TE982: Examining Critical Race Theory in Education
Mondays, 3:00pm – 6:00pm
133D Erickson Hall, Fall 2008

Instructor: Dorinda J. Carter Andrews
Email: dcarter@msu.edu
Phone: (517) 432-2070
Mailbox: Erickson, 3rd Floor
Office Location: 358 Erickson Hall
Office Hours: By appointment

NOTE: This syllabus is a draft and is subject to changes.

**Course Description:**
This course will allow students to explore Critical Race Theory as an analytical framework that provides race-based epistemological, methodological, and pedagogical approaches to the study of everyday inequalities in P-20 education. Key foci of this seminar are to help students understand CRT as a theoretical framework, examine its utility and limitations, and consider its application to students' own research and practice.

We will begin by exploring the historical development of CRT from Critical Legal Studies (CLS) and move through its contemporary nuances. In addition, we will work to expose the ideological construction of race and education in the U.S. As such, we will also work through the oppressive nature of education and boldly confront notions of colorblindness. Throughout this course, we will grapple with the challenges surrounding the inclusion of multiple voices and perspectives in the complex intersections among race, gender, class, and sexual orientation. Other intersecting analytical frameworks discussed include TribalCrit Theory, LatCrit Theory, Critical White Studies, AsianCrit, QueerCrit, and Critical Race Feminism.

Specifically, we will critique the strengths and limitations of CRT as theoretical framework for addressing educational inequalities. As to be expected there is a substantial amount of reading assigned in this course. To successfully accomplish and engage with the readings, you will need to manage your time wisely.

**Student Responsibilities:**
In addition to completing the readings and assignments for the course, you are expected to fully engage in the learning experience throughout the quarter. As a seminar, this course will consist of presentations, guest speakers, and critical discussions. Therefore, students will need to draw upon active listening skills, make a strong effort to critically self-reflect, and locate their voices to engage in dialogue with their colleagues.

**Course Objectives:**
1. We will explore how racial inequities are produced, reproduced, and maintained within social institutions of education.
2. We will strive to create affirming spaces for counter discourses that refute ideological constructions of “truth” and “reality.”
3. We will work to understand and value the similarities and differences among the experiences of people with different racial backgrounds in P-20 education.
4. We will use CRT to inform our personal, social, political, and intellectual experiences as racial beings.
5. We will engage in CRT with the end goals of heightened social consciousness and social transformation.

**Required Text:**

**Course Evaluation**
Grades will be determined as follows:

- Attendance and Participation: 15%
- Briefs: 15%
- Annotated Bibliography: 10%
- CRT Political Autobiography: 25%
- Research Paper: 25%
- Research Presentation: 10%

**Attendance and Class Participation:**
Attendance is expected at all class sessions. Missing class can affect depth of understanding and is frequently reflected in the quality of written analysis and in the overall learning experience. Your presence is important, and missing class sessions will be reflected in your final grade. As a member of this class, you are responsible for the learning that takes place during each class meeting. Meaningful class discussion is a crucial part of the learning experience for students and the professor; therefore, you are expected to complete all assigned readings and course tasks prior to the class meeting. Your participation in class will be evaluated based on your contribution to other students’ learning, clarity of your contribution, demonstrated knowledge of course content, and your willingness to assume responsibility for making the discussion work in our learning community.

For this class, high-quality participation is characterized by the following.

1. **What are you learning?** Students demonstrate an understanding of facts, concepts, and theories presented in the class readings and other materials.
2. **How clearly do you express yourself?** Students ask questions, answer questions or otherwise contribute in a comprehensible manner.
3. **How do you work with others?** Students offer constructive criticism during discussions and build on each other’s ideas. Students also assume leadership and maintain active participation in small groups.
4. **How do you go beyond what is given?** Students relate concepts from class to their experiences as a teacher and learner, generating new insights and applications.
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Briefs:
Students are expected to write seven (7) single-spaced, 1-2 page briefs during the course. In each brief, students should make reflective and analytical responses to the readings. This means developing defensible interpretations, negotiating meanings, and drawing connections to other works, concepts, or phenomena. You are also encouraged to make connections between theory, research, and practice by drawing on your life experiences as a student, professional, and learner. Briefs SHOULD NOT summarize the readings. Overarching guiding questions will be provided to help you get started.

Your briefs will help the professor prepare for class discussions. Briefs should be uploaded to the appropriate ANGEL Discussion Forum no later than 6:00pm on Sunday evening prior to Monday’s class so that the professor and your classmates have ample time to respond to each brief. I will not assign weeks for you to write your brief. You have the option of choosing which seven weeks you will submit briefs. However, don’t get yourself caught in a trap of having to do all seven consecutively at the end of the semester. Pace yourself.

Annotated Bibliography – due September 22nd
The purpose of this assignment is to allow you the opportunity to engage with your final topic early on in the semester. Each student will complete a 10-entry annotated bibliography of scholarly texts accompanied by an abstract in conference format related to your research paper. More details to follow.

CRT Political Autobiography – draft due October 20th; final copy due November 10th
As a leader within the field of education, it will be necessary and beneficial for you to continuously assess your personal development, confront your weaknesses, and acknowledge your strengths. The purpose of this assignment is to grant each of you the opportunity to personally, politically, and intellectually reflect on the content of this course and your experiences (or lack of experiences) as a racialized being. As such you will be expected to maintain a continuous narrative reflecting upon your personal journey through our course. In your entries (weekly, we advise), we expect that you will utilize course readings, discussions, presentations, etc…to reflect. Within your reflections, please consider addressing areas of personal resistance, new knowledge/perspectives, change, and/or insights. To inspire your thoughts, please consider questions such as:

1. How have my educational experiences been racialized?
2. How have my life experiences contributed to my understanding of myself and others as racialized beings?
3. What significant life experiences have I had that have contributed to my perceptions of racial, gender, sexual orientation, class, etc. identities in education?

