**ENGL 5330 *Voicing Resistance: African-American philosophy, culture, politics, and art in ‘post-racial’ America***

Dr. Ingram

Spring 2019 R 2:00-4:50 Classroom: TH 23

**Office Hours**: T 11-12:30 or by appointment Office: CAR 410

**Email:** pingram@uta.edu

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this course, we will read a variety of *contemporary* voices on the subject of race in America. These critics consider ways to define, theorize, and live a black life in an America increasingly hostile to black bodies. We will begin by exploring the ‘question of blackness’ today from political, sociological, philosophical, and activist perspectives. We then turn to pop culture texts by contemporary filmmakers (Jordan Peele, Ryan Coogler, and Spike Lee) and by musicians (Beyoncé, Kendrick Lamar), who are examining similar questions in their own mediums.

R**equired** **Reading:**

Political

Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility* (2018)

Ta-Nehisi Coates, *We Were Eight Years in Power*: *An American Tragedy* (2017)

Tim Wise, *Colorblind* (2010)

Cultural/Social

Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration* *in the Age of Color*

*Blindness* (2012)

Wilderson, “Prison Slave as Hegemony’s (Silent) Scandal” pdf on BB

Hartman, “The Belly of the World: A Note on Black Women’s Labors” pdf on BB

Aph Ko and Syl Ko, *Aphro-ism: Essays on Pop Culture, Feminism, and Black Veganism from Two Sisters.* (2017)

Philosophical

Jared Sexton, “Afro-Pessimism: The Unclear Word”

<http://www.rhizomes.net/issue29/sexton.html>

Fred Moten, “The Case of Blackness” pdf on BB.

Calvin Warren, *Ontological Terror*: *Blackness, Nihilism, and Emancipation* (2018)

Artistic/Social

Music of Beyoncé and Kendrick Lamar

*Get Out* (2017) Dir. Jordan Peele

*Black Panther* (2018) Dir. Ryan Coogler

*Blindspotting* (2018) Dir. Carlos Lopez Estrada

*BlacKkKlansman* (2018) Dir. Spike Lee

Additional readings and podcasts can be accessed through links in the syllabus, or in pdf format on Blackboard.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

* Gain a critical understanding of how ideologies of race undergird historical and contemporary political debate
* Define the concept of antiblackness, recognizing how this concept informs the theories of Afro-Pessimism and Afro-Optimism
* Apprehend the relationship between racialization and state violence
* Recognize the work done by black activists and artists to challenge and resist systemic racism
* Engage critically, through reading and writing, with political, cultural, philosophical, and artistic texts.

**Your Grade:** This course requires active and consistent participation from all members of the class. The breakdown of your final grade is as follows.

* Talking Point papers **20%**
* Bibliography and Abstract for Final Paper **10%**

## Presentation& Paper **30%**

* Final Paper **40%**

**TALKING POINT PAPERS (1-2 pages)**

Each week you are required to produce a paper with **5** talking points for discussion. These can be questions drawn from the reading, comments about assertions made in the reading, connections to real world events prompted by the reading, etc. There is some latitude here in terms of approach; **however** you must:

* Demonstrate that you have done the reading/watching in its entirety (so don’t make points that only pertain to the first part of an assignment)
* Offer your own answers/comments/analysis (however tentative) of the points you raise
* **Upload to BB before 11am on the day it is due and bring a hard copy** with you. (We will be using these as the basis for discussion)

Late talking point papers will not be accepted. If you know you will be absent, you should upload your paper to BB anyway.

**PRESENTATION**

One of the key components of this course is examining the various ways that concepts of racial hierarchy structure the political and social life of the United States. But we are also interested in how communities of color, specifically the Black community, responds and resists structural, systemic racism through philosophy, art, and culture. You should examine the methods and choices your artist/activist/film makes in relation to representations of race and think about the influence that the art might have had or seeks to have on public discourse or perceptions about race.

* The presentation should last 30 minutes and include clips from the medium being examined.
* You should include research related to the topic and cite your sources on the last slide of the presentation.
* You should hand in your presentation paper after your presentation.

