Spring 2017

CORE 152

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Recommended Citation
Mercado, Monica, "CORE 152" (2017). Faculty Syllabi. 57.
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CORE 152M: Challenges of Modernity (Spring 2017)
MWF 9:20-10:10 | Alumni 331

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office: 318 Alumni
phone: 315-228-7516
office hours: Tuesdays, 3-5pm, Wednesdays 8-9am, and by appointment

Course Description

Modernity has been used at times to describe a time period, a political project, a way of thinking, and an assortment of social, economic, and cultural changes that have introduced new problems and possibilities into human life. Within modernity, issues of identity, morality, and freedom have been critiqued in distinctive ways. People of different social classes, racial groups, ethnic backgrounds, genders and sexual identities have contributed to an increasingly rich and varied public discourse. The human psyche has been problematized, and the dynamic character of the world, both natural and social, has been explored. Imperialism has had a complex and lasting impact on the entire globe. Urbanization and technological development have transformed the patterns of everyday life. The human capability to ameliorate social and physical ills has increased exponentially, and yet so has the human capacity for mass destruction and exploitation. Together, over the next 15 weeks, we will think broadly and critically about these issues and the world we inhabit, understanding our contemporary concerns through the lens of some of the most important conversations of the last two centuries.

We will contemplate, and talk, and pose questions together, learning to read—and re-read—difficult texts to respond to them, and to write with, about, and through them. We will imagine the texts of modernity not simply the page that was/is read, but also consider political speeches, painting and photography, performance (including live music and dance), film, and poetry. The course will meet three times a week and much of this time will be spent in discussion.

Required Texts (at the Colgate Bookstore and on 2-hour reserve at Case Library)

Please consult with me if you wish to use a different edition of any of these books. In some cases, that will be perfectly fine, but in others it will mean that you are missing critically important material.


Additional readings will be posted on the course Moodle site, or distributed in hard copy.

### Course Requirements and Grading

1) **Attendance, Course Preparation, and Participation**

The course will meet three times a week and much of this time will be spent in discussion. Be prepared to contribute, and also to listen to your fellow students as they speak. Given our 50-minute class meetings, I expect you to come to class having read (or re-read) and thought about the assigned texts, bringing notes and questions. You will arrive on time and remain in class for the full period.

Course meetings will be interactive: students will engage in discussions mediated by the professor and they will engage one another in small groups—thus active and informed participation is essential to your success. As content will deal with political issues that many of us will have differing positions on, class dialogue will provide a context to explore these differences through listening and presenting alternative points of view. Though we should be comfortable to disagree with each other, we will do so in good faith. We also want to work on understanding the differences between opinions and arguments. We want to make arguments in this class, which means being able to situate your ideas with academic and logical argumentation that speaks beyond the anecdotal.

How do I evaluate participation? Your participation grade is based on your level of engagement in the course, as signaled by your active listening, note taking, and thoughtful, regular contributions to class discussions and group activities. Participation can also mean asking questions, and being curious. Offer an interpretation that differs from the readings, from mine, or from that of your classmates. Bring our attention to a particular passage and explain why you think it is relevant to the current discussion. Make connections with other readings. *Come talk to me if you are reluctant to speak up and we’ll figure out a way for you to participate.*

About attendance: one unexcused absence can be taken without penalty during the semester. More than one unexcused absence may affect your participation grade.
If you foresee more than one absence due to scheduled athletic events, religious observances, an emergency, or extra-curricular activities, or cannot attend an out-of-class time event, I need to know as soon as possible so we can arrange make-up work. If you do not do this, your participation grade may suffer.

2) Writing Assignments

Students will complete a series of 3 short reflection pieces and 2 longer essays based on our course readings and the larger themes discussed—the details of which will be provided at least two weeks in advance of the assignment due dates. Reflections will ask students to contemplate contemporary resonances of our readings, and often requires engagement with on-campus speakers and events. The longer essays provide an even more useful measure of each student’s mastery of our material, and expect close reading of our assigned texts. All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade for the course.

3) Exams

There is a take-home midterm exam (short essay format), due Wednesday, March 8. There is a cumulative, oral, final exam to be conducted in assigned groups during the exam period in May.

In short:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIST 213 Assignment/Activity</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Preparation &amp; Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 short reflection pieces (2-3 pages ea.)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>(see schedule of readings for details, email by 5pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 1: (5-6 pages)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Wednesday, February 15 in class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm take-home exam</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Wednesday, March 8 (email by 5pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 2: (6-8 pages)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Friday, May 5 in class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam (oral/in groups)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Finals Week (TBD)</td>
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Additional Guidelines

Late Assignments
Late assignments will incur a penalty of one-third letter grade for each 24 hour period it is not in my hands after the deadline marked on this syllabus, unless arrangements have been made with me in advance.
**Academic Honesty/Honor Code**

You are responsible for understanding and complying with Colgate’s Honor Code. Do not claim the ideas or words of someone else as your own. Do use the ideas and words of others to help develop your own, and give them credit by paraphrasing or quoting them. Do acknowledge those who have helped your thinking overall. Remember that intellectual work is the process of developing and sharing your ideas, which also involves giving recognition to those who have shared ideas with you. Although you are encouraged to discuss the readings and your ideas with your classmates, you must develop, outline, and write your papers alone. Please ask if you are unsure about how to cite sources.