While it is required for you to explore your racial identity given the nature of our course, please incorporate additional aspects of your identity as well. This essay is intended to be an approximately 12-15 page reflection in which you process through your thoughts and experiences relying upon APA Format to reference our course readings.
Final Research Paper – due November 24th; Paper Outline due October 27th
Each student will submit a 20-25-page paper focused upon an area of interest pertaining to CRT and education. The main objective of this assignment is to create an original research project utilizing CRT as a guiding framework. It is expected that each final paper will:

- Critique an area (i.e. teachers, students, administration, curriculum, pedagogy, structure, policy, etc…) of education using CRT.
- Use CRT to address an educational inequality or dilemma.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of CRT as a theoretical and methodological framework.
- Highlight the implications of your analysis for education and future possibilities for further inquiry.

Research Presentation – Final Exam Session
During the final exam session, students will have an opportunity to share their research topic with the class. Your presentation should include an overview of your topic and a general sense of the key findings and implications of your research paper. It should also evidence how your work intersects with the issues that are central to this course. More details to follow.

Late Assignments:
Students are expected to meet writing deadlines. Any work submitted after its due date will be considered late. Late papers will be reduced by one-half letter grade for the first day of lateness and a full grade any time later, except in extreme cases. Assignments are due at the beginning of class.

Writing Guidelines:
Writing proficiency is a minimum requirement for satisfactory completion of this course. All written work must reflect adequate writing skills in order to receive a grade.

Please edit your work carefully and check for spelling/typographical errors before turning it in. Many of you will be teachers and you will need to be able to clearly communicate ideas to parents, other teachers, administrators, community news sources, etc. In light of this, it is our policy to support you in the development of your writing. If you feel you need outside support with writing, the Writing Center in 300 Bessey Hall (tel: 432-3610; website: http://writing.msu.edu/default.html) can be of assistance. I may refer you there if I feel they may be of service to you. If you already know that you have weaknesses in your writing, please see me as soon as possible, so we arrange assistance. Please do not feel embarrassed about coming to me for help – assisting you is my job as your instructor.

Academic Honesty:
Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that “the student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards.” In addition, the College of Education adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and in the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, which are included in Spartan Life: Student
Students who commit an act of academic dishonesty may receive a zero on the assignment or in the course.

**Special Accommodations:**
Students with disabilities should contact the Professor to discuss any accommodations needed to fulfill the course requirements and achieve learning objectives. In order to receive reasonable accommodations from the Professor, students must have certified eligibility through the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) located at 120 Bessey Hall (tel: 353-9642; TTY: 355-1293; Email: rcpd@msu.edu; web: http://www.rcpd.msu.edu).

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NOTE: The course outline is subject to change depending on the needs of students and direction of the course.

**Week 1 – August 25: History and Foundations of CRT**

**Required Readings:** *(Required in preparation for first class)*


**Recommended Readings:**


**Week 2 – September 1: CRT in a “Colorblind” Society**

NO CLASS MEETING THIS DAY – LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

**Required Readings:**


Week 3 – September 8: History and Foundations of CRT in Education

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:

Week 4 – September 15: CRT and Educational Policies

Required Readings:


**Recommended Readings:**


**Week 5 – September 22nd: The Branches of Critical Race Theory: LatCrit, AsianCrit, and TribalCrit**

**Guest Videoconference Lecture**

Dr. Sandy Grande, Associate Professor, Connecticut College
http://www.conncoll.edu/academics/web_profiles/grande.html

**Recommended Readings:**


**Delgado & Stefancic**, pp. 81-86.


**Recommended Readings:**


Week 6 – September 29th: The Branches of Critical Race Theory: Critical Race Feminism and Queer-Crit

Required Readings:
Delgado & Stefancic, Chapter 4

Recommended Readings:

Week 7 – October 6th: CRT and Critical Pedagogy
Required Readings:

**Delgado & Stefancic, pp. 67-80.**

Recommended Readings:

Week 9 – October 20th: Critical Race Epistemology and Methodology
**Delgado & Stefancic, Chapter 3**


**Recommended Readings:**

**Week 10 – October 27th: CRT and Students of Color: Examining K-12 Education**

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<th>Guest Videoconference Lecture:</th>
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<td>Dr. Marvin Lynn, Associate Professor &amp; Director of Elementary Education, University of Illinois at Chicago</td>
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**Required Readings:**

**Week 11 – November 3rd: CRT and Students of Color: Examining Higher Education**

**Required Readings:**
Lewis, A. E., Chesler, M., & Forman, T. A. (2000). The impact of “colorblind” ideologies on


**Recommended Readings:**


**Week 12 – November 10th: Using CRT to Examine Aspects of Teacher Education**


Week 13 – November 17th: CRT and Faculty of Color

Guest Videoconference Lecture:
Dr. Louie Rodriguez, Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Florida International University
http://www.fiu.edu/~rodriglo/
Dr. Frank Tuitt, Program Director and Assistant Professor, Higher Education Program, University of Denver
http://www.du.edu/education/faculty/faculty.html#t

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:

Week 14 – November 24th: Critiques of CRT

Required Readings:
Delgado & Stefancic, Chapter 6


**Recommended Readings:**

**Week 15 – December 1st: CRT Future Directions**

**Delgado & Stefancic**, Chapter 8


**FINAL EXAM SESSION: RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS**