

# **RCLS 270 – Diversity & Social Justice in RCLS**

Spring 2015

## **General Information**

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Class Meets: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 12:00-12:50  
Location: PEC 113  
Office Hours: Tuesday 11-2, Thursday 1-2

## **Course Overview**

This course is designed to enhance understanding of leisure in a diverse society. Students will examine factors that influence leisure, explore how leisure mirrors broader cultural values, and learn ways to use leisure to expand their own cultural understandings. In addition, students will learn to think critically, understand and respect different perspectives, and appreciate the cultural and contextual nature of their leisure choices and actions.

## **Class Culture**

As a classroom of engaged learners, we agree that we will...

- 1) Value and respect different opinions as well as the diversity that exists among us;
- 2) Voice our passions, and not censor ourselves. By this we mean that we want to ensure that we can and should be able to share our thoughts and experiences *especially* if our perspectives are different from the class norms, expectations, or experiences of others;
- 3) Stay focused on a scholarly examination of issues rather than judging individuals;
- 4) Encourage questions and clarification;
- 5) What happens in class stays in class. By this, we mean that the classroom is a safe space and that comments made should be held in confidence. The instructor's door is always open if any of us would like to continue conversations from class or voice concern;
- 6) Be active participants and come to class prepared;
- 7) Respect the comfort levels of classmates around us;
- 8) Communicate in a respectful, non-judgmental manner;
- 9) Be passionate problem-solvers through open-minded approaches;
- 10) Keep in mind that we are all RCLS professionals;
- 11) Be empathetic; and,
- 12) Work to become explorers/lifelong learners.

*Instructor's Comment: I assume that you are here because you want to learn something about this topic and that you will take responsibility to be an active participant in this class. You and I share the same expectations of each other: we will be on time, we will be prepared for that day's discussion by having done the assigned readings or activities, we will share our ideas and reactions in class discussion, we will be respectful of one another, and we will be engaged in learning about leisure, social justice, and diversity. If you commit yourself to truly doing your best, I will give you the time and assistance you need to get the most out of this class. But the responsibility lies on you to become an engaged learner.*

### **Textbook**

Adams, M., Blumfeld, W.J., Castaneda, C.R., Hackman, H.W., Peters, M.L., & Zuniga, X. (Eds.), (2013). *Readings for diversity and social justice, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Additional reading materials will be distributed in class or uploaded to Canvas. It is essential that students **read all assigned material** for class. As Michel Foucault famously stated, "Knowledge is power." In this class, an important way to gain knowledge is through reading. Take the time to read closely and thoroughly.

### **Assumptions and Choices**

My assumptions:

- You are an honorable person who stands by her/his word.
- Your enrollment in this class was a willing choice. As such, you are intrinsically motivated to learn.
- You do not equate effort with understanding, and value the latter more highly.
- You are willing to take personal responsibility for your experiences in this class.
- More than likely, you will disagree with me and/or your classmates at some point and will do so respectfully.
- You will come to class prepared and ready to participate.

Choices to facilitate your success in this class:

- You may type and proofread all take-home assignments for content and grammar (including spelling).
- You may turn in your assignments any time up until the due date and may ask for feedback.

### **Course Goals and Objectives**

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Explain why leisure is a significant context for understanding diversity;
2. Explore various theories of identity construction (social construction & developmental theories) and discuss how "differences" in identity are constructed in and through various leisure contexts (e.g., Sports, the arts, Facebook);

3. Articulate an understanding of and demonstrate the ability to use key terms within education for diversity such as “social justice,” “equality vs. equity,” “assimilation & acculturation,” “hegemony,” “structural oppression,” “power,” “ally,” and “intersectionality;”
4. Have participated in at least two experiential learning activities that will specifically address people from non-dominant groups;
5. Discuss the ways that leisure acts to build community, and recognize the psychological, sociological, and physiological significance of this for people who are marginalized in mainstream culture;
6. Discuss the ways that leisure can be a site of conflict, power, and social control;
7. Discuss critical concepts of leisure in the context of a multicultural, pluralistic, society. This includes areas such as race, ethnicity, religion, age, gender, lifestyle, social class, sexual orientation, family structure, and ability;
8. Critically evaluate and identify potential impacts of leisure-related media information in the form of newspaper, magazine, and journal articles, television, radio, blog, and other audio and visual media;
9. Identify and discuss strategies for building alliances and collaborations among and between people within various leisure contexts;
10. Explore a range of possible ways to engage in public activism (no matter how large or small a scale) in order to enact real change toward a more socially just world.

