

SYLLBUS FOR LIBA 497/LBST 590

Dr. B. L.Hart 3039 Liberal Arts Center

Voice: 465-1669; Fax: (812) 465-7152

Adm. Asst.: 465-7128;

e-mail: blhart@usi.edu or bhart@risc.usi.edu

URL: <http://www.usi.edu/libarts/english/blhart/profhart.htm>

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores the issues of racism and racial discrimination in America from literary, sociological, and philosophical perspectives. Students will participate in a variety of formats--class discussions, readings, on site visits, and research projects--to consider to what degree (if any) racial conflicts between whites and blacks have been resolved in America. This course meets the University Core Curriculum synthesis requirement, Category D. As a graduate course, students must make at least a C to pass the course.

PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES:

The subject of this course is the following issue: What is the basis for a claim that racism in this country is or is not systemically practiced through most American cultural and social venues? We will begin with a brief discussion of the definitions of race, ethnicity, and discrimination. We will examine the socially constructed categories of ethnic subcultures in America and consider how contemporary racial attitudes and images are reinforced and institutionalized in the American majority culture. We will spend most of our time examining a range of relevant questions and evidence, focusing especially on contemporary white racial attitudes, the ideology of racism as a social force, and the subtlety of racial behavior in everyday life in America. We will conclude with an examination of how Americans of all races attempt to deal with the problems and issues of racism in America. .

ADA STATEMENT:

If you need an accommodation because of a documented disability, you are encouraged to register with the Disability Support Services at the beginning of the semester. If you will require special accommodations for test taking etc., please notify your instructor immediately

TEXTS:

Aguirre, Adalberto, and Jonathan H. Turner. *American Ethnicity: The Dynamics and Consequences of Discrimination*.

Gallagher, Charles A. *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*.

Killens, John. Youngblood. 1954, rpt.; Athens: U. of Georgia Press, 1982.

Selected essays, articles, and handouts on racial profiling, job discrimination, affirmative action, the confederate flag debate, etc.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students are required to present the following papers and projects as part of this course:

1. Quizzes (four on the novel, Youngblood) scheduled and unscheduled as reading checks. These scores will be added to classwork credits for a total score and single grade.
2. Panel presentation: From the list of outside reading texts, students will form a group of three to four students to select a topic which they will present as a panel to the class. If the graduate student(s) does not choose to do a display, then one student panel will have an option of constructing a display or website as an alternative to a panel presentation.

Each student is responsible for participating on a panel which will present and discuss one of the topics listed in our textbook.. Panels will consist of three to four students. If a panel has less than three members signed up, those members may be reassigned to a larger group and a different book.

Panelists will prepare a two to three page paper in response to one of the above questions and turn it in for grading at the end of the panel. Students may read their papers as their presentation, or they may use notes to present their papers. Each student will receive a separate grade based on the paper, the presentation, and his or her response to audience questions and remarks.
3. Literary essay: Each student will write an essay on a topic related to the assigned novel (Youngblood by John O. Killens).
4. Site reports: Each student will make a local visit, either to a community site, such as a predominantly black church or a community center; or to a civic event such as a Human Relations Commission or City Council meeting. The student will write a short report on each of the visits.
5. Response essays: students are required to submit six short response essays based on questions listed at the class web site.
6. Final examination: Each student must write an exit essay on a topic selected by the instructors of the course for the final exam.

Active and informed student participation in class discussion is critical to learning in this course. Each student will be expected to come to class prepared -- having done the assigned readings -- to contribute to the discussion in a thoughtful and respectful manner.

GRADUATE STUDENTS (LBST 590)

Graduate students (LBST 590.001) will have the same reading and writing assignments and due dates as the undergraduate students. In addition to the requirements outlined for undergraduate students, graduate students will do the following for the course:

- Literary essay: Each student will write an essay on a topic related to the assigned novel (Youngblood by John O. Killens). Graduate students will write a researched literary essay, using at least three scholarly secondary sources. The length of the paper shall be

from 6 - 8 pages. A week before the paper is due, graduate students must turn in a five-item annotated bibliography for their paper.