**Academic Support**

If you feel you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. If you have not already done so, please contact Lynn Waldman at the Office of Academic Support and Disability Services in the Center for Learning, Teaching, and Research (x7375). She will review documentation to determine and help coordinate reasonable and appropriate accommodations for students.

**Writing & Speaking Center**

Colgate’s Writing & Speaking Center (208 Lathrop, x6085) is committed to helping all students succeed as clear, effective communicators. Peer writing and speaking consultants can help you refine your ideas, and prepare or organize the content of your written assignments or spoken arguments. All meetings are private, and you may visit at any stage of your process, from clarifying your initial ideas to reviewing a final draft or practicing an oral performance. For more information, see http://www.colgate.edu/writingcenter.

**Office Hours and Email Contact**

I am available in my Alumni Hall office by appointment and regularly on Tuesdays (3-5pm) and Wednesdays (8-9am) to discuss any aspect of the course and your learning. Come visit! Furthermore, if you feel you are having any problems with the readings, lectures, discussions, or assignments for this course, I encourage you to make an appointment to talk to me at a time convenient for both of us. Don’t wait until the end of the semester to discuss your concerns.

I will respond to all emails but not always immediately; I don’t check it very frequently on the weekends, and I almost never check it after 6 p.m. If your email requires a lengthy reply or conversation, I will ask you to see me in person. In general, most questions about assignments are better answered in conversation—it is easier in that context to push you farther than you could go on your own.
Technology in the Classroom

Please leave your electronic devices at home—I expect students to bring all readings to this class in some physical form. The same goes for your notes. Technology has wonderful advantages, but it can hinder discussion and focus.

I will gladly make exceptions for students who require technology use as an accommodation for a documented disability. In addition, there is absolutely no texting or using smartphones during class time.

Important Dates

Saturday, January 28    First reflection piece due (email by 5pm)
Wednesday, February 15  Manifestos and Declarations performance and essay due in class
Wednesday, March 1 or  “Strange Fruit” lecture with Professor Coyle, 7pm
Thursday, March 2
Wednesday, March 8    Midterm take-home exam due (email by 5pm)
Thursday, March 23    Masterclass with Dinita Clark, 303 Huntington, 8:30-9:45 am
Friday, March 24    Performance/lecture/demonstration with Dinita Clark, Chapel, 1pm
Thursday, March 30    Manhattan String Quartet (MSQ) lecture/short concert, Chapel, 6pm
Monday, April 3    Second reflection piece due in class
Friday, April 21    Third reflection piece due (email by 5pm)
Friday, May 5    Essay due in class
Week of May 8    Group finals

Schedule of Readings

I reserve the right to alter this schedule as our interests develop.

Week 1:  Power, Justice, and Education

January 23 M  Introductions
Read: Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” draft (1963), collections of the King Center and Stanford University King Research and Education Institute.

January 27  F  NO CLASS | Reflection due Saturday 1/28 by 5pm (via email)

Reflection assignment (2-3 pages): Attend at least one of this MLK week events (full schedule posted to Moodle). In conversation with your reading of our syllabus, Deresiewicz, and King, reflect on the event you attended. Some questions to consider: how do we talk about power, justice, and education in our campus communities? What is the responsibility of students? Of educators? Can we study words and actions together? These are not easy questions; there are no right and wrong answers. This first reflection is not just a synthesis of our readings, it tells me who you are and what interests or perplexes you. A few more details:

Be sure to refer to certain passages in the readings, and discussions from the event you attended/participated in to illustrate your idea(s) and identify questions you would like to pose in our studies going forward.

Your reflection should be typed in 12-point font, double spaced, with page numbers and a title.