### **Attendance (50 points):**

Your participation makes a significant contribution to class discussion. When you are not present, we can't hear your perspective or learn from the stories you share. Therefore, attendance will be taken each class period. The distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences is too arbitrary to enforce; therefore, we will follow the same policy you encounter at a job—you are allowed **TWO** personal days/sick days. After that, you will lose 10 points of your attendance grade per absence, up to six (6) total absences. If you miss more than six (6) days for any reason, you will need to retake the course. If you are sick, injured, or are experiencing some kind of personal crisis, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

### **Choices for Academic Success**

This course has been organized around class readings and discussion, experiential activities, written assignments, journal reflection, and one presentation. While each assignment overview is given below, the specific requirements of each assignment will be handed out separately and discussed in class well in advance of the due date.

#### ***1. Presentation/Facilitated Discussion (50 points)***

Students will have the opportunity (in groups) to lead one class discussion. Students will tie course readings for the week to an article (magazine, newspaper, journal, etc.) that relates to the topic area. Articles should have content that helps the class think critically about the population **and our field**. The group will present the article, then lead the discussion. Presentations should be a maximum of 10 minutes with

approximately 10 minutes of discussion to be led by the students following the presentation. In connection with their presentation, students should also prepare an outline of the presentation and the facilitated discussion for the instructor.

2. *"Leisure Anthropologist" AKA "Self as Other" Writing Assignment (50 points)*

What does it feel like to sense prejudice or experience discrimination as a result of being —different? You will to attend an event that challenges or increases your cultural worldview, perhaps as related to current course topics: religion, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, ability, socio-economic status. You need to be an outsider to the event or experience, and need to be respectful of the people and processes you encounter. During the event, you will take the lens of a "leisure anthropologist" taking in-depth field notes (during or after the experience) in order to create "thick description." We will explain what this means at a later point in class. You'll then produce a first-person reaction paper (narrative) 3-5 pages in length. Assignment details and expectations will be discussed in more detail during class. Possible visitation sites will be discussed in class. If you discover an event but are not sure that it fits, you should clear the visitation with an instructor prior to the event. If the event is not approved prior to the visit, you may or may not receive credit.

3. *Media Analysis Paper (100 points)*

People in the United States watch a lot of T.V. (It is the #1 leisure activity in the U.S.) and they watch a lot of movies. Given that watching all of this media seems so central to our culture, your task will be to examine one media product (noted below) and analyze how issues of race or class or gender or sexual identity or disability are discussed **and** how these portrayals work to resist or reinforce certain systems of power. Choose one of the three media contexts listed below:

1. Film (Hollywood or independent film) – (e.g., Lord of the Rings, etc.)
2. Sporting event (professional/amateur) – college or professional sports for women/men
3. Television sitcom (e.g., Will and Grace)

Write a 6-8 page paper in which you talk about how, for example, gender is conveyed through the film, "Lord of the Rings" – how are women portrayed, how are men portrayed? What systems of power are challenged or upheld with such portrayals? What do sportscasters say about women when they cover women's sports at the collegiate and professional levels – what do they say about the women relative to their personal lives, what do they say about the men relative to their personal lives? (How are women and men constructed in terms of sports coverage?) What do commentators say about individuals with disabilities as they cover the Paralympics? Use **at least three readings from class** to help shape your paper. Also, if you use other sources/references, please be sure to include the full references in your reference list.

#### 4. Reading Responses (200 points)

In order to prepare yourself for class discussion, and to assist you in reading deeply and critically, for each reading, you will complete a “reading response” in your journal. This reading response will provide you with notes and reminders of points from the reading you wish to discuss in class. The more thoughtful and thorough the notes, the better prepared you will be for class, making our discussions rich. Each week’s reading response(s) will be graded weekly for a total of 10 weeks of responses at 20 points each.

