

Independent Study: Racialized Community Formation

(Spring 2023, 2 Credits)

This is a draft syllabus and is subject to change

Instructor: Dr. Haskins

Email: alex.haskins@wheaton.edu

Class Time: H, 1:00pm-3:00pm (Location: MSC 213)

Student Hours: MWF 4-5pm, T 12-3pm, H 3-4pm

Department Mission Statement:

The mission of the Department of Politics and International Relations is to equip students with knowledge about politics and government, with methods for analyzing political actors and institutions, and with the ability to apply biblical and theological perspectives to public life.

i. Course Overview and Objectives

An independent study may take many forms. One possible approach is to carry out research on a particular issue or problem; another approach is to examine the general literature in a particular field for which we offer no courses. The content of the independent study will thus depend on the purposes of the study. Whatever approach the independent study takes, it should be kept in mind that the student's efforts should not significantly differ from the time commitments assigned to regular lecture courses. The goal of the independent study is to provide flexibility to learn. This independent study is concerned with research about a particular subject or theme, so the student should provide a written paper, with appropriate bibliographical entries.

Learning Goals

- To **improve** the student's ability to analyze and interpret and engage with texts critically and charitably
- To **gain** a nuanced perspective on the development and practice of Christian beliefs on culture and community.
- To **articulate** a Christian and educated response to the subject researched

ii. Required Texts

Physical copies of these texts should be available in Buswell library. If you have concerns obtaining these texts for whatever reason, please contact me.

- Michael Emerson, *Divided by Faith*
- Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law*
- Willie Jennings, *After Whiteness*

ii. Assignments, Grading, and Policies

Attendance and Participation

15 %

Regular attendance and active participation facilitate the successful fulfillment of the course learning goals. Thus, attendance and participation are mandatory. Absences due to personal emergencies, illness, or other legitimate causes will be excused with advanced notice and proper documentation, where applicable. Good participation reflects quantity and

quality of student comments. Students are expected to come to class with texts readily available, having done the reading and having prepared for respectful and substantive discussion. Laptops are allowed only for course-related activities; other observed activities will result in a grade reduction. I am available for any student (or group of students) wishing to discuss methods for engaging more effectively in class discussion. Students can sign up for student hours with me by clicking on the “Student Hours” link above. Be advised: you must sign up 24 hours in advance for student hours.

Reading Summaries

30 %

Reading summaries serve as a written means for students to demonstrate their ability to assess strengths and weaknesses of an author’s thought or to compare thinkers in the course on a given theme. They are also intended to help students develop their writing and research skills for the longer essay. Annotations will be due as each reading is finished. The student will develop content and deadlines in consultation with the professor. will be sent out the week before it is due. Annotations should be roughly 150-200 words, single-spaced, 12pt font, normal margins and include both a brief summary of the piece and an assessment. See below for the plagiarism policy and the late policy.

- Annotations: 20%
- Weekly One-page Summaries : 10%

Research Essay

55 %

The research essay is intended to give students an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to critically, yet charitably, assess course themes in the service of a concise, yet sustained, argument. The research essay requires students both to (1) assess the merits of a thinker’s (or thinkers’) perspective on a perennial question related to politics and/or international relations and to (2) assess how the view(s) on their chosen topic may or may not align with a biblical view of the topic. This will involve substantial analysis of textual evidence for one’s argument as well as engagement with contending evidence from multiple texts in the course. The research essay should be 3000-4000 words (double-spaced, 12pt font, normal margins) and should answer the prompt. The research essay will be due during week 16. It must be original work from the student; plagiarism is not tolerated under any circumstance and will result in failure on the assignment and possibly failure in the course or further College sanctions. If students are unclear on what constitutes plagiarism, they should consult the Student Handbook and Community Covenant. A one-page prospectus with a thesis paragraph and potential supporting evidence (with citations) will be due earlier in the term during week 8. I will not read drafts of papers, but I am willing to discuss essay ideas. Late assignments will be reduced by one-third a letter grade (e.g. from a B+ to a B) for every day past the due date and will no longer be accepted after three days, without advanced notice and proper documentation, where applicable.

- Prospectus: 10%
- Final Essay: 45%

iv. General Policies and Information

Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as a faculty member. I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on Wheaton College’s campus with the College. Confidential resources available to students include Confidential Advisors, the Counseling Center, Student Health Services, and the Chaplain’s Office. More information on these resources and College Policies is available at www.wheaton.edu/sexualassaultresponse.

