

RACE, LAW & MEDIA

AADS/COM
44720V/44720Z
SYLLABUS



ANSWERS TO IMPORTANT QUESTIONS!

WHO'S THE PROFESSOR?

Anjali Vats, JD, PhD

WHEN AND WHERE DOES THE CLASS MEET?

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30am - 11:45am, St. Mary's Hall
South Fourth Floor Conference Room

WHAT IS THIS SYLLABUS EVEN?!

Pedagogy scholars argue that the contract model of syllabuses is increasingly outdated (when was the last time you read your Instagram terms of service?!?). This is a way of making the material in the class accessible and interesting! Plus, it keeps your professor from having to tell you to read the syllabus.

WHAT WILL I LEARN IN THIS CLASS?

This is a course about the intersections of race, law, and media. Proceeding from the premise that law is, as James Boyd White states, much more than "a system of rules," we will examine law as a cultural object that is interconnected with questions of identity and technology. In the first part of the course, we will focus on theoretical approaches to race, law, and media. In the second part of the course, we will examine legal case studies in relation to a variety of related media content.

HALP! HOW DO I GET TO OFFICE HOURS?

Sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycyqodvw>

Come to St. Mary's South S455 at your appointment time!
Please make sure you show up at your scheduled time or cancel.

CAN'T I JUST EMAIL YOU?!

Yes and no. I will do my best to respond to short, easy questions not addressed on the syllabus within 48 hours, not including weekends/holidays. For all other questions, face-to-face contact is ideal. You can email me at vats@bc.edu.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO READ/WATCH?

A lot of academic articles and long form journal articles posted on Canvas! Also, some books, TV shows, podcasts, and movies.

WHAT WILL I BE GRADED ON THIS SEMESTER?

Pop Quizzes – 4 @ 50 points	200 points
Theory Paper – 1 @ 100 points	100 points
Final Paper – 1 @ 200 points	200 points
TOTAL	500 points

CAN YOU SAY MORE ABOUT ALL THAT?

I can and will as the semester goes on!

WHAT ABOUT LATE ASSIGNMENTS? AND FILE FORMATS?

Late assignments will lose 10 points per day. I will accept them for 7 days. All assignments must .doc, .docx, or .pdf format. There are no makeups for pop quizzes.

OKAY, WHAT IF I HAVE TO MISS CLASS?

Cool. But Department of COM policy requires me to count *all* absences toward your total, whether excused or not. That means you don't need to tell me if you're not going to be in class. But if you miss two weeks of classes, I have to reduce your grade by one letter and if you miss three weeks of classes, I have to give you an F.

BUT I HAVE THIS SPECIAL EXCUSED THING!

There are no exceptions, truly. It's out of my hands. Asking again won't change the answer to the question.

SIGH, WELL, HOW CAN I GET THE NOTES I MISSED?

From a classmate! I will answer lingering questions only.

WHAT ABOUT MAKEUP WORK?

I don't allow makeup work, except in the case of emergencies and excused absences. If you have a foreseeable issue, please get in touch in advance to make arrangements for a makeup.

CAN I USE MY COMPUTER, PHONE, IPAD, GRAPHING CALCULATOR...?

I run a no technology classroom. For our time together, I would like you to be 100% present and engaged. For most humans, technology makes that very difficult in my experience.

WHAT'S THE GRADE SCALE?

Grading will be done on a total points scale, calculated into a percentage, and translated as follows:

A	4.0	94- 100%
A-	3.66	90- 93%
B+	3.33	87- 89%
B	3.0	84- 86%
B-	2.66	80- 83%
C+	2.33	77- 79%
C	2.0	74- 76%
C-	1.66	70- 73%
D+	1.33	67- 69%
D	1.0	64- 66%
D-	.66	60- 63%
F	0	59% or below

WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH MY GRADE?

I'm happy to discuss your grade concern! However, if you want to discuss or challenge your grade you must: (1) wait 24 hours after receiving your score, (2) email me a paragraph summary of your concerns, making reference to the assignment, and (3) make an appointment to meet with me. I'll entertain grade disputes for one week after papers are returned. And please know that grades can go up or down if I regrade your paper!