**Presentation Paper**

PLEASE NOTE: You must hand in a written paper on the day of your presentation. It should represent the content of the presentation, but will be a formal piece of writing, NOT bullet points. Do NOT read your paper during the presentation. You may refer to it, of course, but don’t read it word for word, please.

Late presentation papers will not be accepted.

Length: ~5 pages double-spaced.

**ABSTRACT & BIBLIOGRAPHY**

A one-paragraph abstract and preliminary bibliography of your paper is due 4/11 via BB. I will assess the viability of your “events” and give you feedback on your thesis.

**FINAL PAPER**

**Due: 5/6 via BB**

**Length: 15-20 pages**

For your final paper you will choose **TWO** social/cultural/political/artistic events in the present or recent past (2000 onwards) that engage in some way with race/raced identity/racism. This could include negative events such as hate crimes; protests; political legislation; or policing. But it could also include resistance or celebrations or affirmations of race in music; poetry; novel; or film. Please note, you can certainly consider other races here, not just African-Americans, and you don’t have to restrict yourself to the USA.

The paper will “read” these two events together, analyzing them in terms of the theoretical questions, resources, and ideas raised during the semester, as well as incorporating other work and theories pertinent to the texts being analyzed. You should compare and contrast the two events, recognizing the importance of context: when, where, why did these events occur? Consider the social/political response to the events, whether local or global and situate the events within a historical trajectory of race in this country or elsewhere (if applicable). There will most likely be a lot of material on the internet about your events. Feel free to utilize these sources, but also consider the events in terms of the philosophical issues raised in our course and use scholarly works, as well.

POLICIES:

**Attendance:**

I will take attendance every day. Full attendance is expected of graduate students. However, I do know that emergencies do arise. Please let me know if you cannot make it to class. It is your responsibility to catch up with the reading and obtain notes from the class you missed.

**Tardiness:**

You must arrive to class on time. Not only do you disrupt the class, but you can miss important information which will not be repeated. Frequent tardies may be counted as an absence.

**Classroom/email etiquette:**

I expect each member of the class to behave respectfully towards each other and towards me. Some of you may find the material we will discuss in class to be controversial, but not everyone will share your opinion. Please be mindful of this fact during discussions and in email correspondence. Please be conscious of the following policies.

Turn off your cell phones when you come into class and put them away. This means **no texting in class**. If a student persists in sending text messages during class, he or she will be dismissed from class for the day. Attention to discussion and showing respect for your instructor and classmates is part of being present.

**Academic Integrity:** Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

**PLAGIARISM**

In both oral and written communication, the following guidelines for avoiding plagiarism must be followed:

1. Any words quoted directly from a source must be in quotation marks (for a written assignment and referenced for an oral presentation) and cited.
2. Any paraphrasing or rephrasing of the words and/or ideas of a source must be cited.
3. Any ideas or examples derived from a source that are not in the public domain or of a general knowledge must be cited.
4. **All papers and presentations must be the student’s own work.**

Students who are confused about what constitutes plagiarism should meet with me.

Academic Honesty is expected of all students. Cheating and plagiarism are violations of academic honesty. Any student caught violating the academic honesty code will be failed for the entire semester and the matter will be reported, with documentation, to the Office of Student Conduct for further disciplinary action.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** Students who need accommodations are asked to arrange a meeting during office hours the first weekof classes, or earlier if accommodations are needed immediately. Bring a copy of all relevant paperwork to the meeting. If you do not have a notification for accommodations but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office for Students with Disabilities, 102 University Hall, 2-3364.

**Student Support Services**:UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is directly to your left after exiting. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**Title IX:** The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law “Title IX” such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX).

**Student Support Services**:UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources)

**Assignment Schedule (subject to change)** Readings are due on the date recorded and should therefore be completed BEFORE the corresponding class day.