COVID-Safe Classrooms

In accordance with the Wheaton College Face Covering Policy, CDC-approved face coverings are required while attending class. Failure to comply with wearing a face covering will result in dismissal from the class session and an unexcused absence. Multiple violations can lead to dismissal from the class. Student Health Services will officially communicate when a student must be absent from class due to quarantine or isolation. Remote learning will not be automatically offered for the spring semester. The student is encouraged to coordinate with the instructor any needed adjustments to tests or deadlines. Learning & Accessibility Services will also provide assistance for students in quarantine if necessary.

Inclusive Language

As per the faculty rules, I expect students to use gender inclusive language for human beings.

Learning and Accessibility Services

Wheaton College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with documented learning differences, physical or mental health conditions that qualify for accommodations under the ADA. Any student needing academic adjustments is requested to contact the Learning and Accessibility Services Office as early in the semester as possible. To contact LAS, please email las@wheaton.edu or call 630.752.5615. If you already have an accommodation letter, I am available to discuss how to implement the accommodation.

Writing Center

Writing Center: The Writing Center is a free resource that equips undergraduate and graduate students across the disciplines to develop effective writing skills and processes. This academic year, the Writing Center is offering [online appointments only](#). Learn more about online consultations for [undergraduates](#) and [graduate students](#), and [make an appointment](#).

v. Tips for Success

In my experience, students who follow these tips tend to do well. I encourage you to heed them.

- *Finish the reading at least 24 hours before it is due.* For example, finish Wednesday's class reading by Tuesday morning. This will require time management, but it allows more time for reflection.
- *Take notes as you read, in the text.* This will allow you to track your reactions to the readings and think (ahead of class) about intriguing or puzzling passages.
- *Come to office hours.* I do not bite. I am invested in you succeeding in this course.
- *Talk with your peers about the readings outside of class.* It helps you process and vocalize your views on the text(s) in preparation for class discussion.
- *Map out the "A-L-E" (Argument-Logic-Evidence) of the text before, during, and after class.* Your reproduction of the "A-L-E" of class texts helps enrich both our class discussion and your written assignments.
- [For any writing assignment] *Outline your argument—section by section, paragraph by paragraph.* If you cannot justify why a section or paragraph should be included in the writing assignment, do not include it.

vi. Reading Schedule

*Assignments listed under each day are **due for that day**. Readings reflect a balance of primary and secondary sources. Students are expected to gain a general view of prominent concepts and arguments, from which they may elect to develop a more focused research topic in the final essay. All readings will be in English.*

[Pages of Reading]

Week One

(1/12): Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law* [Chapters 1-3] [~140]
Givens, *Fugitive Pedagogy* [Introduction, Chapter 2]
Dawson, *Behind the Mule* [Introduction, Chapters 1-2]

Week Two

(1/19): Hunter, *Bound in Wedlock* [Chapter 6] [~136]
Michelle, Alexander, *The New Jim Crow* [Introduction, Chapter 1]
Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law* [Chapters 4-6]

Week Three

(1/26): Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged* [preface, chs. 1, 5] [~40]

Week Four

(2/2): Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, Chs. 1, 2, [~53]

Week Five

(2/9): Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, Chs. 3 & 4 [~61]

Week Six

(2/16): Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, Chs. 8 & Conclusion [~60]

Week Seven

(2/23): Hamilton, *Immigration and the Remaking of Black America* [chs. 5, 7] [~60]

Week Eight

(3/2): Michael Emerson, *Divided by Faith*, introduction, chs. 1-4 [~92]

RESEARCH PROSPECTUS DUE (sheet in email)

Week Nine

(3/9): **NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)**

Week Ten

(3/16): Michael Emerson, *Divided by Faith*, chs. 5-9 [~75]

Week Eleven: NO CLASS

Week Twelve

(3/30) Jennings, [*After Whiteness*](#)

[~150]

Week Thirteen

(4/6) **NO CLASS**

Week Fourteen

(4/13) De La Torre, [*Decolonizing Christianity*](#)

[~106]

Week Fifteen

(4/20) De La Torre, [*Decolonizing Christianity*](#)

[~112]

Week Sixteen

(4/27) RECAP

RESEARCH ESSAY DUE FRIDAY 4/28 (11:59pm)