“For Europe, for ourselves and for humanity, comrades, we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new [hu]man.”

Franz Fanon

COURSE OVERVIEW

Reflecting the individualistic roots of mainstream psychological science, prevailing approaches within psychological theory and research locate the roots of oppression in individual hearts and minds (e.g. prejudiced feelings, stereotype-prone thoughts, discriminatory actions of biased individuals). As a result, most approaches focus their liberatory efforts on changing individual hearts and minds (e.g. interventions for prejudice-reduction, emotion-management, and skills training). In this course, we will take a radically different perspective. Rather than reducing the roots of oppression to individual-level phenomena, we will consider the extent to which individual experience exists in a dynamic relationship with oppressive structures of the everyday worlds that people inhabit. Accordingly, we will direct our attention to liberatory approaches that go beyond individual fulfillment or adjustment and advocate transformation of social reality.

Besides examining psychological experience in the context of sociocultural affordances for various, interlocking forms of oppression, another equally (if not more) important goal of this course is to examine how mainstream work in psychological science itself contributes to ongoing systems of oppression. As revolutionary scholar and psychologist Franz Fanon (1963) noted, prevailing understandings in mainstream psychology tend to reflect and promote interests of domination. In the last lines of his last book, The Wretched of the Earth, Fanon called on scholars to decolonize mainstream intellectual production and articulate alternative concepts that are more conducive to broad human liberation. Yet psychologists have largely ignored his challenge. The bulk of work in mainstream psychology still reflects and promotes the interests of a privileged minority of people in Western, Educated, Industrial, Rich, Democratic (a.k.a. WEIRD; Henrich, Norenzayan, & Heine, 2010) settings and undermines experiences of the vast majority of global humanity. In this course, we will examine various critical perspectives (within and outside the discipline) to consider possibilities for liberating psychology (Martín-Baró, 1994) so that it may more adequately respond to interests of broad human liberation.

COURSE STRUCTURE

The format of the course is a seminar. I will typically have a brief presentation or lecture to ground discussion at the beginning of the session. However, we will use most of the class session for discussion of weekly reading assignments. Given this format, the success of the course depends on input from course participants. This input comes in 4 forms that will constitute one major basis for grades (50%).
**Discussion of Reading Assignments:** In most cases, I have scheduled 4 reading selections for each week. My expectation is that seminar participants will read all selections and come prepared to discuss.

**Reviews.** Although it is the responsibility of all participants to read each paper and prepare for discussion, one course participant will bear primary responsibility for critique and analysis of each paper. Designated reviewers of each paper will prepare a one-page (single spaced) commentary that they submit electronically to the course website by 6:00 PM Sunday evening before the selection appears on the syllabus. Other participants should access these reviews and read them before coming to class. The rationale for reviews procedure is not only to give participants practice at reviewing papers, but also to stimulate class discussion. Toward this end, reviewers for each paper will bear primary responsibility for starting the discussion of each paper. As we consider each assigned paper, we will turn to the reviewer responsible for that paper to begin the discussion with an appropriate question or comment.

**Review Reactions.** Enrollment in the seminar is such that, in any given week, half of the participants will have a review assignment. The other participants are not "free"; instead, their assignment is to react, in writing, to any of the reviews for the week. These review reactions are due 5:00 PM Tuesday before class.

**Participant Selections.** The final mechanism for participant input concerns the reading assignments themselves. I have reserved two weeks of the course syllabus for "participant selections". Each course participant will choose a paper for addition to the course syllabus. Participants can choose something from the "further reading" sections of the reading list, or they can nominate something that arises from their own search of relevant literature. In either case, this feature provides an opportunity for participants to steer the course in the direction of their individual interests. To the extent that there is an evaluative component to these selections, it will be on the quality of the selection and the presenter's discussion of it.

**Term Paper.** In lieu of a final exam, the major graded assignment for the course (constituting 50% of the course grade) is a term paper. This assignment provides another way for you to engage the themes of the course in the context of a topic that you find interesting. Ideally, you should write a paper that you will use later, either as a stand-alone submission or to provide sections that you appropriate for other papers.

The length of this paper should be 15-20 double-spaced pages. It is due to me (preferably as an email attachment) by 5pm on **Friday, December 10.** You will get more details on the structure and format of the paper later in the course. For now I want to emphasize that this exercise is a **TERM** paper—that is, something you do throughout the semester. You should plan to come see me early in course so that we can talk about a topic and start tracking down relevant material. Ideally, you can choose as your "participant selection" (see above) a paper that figures prominently in your own term paper. This way, your final paper will benefit from the thoughts of fellow course participants.
ASSESSMENT
Term paper 50%
Participation 50%

PLEASE NOTE: Any student in this course who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of abilities should contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations.

READING LIST
Each week of the reading list has two sections. The first section lists required selections. The second section ("Further Reading") lists optional selections that course participants can read if interested. Most journal articles are available electronically from UWG libraries through their collection of e-journals. Books chapters and the few journal articles that are not electronically available will be available through the course website. Please note that this list is tentative. I reserve the option to change selections in consultation with seminar participants to respond to emerging influences.

Sept 1: A Science of Humanity?
Required Readings:

Further Reading:


**Sept 8: Dreaming the American Dream**

**Required Readings:**


**Further Reading:**


Sept 15: Everyday Worlds of Oppression
Required Readings:

Further Reading:

Sept 22: Silence, Denial, and Invisibility
Required Readings:


Further Reading:


**Sept 29: Intersectional Approaches**

**Required Readings:**


Further Readings:

Oct 6: Coloniality of Being and Knowing
Required Readings:

Further Reading:


**Oct 13: Epistemic Interventions to Liberate Psychology**

**Required Readings:**


**Further Readings:**


**Oct 20: Decolonizing Theory, Research, Practice**

**Required Readings:**

**Further Reading:**
Oct 27: Decolonizing Methodologies
Required Readings:

Further Reading:
Solorzano, D. G. & Yosso, T. J. (20, Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for educational research. Qualitative Inquiry, 8, 23-44.

Nov 3: No class

Nov 10: Transformative Praxis-I
Required Readings:

**Further Reading:**

**Nov 17: Transformative Praxis- II**

**Required Readings:**
Further Reading:

**Nov 24: No class (Thanksgiving Break)**

**Dec 1: Student Selected Readings**

**Dec 8: Student Selected Readings**