how you are doing, see if you have any questions, if you are struggling with anything, or simply just get to know you better! Simply click the Video Chat with Croix button on Canvas.

You need to video chat with me at some point during the first two weeks of the quarter. For the first two weeks of the quarter, I will be online and available to chat every morning from 7 am to 10:00 am and from 1 pm to 2 pm.

Introductions/Getting to Know Your Peers Discussion (15 points – 2% of final grade)

During the first week of the quarter, I have provided some prompts to aid us in building community in the class and getting to know one another. Similar to the other Discussion Boards, you will be required to post an initial post and respond to two of your classmates.

4. Exams: (200/820 points; 100 points each – 24% of final grade)

There will be two exams (essentially a midterm and a final exam - note the final exam is NOT comprehensive). Exams are designed to make sure you understand important course concepts and themes. Exams will include multiple choice and short answer questions. You will have two hours to complete these exams. Due dates are noted on the calendar.

My Recommendations for Studying for Exams:

- You will be provided with a review sheet of key/core concepts. Go through that review sheet, writing out the definitions for key terms in your own words and come up with several examples for each key term. Your exams are not testing your memorization skills; they are assessing how well you understand the information and can apply that understanding to different contexts.
- **DO NOT** rely on Google or Wikipedia or other outside sources. These are not sociological and often incorrect. Not to mention, this is plagiarism. So, you cutting and pasting from google = a 0 on that question. No exceptions.
- **Organize your notes.** You should be taking notes while you read and listen to the lectures. When you are taking the exams, you will need to find information quickly. Perhaps create a note sheet of just key definitions that you are having trouble remembering. Perhaps organize sections in themes. Anything that you do to write and rewrite information is studying and will help you retain the information.

Calendar

Week One:

Wednesday, April 8th: Start of the quarter

- Log onto the course site, play around, get a feel for the class
- You need to do a 10-minute video chat with me sometime in the first 2 weeks – look at your schedule and plan (10 points)
- Post your Introduction Discussion Board to your classmates (7.5 points)



Friday, April 10th by 11:59 pm:

- Introduction Discussion Board Replies to Classmates due (7.5 points)
- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #1 (10 points)



Week Two:

Monday, April 13th by 11:59 pm:

- Discussion Board #1 replies due (10 points)
- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #2 (10 points)
- Read Chapter 3 in *What Does It Mean to Be White* (scanned for you) – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 3 (see syllabus for minimum requirements and expectations) – 15 points

Wednesday, April 15th by 11:59 pm:

- Discussion Board #2 replies due (10 points)
- Read Chapter 9 in *What Does It Mean to Be White* (scanned for you) – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 9 (15 points)



Friday, April 17th by 11:59 pm:

- Watch 8-minute lecture on White Socialization and Segregation
- Submit notes on White Socialization and Segregation (10 points)
- Start working on Reflection Paper #1

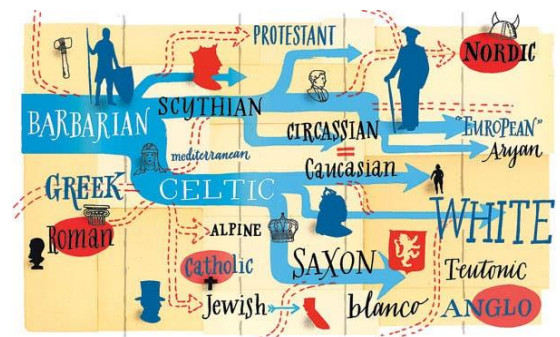
Week Three:

Monday, April 20th by 11:59 pm:

- Reflection Paper #1 Due (30 points)

Wednesday, April 22nd by 11:59 pm:

- Read Chapter 6 in *What Does It Mean to Be White* (scanned for you)– take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 6 (15 points)
- Watch 9-minute lecture on The Invention of Whiteness
- Submit notes on The Invention of Whiteness (10 points)



Friday, April 24th by 11:59 pm:

- Watch 7-minute lecture on Whiteness as Property/Optional Ethnicities
- Submit notes on Whiteness as Property/Optional Ethnicities (10 points)
- Read Chapter 5 in *What Does It Mean to Be White* (scanned for you) – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 5 (15 points)



Week Four:

Monday, April 27th by 11:59 pm:

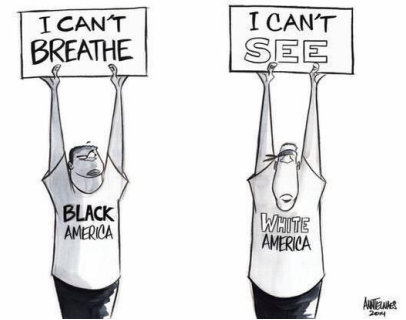
- Read Chapter 4 in *What Does It Mean to Be White* – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 4 (15 points)

Wednesday, April 29th by 11:59 pm:

- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #3 (10 points)
- Watch lecture on White Supremacy and Racism
- Submit notes on White Supremacy and Racism (10 points)

Friday, May 1st by 11:59 pm:

- Discussion Board #3 replies due (10 points)
- Read Chapter 7 in *What Does It Mean to Be White* – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 7 (15 points)



Week Five:

Monday, May 4th by 11:59 pm:

- Read Chapter 8 in *What Does It Mean to Be White* – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 8 (15 points)

Wednesday, May 6th by 11:59 pm:

- Watch lecture on Colorblindness
- Submit notes on Colorblindness (10 points)
- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #4 (10 points)

Friday, May 8th by 11:59 pm:

- Read Chapter 10 in *What Does It Mean to Be White* – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 10 (15 points)
- Discussion Board #4 replies due (10 points)
- Start working on Reflection Paper #2



Week Six:

Monday, May 11th by 11:59 pm:

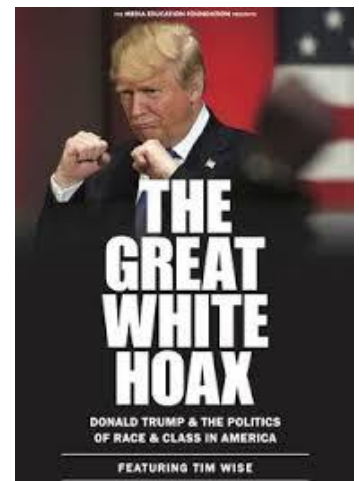
- Reflection Paper #2 Due (30 points)

Wednesday, May 13th by 11:59 pm:

- Exam #1 Due (100 points)

Friday, May 15th by 11:59 pm:

- *Great White Hoax* Film Discussion Questions/Reflection Due (15 points)



Week Seven:

Monday, May 18th by 11:59 pm:

- Read Chapter 12 in *What Does It Mean to Be White* – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 12 (15 points)

Wednesday, May 20th by 11:59 pm:

- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #5 (10 points)

Friday, May 22nd by 11:59 pm:

- Read Chapter 14 in *What Does It Mean to Be White* – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 14 (15 points)
- Discussion Board #5 replies due (10 points)



Week Eight

Monday, May 25th by 11:59 pm:

- Read White Fragility Part 1 – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on White Fragility Part 1 (15 points)

Wednesday, May 27th by 11:59 pm:

- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #6 (10 points)

Friday, May 29th by 11:59 pm:

- Read White Fragility Part 2 – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on White Fragility Part 2 (15 points)
- Discussion Board #6 replies due (10 points)



Week Nine:

Monday, June 1st by 11:59 pm:

- Read White Women's Tears – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on White Women's Tears (15 points)
- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #7 (10 points)

Wednesday, June 3rd by 11:59 pm:

- Read Chapter 16 in *What Does It Mean to Be White* – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 16 (15 points)

Friday, June 5th by 11:59 pm:

- Watch lecture on Tears, Tone, Silence and Exceptionalism
- Submit notes on Tears, Tone, Silence and Exceptionalism (10 points)
- Discussion Board #7 replies due (10 points)