#### 5. Reflection Journals (100 points)

At the end of every Thursday discussion, each of you will complete a short write-up reflecting on class discussions, readings and homework from throughout the week. While journal prompts will vary, each reflection will aim to explicitly answer the following three questions:

- What? Over the course of the week, objectively, what did I experience/what did I do?
- So what? Yeah...so these things happened. I went and did something. What is/was the POINT?
- Now what? So...based on what happened/what I experienced, what am I going to do, not do, or do differently? What’s my action plan?

Additionally, journals will be a place for you to record your responses to participation exercises. Journals will be graded weekly for a total of 10 entries at 10 points each.

#### 6. Exams

There are no exams in this course (Yay!); however, the end of quarter writing assignment (Media Analysis Paper) is largely based upon information that will be presented and discussed throughout the ten weeks of class.

### **Written Assignment Policies**

All written assignments are required to meet the following criteria:

- Have a font no smaller or bigger than 12-point.
- Be completed on a computer, i.e., I will not accept handwritten assignments.
- Be stapled in the upper left-hand corner (folders, binders, etc. not accepted).
- Be double-spaced and in the appropriate format for the assignment.
- Have numbered pages, not including the cover sheet.
- Have a cover sheet listing the following:
  - Name and number of course
  - Student’s name
  - Date assignment is due
  - Named title
- Meet APA Publication Manuscript style, i.e., references, citing (direct and paraphrased quotes, headings, etc.). See Purdue Owl for help:  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/>

### **Grading and Evaluation Procedures**

Criteria for evaluation in this class include ordinary standards of good writing (clear expression; accurate punctuation, grammar, and spelling; well organized) and meeting specifications of individual assignments. Assignments must be handed in on or before announced deadlines. Assignments must be typed (12 point font) and double-spaced. *Late assignments will not be accepted.*

### **GPA calculator**

Grades will be assigned according to normal university standards, (which includes an assumption of basic literacy in English)

|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 95% | 4.0 | 86% | 3.3 | 77% | 2.7 | 68% | 1.9 |
| 94% | 3.9 | 85% | 3.2 | 76% | 2.6 | 67% | 1.8 |
| 93% | 3.8 | 84% | 3.1 | 75% | 2.5 | 66% | 1.7 |
| 92% | 3.8 | 83% | 3.1 | 74% | 2.5 | 65% | 1.6 |
| 91% | 3.7 | 82% | 3.0 | 73% | 2.4 | 64% | 1.5 |
| 90% | 3.6 | 81% | 3.0 | 72% | 2.3 | 63% | 1.4 |
| 89% | 3.5 | 80% | 2.9 | 71% | 2.2 | 62% | 1.3 |
| 88% | 3.4 | 79% | 2.8 | 70% | 2.1 | 61% | 1.2 |
| 87% | 3.4 | 78% | 2.8 | 69% | 2.0 | 60% | 1.1 |

**Final grades will be assigned according to the following breakdown:**

| <b><i>Assignment</i></b>              | <b><i>Points</i></b>  |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Class Attendance                      | 50 pts.               |
| Facilitated Discussion & Presentation | 50 pts.               |
| “Leisure Anthropologist” Paper        | 50 pts.               |
| Media Analysis Paper                  | 100 pts.              |
| Reading Responses                     | 200 pts.              |
| Journal Reflections                   | 100 pts.              |
|                                       | <b>550 total pts.</b> |

### **Academic Dishonesty**

It is a violation of the Eastern Washington University Student Conduct Code to represent the work of others as your own (plagiarism), fabricate research data, or to cheat on exams. Such acts of academic dishonesty can result in failure of the course and be subject to disciplinary action from the University. If you have any questions about academic integrity, please be sure to contact the instructor or read the EWU Academic Integrity Policy, which is located on the EWU web site.

**ADA Statement**

Eastern Washington University is committed to providing support for students with disabilities. If you are a student with physical, learning, emotional, or psychological disabilities needing an accommodation, you are encouraged to stop by Disability Support Services (DSS), TAW 124 and speak with Kevin Hills, the Manager DSS or call 509-359-6871.

**Syllabus Disclaimer: This syllabus is as accurate as possible, but may change as we encounter new ideas/current events and need more time to unpack them.**