WHAT IF I NEED A DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION?

I'll do everything I can to support you! You can start the process by contacting Kathy Duggan, (617) 552-8093, at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities, or Paulette Durrett, (617) 552-3470, in the Disability Services Office regarding all other types of disabilities.

HOW ARE WE GOING TO TALK ABOUT RACE?

Talking about race is tough! And often triggering. We're going to try to create a safe classroom space in which everyone is comfortable speaking. This is no small task. It requires respect, vulnerability, thoughtfulness, and self-awareness. Perhaps most importantly, it requires acting instead of reacting, by understanding how our trauma gets in the way of hearing each other. We won't be perfect, that's not the goal. But we'll try to create a space without harassing or discriminatory language, with a supportive environment in which we can support one another even when we make mistakes.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO CREATE A "SAFE SPACE?"

"Safe space" is a term that gets used a bunch. In short, we're trying to minimize additional trauma to each other in our conversations. That also means that we need to be present and engaged with each other. Texting, sleeping, and other distracting behaviors are generally inconsistent with creating a safe space or an engaged and supportive space.

ONE MORE THING, ACADEMIC INTEGRITY!

I'll abide by BC's academic integrity policy. You signed this when you arrived and I've attached it here.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT ALL THIS?

My door is always open and I'm 100% happy to talk with you about any of the issues outlined here!



GREEN ARROW & DAREDEVIL



DONALD TRUMP ON CHINA



CENTRAL PARK FIVE AT THE ACLU



LONGHERA IN LA

COURSE SCHEDULE

- 8.27 COURSE INTRODUCTION**
Syllabus and Introduction
Reading in the Age of the Internet
- 8.29 NARRATING RACE, LAW & MEDIA**
Derrick Bell, "The Space Traders," in *Faces at the Bottom of the Well*
- 9.3 INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL RACE THEORY**
Kimberle Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, and Kendall Thomas, "Introduction" in *Critical Race Theory*
- 9.5 NO CLASS – PITT TALK**
Douglas Kellner, "Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism, and Media Culture"
- 9.10 CRITICAL RACE THEORY METHODS**
Imani Perry, "Cultural Studies, Critical Race Theory, and Some Reflections on Method"
Ian Haney Lopez, "The Legal Construction of Race," in *White By Law*
- 9.12 WHERE LAW MEETS MEDIA**
Austin Sarat, "What Popular Culture Does For, and To, Law," in *Imagining Legality: Where Law Meets Popular Culture*
Michael Lacy and Kent Ono, "Introduction" in *Critical Rhetorics of Race*
- 9.17 WRITING WORKSHOP No. 1: TOPICS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**
- 9.19 INTERSECTIONALITY IN LAW**
Devon Carbado, "Colorblind Intersectionality"
- 9.24 WRITING WORKSHOP No. 2: RESEARCH**
- 9.26 ANTI-SEMITISM, ANTI-BLACKNESS & CLASS CRITIQUE**
Parade: The Musical [In Class]
- 10.1 ANTI-SEMITISM, ANTI-BLACKNESS & CLASS CRITIQUE**
Pao-hsiang Wang, "Staging Poetic Justice: Public Spectacles of Private Grief in the Musical *Parade*"
- 10.3 WRITING WORKSHOP No. 3: THEORY PAPERS**
- 10.8 VIGILANTES AND VILLAINS**
Daredevil [In Class]
- 10.10 VIGILANTES AND VILLAINS**
Tyler Scully and Kenneth Moorman, "The Rise of Vigilantism in 1980s Comics: Reasons and Outcomes"
Jennifer Latson, "Two Shootings, 30 Years Apart, Linked by Fear," <http://time.com/3640967/bernhard-goetz-history/>
- 10.15 NO CLASS – FALL BREAK**
- 10.17 FEARING URBAN BLACKNESS**
Central Park Five [In Class]
- 10.22 FEARING URBAN BLACKNESS**
Greg Stratton, "Transforming the Central Park Jogger in the Central Park Five: Shifting Narratives of Innocence and Changing Media Discourse in the Attack on the Central Park Jogger, 1989-2014"

