

## **FOLK STUDIES 280: CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE UNITED STATES SPRING SEMESTER 2022**

Instructor: Timothy H. Evans

Office: FAC 245

Office Hours: Prof. Evans will hold office hours via Zoom, Tuesday 9-11. The zoom link will be announced each Monday, via email and posted as an announcement on blackboard. Meetings can also be scheduled by appointment. Please email or text Prof. Evans to set up an appointment.

E-mail: [tim.evans@wku.edu](mailto:tim.evans@wku.edu)

Phone: 745-5295 (to leave a message with the Folk Studies & Anthropology Department)

Mailbox for papers, messages, etc.: FAC 237 (Folk Studies & Anthropology Department)

Teaching Assistant: Ariana Pedigo

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Office Hours: by appointment

**This will be a non-synchronous online class. It will consist of readings, Power Points, films that you will need to stream, and discussion forums. Students will need internet access to access readings, use Blackboard and FlipGrid, and stream films.**

*Cultural Diversity in the United States* shows students how to interpret and understand the multicultural nature of American society in a globalized world, with an emphasis on varieties of cultural expression, custom, and worldview as practiced by cultural groups of many different kinds. This course fulfills the requirements for a Connections course (Social/Cultural) under the Colonnade plan. It will help students to meet this Colonnade education goal: *an appreciation of the complexity and variety in the world's cultures*, as well as the following Connections goals: *Analyze the development of self in relation to others in society, examine diverse values that form civically engaged and informed members of society, evaluate solutions to real-world social and cultural problems.*

FLK 280 also counts as an elective for the Folk Studies minor.

### **Course objectives support Colonnade goals in the following ways:**

\* *Cultural Diversity in the United States* will prepare students to understand basic concepts such as culture, ethnicity, cultural diversity, and methods of ethnographic research.

\* Students will learn to recognize the contributions to American culture and society of a variety of social or cultural groups and the ways in which these groups are related and interdependent. These may include “racial” groups, immigrant/refugee or ethnic groups from many parts of the world, as well as groups defined by religion, social class, gender, occupation, disability, age, region, subculture, sexual orientation or other factors.

\* Students will also learn to identify ways in which one culture or group may be favored over another, including racism, ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, sexism,

colonialism and various forms of privilege. Students will learn to recognize that members of all cultures tend to take much of their own culture for granted, and that there is a need to examine one's own culture critically before one can understand other cultures.

\*Students will explore critically how we respond to cultural differences in our lives, examine our own cultural biases and assumptions, and practice cross-cultural communication skills.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, cultural diversity in the United States is increasing rapidly in a variety of ways, as are the opportunities for Americans to interact with people from diverse countries and cultures. Dealing with diversity in a positive and flexible way is a crucial skill in the modern world.

**Disclaimer:** Be warned that this class will sometimes deal with controversial and/or trauma-inducing issues. You are encouraged to express thoughtful opinions, but also to listen respectfully to others, and to seriously consider points of view that differ from your own. Be nice to each other! The class may occasionally make use of materials that may be disturbing, offensive or inflammatory in content (e.g., racist, sexist, homophobic). The intention is not to promote such attitudes but to deal in a critical way with the realities of American (and world) cultures.

I reserve the right to make changes in the class schedule as needed, but I will not add major writing assignments or exams. I may add occasional short readings or handouts. I will not change exam dates (except in an emergency), and in the event that I change due dates on readings or assignments, I will make them due later, not earlier.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS (450 points total)**

1. **General class participation** (100 points). This is based on participation in Blackboard discussion forums (and the Introductions on FlipGrid). Online discussions will be graded by both the frequency and the substance of participation. **You do not need to post in every thread** – quality is more important than quantity – but do participate on a regular basis. To participate, you will need to keep up with the readings, films, assignments and other materials. There will be no deadlines on Blackboard discussion forums; they will remain open once they are posted.

2. **Paper #1** (50 points). Describe some aspect of your own culture as though it were exotic and alien, or shocking. This will be a typed, double-spaced paper, about 3-5 pages, submitted on Black Board. It will be explained in more detail in a prompt. The due date is Wednesday, 2/2 (by midnight).

3. **Paper #2** (50 points). Reflection on Octavia Butler's novel *Kindred*. This will be a typed, double-spaced paper, about 3-5 pages, submitted on Black Board. It will be explained in more detail in a prompt. The due date is Friday, 3/11 (by midnight).

4. **Paper #3** (50 points). Paper on your own cultural traditions. You will write about one of the following (your choice): foodways, body decorations (dress/hair/tattoos etc) or a COVID-related

tradition. This will be a typed, double-spaced paper, about 3-5 pages, submitted on Black Board. It will be explained in more detail in a prompt. The due date is Thursday, 4/7.

**5. Exams: A midterm and a non-cumulative final** (200 points, 100 points each). Exams will be essay and short answer. They will be take home, open book exams, submitted on Blackboard. You will have five days to complete each one.

**FOR POSTING AND CREATING VIDEOS, WE WILL USE THE APP FLIPGRID. Here is an instructional video (intended for elementary students):**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tfoCgQuqcw&t=23s>. The app can be found at <https://info.flipgrid.com/>. To make your introductory video, you will need a FlipGrid Code; see the assignment prompt.

## **STAYING HEALTHY DURING COVID: WKU GUIDELINES**

All students are strongly encouraged to [get the COVID-19 vaccine](#). Out of respect for the health and safety of the WKU community and in adherence with CDC guidelines and practices of all public universities and colleges in Kentucky, the University requires that a cloth face covering (reusable or disposable) that covers both the nose and mouth must be worn at all times when in public areas within all buildings. Students must properly wear face coverings while in class regardless of the room size or the nature of the classroom activities. Students who fail to wear a face covering as required will be in violation of the WKU Student Code of Conduct and will be asked to comply or will face disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the University. Accommodations can be requested in special cases through the Student Accessibility and Resource Center ([SARC](#)): [270-745-5004](#) (voice), [270-745-3030](#) (TTY), or [270-288-0597](#) (video).

All students must immediately report a positive Covid-19 test result or close contact with a person who has tested positive to the Covid-19 Assistance Line at 270-745-2019. The assistance line is available to answer questions regarding any Covid-19 related issue. This guidance is subject to change based on requirements set forth by public health agencies or the office of the governor. Please refer to the Healthy on the Hill website for the most current information. [www.wku.edu/healthyonthehill](http://www.wku.edu/healthyonthehill)

## **POLICIES ON LATE PAPERS**

Unexcused late papers will be marked down **two points** per day. If you have a good reason for getting it in late, please let Prof. Evans know. Papers will be accepted early for comment, if they are turned in at least one week before the due date.

## **SYLLABUS CHANGES**

I reserve the right to make changes in the class schedule as needed, but I will not add major writing assignments or exams. I may add occasional short readings or handouts, or short homework assignments that will be used in class discussions. I will not change exam dates

except in emergencies, and in the event that I change due dates on readings or papers, I will make them due later, not earlier.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Since this class is online, attendance will not be taken, but you need to keep up with readings and other materials, turn in assignments when they are due, and participate in discussion forums in a timely manner. **If you find yourself unable to keep up with class, please communicate about this with Dr. Evans or Ariana.**

## **DISABILITY POLICY**

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, 1074. SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at [sarc.connect@wku.edu](mailto:sarc.connect@wku.edu). Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center. Please email your FNL to [tim.evans@wku.edu](mailto:tim.evans@wku.edu).

## **TITLE IX/DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy and Discrimination and Harassment Policy, <https://www.wku.edu/studentconduct/titlenine.php>. Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. **If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, 270-745-5429 or 270-745-5121.** Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and **MUST** report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to **afford you confidentiality**, you may contact WKU's **Counseling and Testing Center** at 270-745-3159.

## **PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Any direct quotation (or close paraphrase) of somebody else's work without acknowledging that you are quoting and crediting your source is plagiarism. This will result on a zero on your assignment with no possibility of a makeup. If you are caught twice, you will get a zero in the class. Here is a website on plagiarism from the WKU English department: <http://people.wku.edu/jan.garrett/dptengpl.htm>. Here is WKU's statement on academic dishonesty: <https://www.wku.edu/studentconduct/process-for-academic-dishonesty.php>.

**Plagiarism applies to quotes from your professor (e.g., Power Points), or from other students in the class (e.g., discussion boards). You are welcome to quote from these, but you need to credit your sources.**

## **OTHER POLICIES**

- **Pay attention to the syllabus! You are responsible for doing readings and assignments on time.**
- **Please check your WKU emails and the class blackboard site on a regular basis.**
- **Please tell Prof. Evans if you are having any issues that impede your class performance – internet access, physical or mental health, family emergencies, etc. Any such information will be confidential.**

## **WKU COUNSELING CENTER**

Potter Hall, Room 409

Phone 270-745-3159

<https://www.wku.edu/heretohelp/>

Hours of Operation:

- The Counseling Center is open from Monday – Friday from 8:00am-4:30pm.
- For emergency and after hours information, call 270-745-3159.

The best way to schedule an appointment is to call the office at (270) 745-3159 or stop by Potter Hall 409 and we can work to coordinate schedules and get you an appointment ASAP.

The Counseling Center is open throughout the calendar year and closed during holidays and other specified dates found in the WKU Academic Calendar.

## **FOLKLORE MINOR**

Students at WKU have the opportunity to take a variety of folklore classes and may also minor in folklore. A **folklore minor** is fun, challenging, and includes many fascinating topics related to contemporary American life. It will help you develop valuable critical and problem solving skills for use in the complex social, occupational and political environments in which we work and live. These skills will make you a better candidate for employment, for admission into graduate programs in many fields, and for advancement in just about any career path. Courses include Introduction to Folklore, Urban Folklore, Folklore and the Media, African-American Folklife, Roots of Southern Culture, Folklore and Literature, Folklore and the Supernatural, and many more offerings. For more information, visit

<https://www.wku.edu/fsa/folkstudies/minor.php>.

## **READINGS**

**BOOKS TO PURCHASE.** There is just one book to buy. It can be purchased in the campus bookstore, online or anywhere else you can find it. Please purchase the Beacon Press edition:

Octavia E. Butler, *Kindred*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2003. (1<sup>st</sup> published 1979) **Trigger Warning:** Butler's novel deals with slavery and racism.

**BLACKBOARD READINGS:** Most of the class readings are accessible on blackboard, or elsewhere on the internet. If anyone has trouble accessing readings, please talk to Professor Evans or Ariana Pedigo. On the schedule, selections posted on blackboard are designated with BB.

## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

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| Unit 1: 1/18-1/25.<br>INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASS                      | <u>Read:</u> Horace Miner, "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema," <u>BB</u> .  | Video introductions are due by 1/25               |
| Unit 2: 1/26-2/1.<br>CULTURE AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY : BASIC CONCEPTS | <u>Read:</u> Power Points<br>"Culture,"<br><a href="https://www.tamu.edu/faculty/choudhury/culture.html">https://www.tamu.edu/faculty/choudhury/culture.html</a> (browse this page, especially the definitions at the top)<br>Shirley Jackson, "The Lottery," <u>BB</u> . |   |
| 2/2. PAPER #1 DUE  | Prompt posted on Blackboard.  | Due on Blackboard on Wednesday, 2/2, by midnight. |
| Unit 3: 2/2-2/8.<br>WORLDVIEW  | <u>Read:</u> Power Point<br>Barre Toelken, "Folklore and Cultural Worldview," <u>BB</u> .   |   |
| Unit 4: 2/9-2/15.<br>RACE  | <u>Watch:</u> <i>Race: the Power of an Illusion</i> (three episodes)<br><u>Read:</u> Power Points   |   |
| Unit 5: 2/16-2/22.<br>PRIVILEGE AND OPPRESSION                       | <u>Read:</u> Power Points<br>Lustig and Koester, "Cultural Biases and Intercultural Communication," <u>BB</u> .<br>Allan G. Johnson, "The Social Construction of Difference," <u>BB</u> .   |   |

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| Unit 6: 2/23-3/1.<br>KINDRED                 | <u>Read:</u> Power Point<br>Butler, <i>Kindred</i>  |   |
| Unit 7: 3/2-3/8.<br>IMMI-GRANTS AND REFUGEES | <u>Watch:</u> <i>God Grew Tired of Us</i><br><u>Read:</u> Power Points<br>“An Overview of U.S. Refugee Law and Policy,”<br><a href="https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/overview-us-refugee-law-and-policy">https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/overview-us-refugee-law-and-policy</a>  |   |
| 3/11. PAPER #2 DUE.                          | Prompt posted on Blackboard.  | Due on Blackboard, Friday, 3/11, by midnight. |
| 3/12-3/20                                    | SPRING BREAK!   |   |
| Unit 8: 3/21-3/25.<br>ETHNIC IDENTITY        | <u>Read:</u> Elliot Oring, “Ethnic Groups and Ethnic Folklore,” <u>BB</u> .<br><u>Read/Listen/Watch/Survey:</u> <i>A Culture Carried: Bosnians in Bowling Green</i> . <a href="http://kfpbosniaproject.org">kfpbosniaproject.org</a>  |   |
| 3/25-3/30                                    | Midterm Exam  | Posted 3/25, due 3/30 by midnight.            |
| Unit 9: 3/31-4/6. SOCIAL CLASS               | <u>Watch:</u> <i>People Like Us: Social Class in America</i><br><u>Read:</u> Schaeffer, “Six Facts About Income Inequality in the U.S.”, <a href="https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/02/07/6-facts-about-economic-inequality-in-the-u-s/">https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/02/07/6-facts-about-economic-inequality-in-the-u-s/</a><br>Aprill Emig, “After I Graduate...,”<br><a href="https://www.thenation.com/article/after-i-graduate-how-likely-will-it-be-that-i-follow-my-dreams-not-very/">https://www.thenation.com/article/after-i-graduate-how-likely-will-it-be-that-i-follow-my-dreams-not-very/</a><br><i>The Upshot</i> ( <i>New York Times</i> ) on where colleges rank re social class:<br><a href="https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/01/18/upshot/some-colleges-have-more-students-from-the-top-1-percent-than-the-bottom-60.html?_r=1">https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/01/18/upshot/some-colleges-have-more-students-from-the-top-1-percent-than-the-bottom-60.html?_r=1</a> . Browse this, and find WKU. |   |
| 4/7. PAPER #3 DUE                            | Prompt posted on Blackboard.  | Due on Blackboard, Thursday, 4/7 by midnight. |
| Unit 10: 4/7-4/13.                           | Charles Lippy, “Christian Nation or Pluralistic Culture,” <u>BB</u> .   |   |

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| RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY                | Lewis Schlosser, "A Beginning List of Christian Privileges," <u>BB</u> .   |  |
| Unit 11:<br>4/14-4/20.<br>GENDER   | Read: Aaron H. Devor, "Becoming Members of Society...", <u>BB</u> .<br>Robin Dembroff, "Why Be Nonbinary?,"<br><a href="https://aeon.co/essays/nonbinary-identity-is-a-radical-stance-against-gender-segregation">https://aeon.co/essays/nonbinary-identity-is-a-radical-stance-against-gender-segregation</a><br>Mars Exwyzi, "The Loneliness of Being Non-Binary,"<br><a href="https://www.subvrtmag.com/loneliness-being-non-binary-personal-essay/">https://www.subvrtmag.com/loneliness-being-non-binary-personal-essay/</a><br>Gwynn Kirk & Margo Okazawa-Rey, "He Works, She Works...", <u>BB</u> . |  |
| Unit 12:<br>4/21-4/27.<br>SO WHAT? | Read: Ursula K. LeGuin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas," <u>BB</u> .  |  |
| 4/28-5/3                           | Final exam.  | Posted Thursday, 4/28, due Tuesday, 5/3 by midnight. |