- Site reports: Each student will make two local visits, one to a community site, such as a predominantly black church or a community center; the other to a civic event such as a Human Relations Commission or City Council meeting. The student will write a short report on each of the visits. In addition to visiting the site and writing a report, the graduate student will conduct a brief interview (at least thirty-minutes) with someone in authority at the site. The topic of the interview should relate to the issues relevant to this course and those related to activities or concerns perceived at the site.
- Research project: Each student will write a research paper on an approved topic relevant to the course. Graduate students must write a paper of six to ten pages.
- Final examination: Each student must write an exit essay on a topic selected by the instructors of the course for the final exam.

GRADING:

- Literary analysis essay of John O. Killens' *Youngblood* – one letter grade
- Presentation for discussion panel (to be accompanied with a 3-page documented paper) -- one letter grade
- Final Examination -- in class written essay response--one letter grade
- Site Visit -- either a social or civic event --40 points
Six weekly responses -- 60 points -- total = 100 pts and one letter grade
- Preparation, participation, and discussion -- 15 points; Quizzes on *Youngblood* -- 50 points; Written classwork; reading comprehension quizzes, attendance, 10 pts. – one letter grade determined by percentage of total points earned

ATTENDANCE:

Students are expected to attend class regularly. One week of absences (3 for MWF, 2 for TTR) is allowed for necessary, personal absences. After the allowable absences, the student's final grade is reduced by one-third of a letter value (e.g., an A+ would become an A; a B- would become a C+). Student athletes and others representing the university may be excused from attendance during the university activity but must make arrangements prior to their absence for submitting work on time.

MAKE-UP WORK:

- Major papers may be turned in late (up to one week from the due date). Late papers will receive a grade reduction of one full letter (e.g., an A+ becomes a B+). After one week, the paper's grade is F. Students with valid excuses may make up major papers and will not be penalized by grade, though they have up to one week to submit late work. Class work and homework cannot be made up.

- Papers received after class begins (5 minutes), in the instructor's mailbox, or slipped under the door will be considered late.
- Assignments may be e-mailed in an emergency to verify that the assignment was completed on time. However, the student must provide a hard copy of the paper for grading. This option is available only with the instructor's prior permission.
- Students are responsible for maintaining a balance on their student accounts which will allow for printing hard copies of papers. The instructor's office computer is not a back-up for students whose papers are not printed out on time. A paper on disk, unprinted, is considered late.

All students are encouraged to inquire about their progress and performance in this course. Any student may do so during regular office hours without appointment. Other times, by appointment, are also available for conference.

ACADEMIC HABITS:

- I expect you to arrive on time. Chronic tardiness disrespects your classmates and professor, not to mention interrupts instruction as you bustle to get settled in your seat.
- I expect you to come to class prepared with appropriate materials, including the textbook, completed assignments, paper and pencil for taking notes. I do not condone students sharing texts for in-class reading assignments.
- I assume that you are in the class to learn; therefore I expect that you will demonstrate intellectual curiosity, interest, and engagement in the subject of this course. I further assume that your interest in learning will lead you to explore the subject beyond what is assigned or lectured on in class.
- I expect all students to participate in class discussions. I expect that all students will respect the ideas and opinions of others and be courteous listeners and respondents. Some sensitive topics may be covered in this class. I ask that students not intentionally insult those who may express views different from their own.
- I expect that all students will be academically honest in preparing assignments, reports, and essays. Plagiarism may result in an F in the course or, in serious cases, expulsion from the university.

READINGS FOR LIBA 497/LBST 597: RACISM IN AMERICA

Aguirre, Adalberto, and Jonathan H. Turner. *American Ethnicity: The Dynamics and Consequences of Discrimination*.

Gallagher, Charles A. *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*.

Chapter readings are from the Aguirre text; essays from the Gallagher text, and Killens' Youngblood is indicated.