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| **DATE** | **ASSIGNMENT DUE/CLASS ACTIVITIES** |
| Week 1  1/17 | Introduction to the course  Raoul Peck’s *I am Not your Negro* (2017) |
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| Week 2  1/24 | **Obama Effect: Political Analyses**  DiAngelo, *White Fragility.* |
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| Week 3  1/31 | Coates, *We Were Eight Years in Power* |
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| Week 4  2/7 | Tim Wise, *Colorblind*. |

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| Week 5  2/14 | **Racialization and State Sanctioned Violence**  Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow* |
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| Week 6  2/21 | Wilderson, “Prison Slave as Hegemony’s (Silent) Scandal” *pdf on BB*  Hartman, “The Belly of the World: A Note on Black Women’s Labors” *pdf on BB* |
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| Week 7  2/28 | **Afro-Pessimism vs. Afro-Optimism:**  **Philosophical Perspectives**  Jared Sexton, “Afro-Pessimism: The Unclear Word”  <http://www.rhizomes.net/issue29/sexton.html>  Fred Moten, “The Case of Blackness” *pdf on Bb.* |
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| Week 8  3/7 | Warren, *Ontological Terror* |
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| Week 9  3/14 | SPRING BREAK |
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| Week 10  3/21 | Aph Ko and Syl Ko, *Aphro-ism: Essays on Pop Culture, Feminism, and Black Veganism from Two Sisters.* |
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| Week 11  3/28 | **Social Resistance**  Beyoncé  Listen and watch *Lemonade* album  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BB5zLq1zcdo&list=PLsg7GulH1NBVXi72O7-qISAySLQoVBY_B>  <https://www.npr.org/2016/02/08/466036710/beyonces-formation-is-a-visual-anthem>  <https://www.cnn.com/2016/02/08/politics/beyonce-super-bowl-black-lives-matter/index.html>  <https://www.cnn.com/2016/02/23/entertainment/beyonce-controversy-feat/index.html>  Student Presentation |
|  | Kendrick Lamar  Listen to *To Pimp a Butterfly* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ZTYgq4EoRo&list=PLiS2mJ84ArqbAogNE5G4HawR9euoqMRJM> (not all videos are here)  Grammy Performance 2016  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZTE2WgGbWc>  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ihni6W52Lwo>  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWRowCD86HA>  <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/are-you-not-entertained-kendrick-lamar-black-resistance-n520026>  <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/03/23/the-political-theory-of-kendrick-lamar/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.800c17073e32>  Student Presentation |
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| Week 12  4/4 | Gerald Sim, “Key Developments in Critical Race Studies”  Guerero, “Black Film in the 1990s”  Gillespie, “We Insist. The Idea of Black Film”  *All pdfs on BB* |
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| Week 13  4/11 | *Get Out* (2017) Dir. Jordan Peele  <https://www.indiewire.com/2017/05/get-out-video-essay-jordan-peele-white-fragility-racial-relations-1201831586/>  <https://www.indiewire.com/2017/05/get-out-featurette-jordan-peele-daniel-kaluuya-1201830192/>  <https://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2016/oct/06/get-out-horror-film-jordan-peele-black-men>  Student Presentation  Final Paper Abstract and Bibliography Due |
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| Week 14  4/18 | *Black Panther* (2018) Dir. Ryan Coogler  <https://www.rollingstone.com/movies/movie-features/ryan-coogler-why-i-needed-to-make-black-panther-203737/>  <https://blackyouthproject.com/waiting-wakanda-black-joy-film-epic-resistance/>  <https://www.forbes.com/sites/scottmendelson/2018/02/22/black-panther-the-key-box-office-lesson-that-hollywood-refuses-to-learn/#4d2c6b03159c>  Student Presentation |
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| Week 15  4/25 | *Blindspotting* (2018) Dir. Carlos Lopez Estrada  <https://filmschoolrejects.com/how-blindspotting-makes-the-personal-political/>  <https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2018/07/204978/blindspotting-movie-review>  Student Presentation |
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| Week 16  5/2 | *BlaKkkKlansman* (2018). Dir. Spike Lee  “Spike’s Place” *pdf on BB*  <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2018/aug/26/blackkklansman-review-spike-lee-blistering-return-to-form>  <https://thegrio.com/2018/08/10/spike-lee-breaks-down-why-blackkklansman-needed-to-open-on-charlottesville-anniversary-watch/>  Student Presentation |