- 10.24 INDIAN COUNTRY AND NUCLEAR POLITICS**
Dr. Strangelove: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Start Loving the Bomb [In Class]
- 10.29 INDIAN COUNTRY AND NUCLEAR POLITICS**
Richard Maguire, "The Nuclear Weapon and Genocide"
Danielle Endres, "The Rhetoric of Nuclear Colonialism"
- 10.31 FOOD, RACE & LAW**
Theory Paper Due
Eden Osucha, "The Whiteness of Privacy"
Robert Creighton, "Cheeseburgers, Race & Paternalism"
- 11.5 FOOD, RACE & LAW**
Mandatory Paper Conferences
Sarah Fouts, "Re-regulating Loncheras, Food Trucks, and their Clientele"
- 11.7 CRIMINALIZING LATINIDAD**
Breaking Bad [In Class]
- 11.12 CRIMINALIZING LATINIDAD**
Steven Bender, "Greasers and Gangsters: Latinas/os and Crime," in *Greasers and Gringos*
- 11.14 WRITING WORKSHOP No. 4: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**
- 11.19 CURRENT EVENTS: BLACK LIVES MATTER**
Safiya Umoja Noble, "Teaching Trayvon"
Melissa Brown et al., "#SayHerName: A Case Study of Intersectional Media Feminism"
- 11.21 CURRENT EVENTS: CHINESE EXCLUSION**
Anjali Vats, "Producing the (Chinese) Forever Infringer"
- 11.26 WRITING WORKSHOP No. 5 - Q & A**
- 11.28 NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING**
- 12.3 CURRENT EVENTS: HATE SPEECH**
Wesley Yang, "Henry Louis Gates Jr. Brilliantly Anticipated Today's Illiberal Movement to Ban Hate Speech,"
<https://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-news-and-politics/252754/henry-louis-gates-ban-hate-speech>
Haley Sweetland Edwards, "How the First Amendment Became a Tool for Deregulation," <http://time.com/5342749/first-amendment-deregulation/>
- 12.5 REMAKING LAW**
Angela Harris, "Building Theory, Building Community"
- 12.10 STUDY DAY**
- 12.12 FINAL PAPERS DUE!**

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY FROM THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

The College [of Arts and Sciences] expects all students to adhere to the accepted norms of intellectual honesty in their academic work. Any forms of cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty or collusion in another's dishonesty is a fundamental violation of these norms. CHEATING is the use or attempted use of unauthorized aids in any exam or other academic exercise submitted for evaluation. This includes data falsification; the fabrication of data; deceitful alteration of collected data included in a report; copying from another student's work; unauthorized cooperation in doing assignments or during an examination; the use of purchased essays, term papers, or preparatory research for such papers; submission of the same written work in more than one course without prior written approval from the instructor(s) involved; and dishonesty in requests for either extensions or papers or make-up examinations. PLAGIARISM is the deliberate act of taking the words, ideas, data illustrative material, or statements of someone else, without full and proper acknowledgment, and presenting them as one's own. COLLUSION is assisting or attempting to assist another student in an act of academic dishonesty. As part of your scholarly development, you must learn how to work cooperatively in a community of scholars and fruitfully utilize the work of others without violating the norms of intellectual honesty. You have a responsibility to learn the parameters of collaboration and the proper forms for quoting, summarizing and paraphrasing.

Faculty members who detect any form of academic dishonesty have the responsibility to take appropriate action. The faculty member also has the responsibility to report the incident and penalty to the Department Chairperson and the appropriate Class Dean. The report will remain in your student file until you graduate. If the gravity of the offense seems to warrant it or if the faculty member prefers that another academic authority decide the matter, he or she may refer the case to a Dean. In addition, if the student is unwilling to accept the faculty member's decision, he or she may choose to have the matter adjudicated either by an Associate Dean or by an Administrative Board. The section of the College of Arts and Sciences in the Boston College Undergraduate Catalogue has further details about this process. Academic integrity is a very important matter. If you have any questions in any of your courses about what is allowed or not allowed, please discuss the matter immediately with the instructor.