Week 2: Enlightened Declarations

January 30  M  Read: Declaration of Independence (1776)
Read: Frederick Douglass, Oration, also know as “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” (1852)

February 1  W  Read: Immanuel Kant, “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?” (1784)
Read: Declaration of the Rights of Man (1789)

February 3  F  Read: Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions of the Woman’s Rights Convention, held at Seneca Falls (1848)

Week 3: Capitalism and Labor, Part I

February 6  M  Read: Karl Marx, from the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 8</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Read: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, <em>The Communist Manifesto</em> (1848),</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Parts I, II, and IV, pages 29-58, 72-74.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 10</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Read: Marx/Engels, <em>Manifesto</em>, Part III and 1890 preface, pages 58-74,</td>
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<td>24-27.</td>
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<td><strong>Week 4: Capitalism and Labor, Part II</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>February 15</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Declarations, Sentiments, and Manifestos assignment due / performed (no new reading)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 5: Darwinian Traces</strong></td>
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<td>View: Carrie Mae Weems, “From Here I Saw What Happened and I Cried” (1995-96)</td>
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<td>February 22</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>[One reading assigned per group, TBA]</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Read: Thorstein Veblen, <em>Theory of the Leisure Class</em> (1899), Chapters I and X.</td>
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<td>Read: Andrew Carnegie, “The Gospel of Wealth” (1900)</td>
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<td>February 24</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Read: John Dewey, “The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy” (1909)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 6: Civilization(s)</strong></td>
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<td>February 27</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Read: Mohandas K. Gandhi, “Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule” (1909)</td>
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<td>Read: Charlotte Perkins Gilman, <em>Herland</em> (1915), pages 1-42.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 1**</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Professor Michael Coyle (English) lecture on jazz, focusing on Billie Holiday and her performance of “Strange Fruit,” 7pm in 207 Lathrop</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2**</td>
<td>Th</td>
<td>Professor Michael Coyle (English) lecture on jazz, focusing on Billie Holiday and her performance of “Strange Fruit,” 7pm in 207 Lathrop</td>
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<td>**This week you are required to attend the lecture with Professor Coyle. If you foresee a conflict, you must notify me immediately. **</td>
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<td>March 3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Read and Listen: “Strange Fruit” (originally recorded 1939) Read: Barbara J. Fields, &quot;Ideology and Race in American History&quot; (1982)</td>
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<td>Week 7:</td>
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<td><strong>The Problem of the Color Line, Part I</strong></td>
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<td>March 8</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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<td>March 10</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Read: DuBois, <em>Souls of Black Folk</em>, pages 1-12 (The Forethought &amp; Chapter 1)</td>
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<td>Week 8:</td>
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<td>**Spring Break</td>
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<td>Week 9:</td>
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<td><strong>The Problem of the Color Line, Part II</strong></td>
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<td>March 20</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 22</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Read: DuBois, <em>Souls of Black Folk</em>, pages 74-175 (Chapters 6-11)</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 23**</td>
<td>Th</td>
<td>Masterclass with Di’Nita Clark, 303 Huntington, 8:30 am or 1:20 pm</td>
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<td>March 24</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Read: DuBois, <em>Souls of Black Folk</em>, pages 186-217 (Chapters 13-end)</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 24**</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>1-2:30pm performance/lecture/demonstration with Di’Nita Clark, reception to follow. If you foresee a conflict, you must notify me immediately.</td>
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<td>Week 10:</td>
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<td><strong>Art of Change</strong></td>
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March 30** Th Manhattan String Quartet (MSQ) lecture/performance at 6pm. If you foresee a conflict, you must notify me immediately.

March 31 F MEET IN CHAPEL | Workshop with MSQ Continue reading *Mrs. Dalloway!*

**Week 11: Urbanism as a Way of Life**

April 3 M *Second reflection assignment due in class.* Finish reading for today: Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925)


**Week 12: On Violence**


April 12 W Read: Franz Fanon, “On Violence,” from *Wretched of the Earth* (1961)


** Watch: By Monday 4/17 you need to have screened “The Battle of Algiers,” available via the Colgate library subscription to Kanopy (streaming link on Moodle) **
Week 13: Seeing Colonialism

April 17  M  Watch: Gillo Pontecorvo, “The Battle of Algiers” (121 minutes, 1966)
“Preface” and “The Battle of Algiers,” pages 3-20 and 183-207.
Read: “The Dictatorship of Truth: An Interview with Gillo Pontecorvo,

April 19  W  Read: Stefan Kipfer, “Fanon and Space: Colonization, Urbanization, and
Liberation from the Colonial to the Global City,” Environment and
Read: Alan O'Leary, "The Battle of Algiers at Fifty: End of Empire
Cinema..." Film Quarterly 70.2 (2016): 17-29.

April 21  F  NO CLASS | Third reflection due by 5pm via email

Week 14: Contemporary Challenges

April 24  M  Read/listen: Malcolm X, “The Ballot or the Bullet” speech (1964)
Read: The Combahee River Collective Statement (1977)

April 26  W  TBD

April 28  F  TBD

Week 15: Citizen / Final Reflections

Read: Frank Guan, “Class Dismissed,” The Point (Summer 2016)

May 3  W  Read: Rankine, Citizen, pages 22-end.

May 5  F  Essay #2 due in class (no new reading)