

**HUM 1020 — Spring 2023**  
**3 Credit Hours**  
**Online Course**

**Instructor: Rachel A. May ([rmay@usf.edu](mailto:rmay@usf.edu))**  
**TA: Vahid Valikhani ([vahidv@usf.edu](mailto:vahidv@usf.edu))**

**Office: Cooper 368**  
**Office Hours will be held regularly on Teams. Details are provided on Canvas**

**Course Description:**

This course will explore human social organization through a range of often overlapping analytical perspectives. In this course, we will examine the fundamental concepts that are imbedded in (1) “modernity”; (2) colonialism and nationalism; (3) race, ethnicity, class and citizenship; and (4.) culture, memory, and history. We will use a variety of humanistic and artistic works (novel, memoir, poetry, film and other visual arts) to explore these ideas.

**Learning Objectives:**

- (1) Students will learn critical thinking.
- (2) Students will learn how to analyze a variety of “texts,” including novel, plays, poetry, memoir, film, and other visual arts.
- (3) Students will understand the ways in which history and social life interact with formal techniques (writing and other forms of creative production) to produce meaning.
- (4) Students will learn to evaluate sources and to write a coherent essay.
- (5) Students will learn to distinguish between primary and secondary sources

**Required Texts:**

Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands/La Frontera* (Literature, Memoir, Creative Nonfiction, Poetry)  
James Baldwin, *If Beale Street Could Talk* (Literature, Novel)  
J.M. Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians* (Literature, Novel)  
Rius, *Marx for Beginners* (Graphic Text)  
Isabel Wilkerson, *Caste: The Origins of our Discontents* (Literature, Nonfiction)

All texts are available in pdf in the modules, although I recommend buying/reading the graphic text by Rius in hard copy.

**Assignments/Grading:**

Evaluating Information Assignment I	10%
Evaluating Information Assignment II	10%
Reading Reflection Assignments (4)	40%
Take Home Final Exam	15%
Participation (Discussion Boards)	15%
Participation (Quizzes and Games)	10%

## **Evaluating Information I**

All students need to choose a topic relating to some kind of current subject/event (something that is currently “in the news”). You should choose a topic that is personally important to you. Examples of current topics you could choose include (but are not limited to): the war in Ukraine, Covid, Covid vaccination, US immigration policy, reproductive rights, trans rights, etc. Then, you must find four distinct sources of information on the same subject/event-- (1) One example of “fake news”; (2) One example of a source that contains some factual inaccuracies; (3) One example of an editorial or “opinion” piece; and (4) one example of secondary analysis. There is some overlap between the last three types of sources. Therefore, your task will be to focus on the relevant information that puts the information in the assigned category that you choose. (Note: “Fake news” is wholly fabricated disinformation, and there should be no overlap between it and the other sources.) You will provide a bibliographic entry for each source, along with a functional link or a copy of the source. You will then write a **brief** description of each source (150-300 words per source) which explains *why* it is in the relevant category. Then include a 1-2 page (no more than 1000 words) analysis of the subject, in which you “present the facts” and where you provide your own subjective analysis. You should explicitly consider why you chose the topic that you did, and what that choice says about your own “positionality” vis-à-vis your topic.

## **Evaluating Information II**

Each student will choose a research topic pertaining to one of the four course themes (modernity; colonialism and/or nationalism; race, ethnicity, social class and/or citizenship; and culture, memory, and history). You will then identify four primary sources, and eight secondary sources (4 academic or scholarly secondary sources, and 4 “popular” secondary sources). You will submit a brief annotated bibliography on all of these sources. The bibliography should explicitly label the three categories above. That is, you should have sections which are marked “Primary Sources,” “Secondary/Scholarly Sources,” and “Secondary/Popular Sources.” Each annotation must be no more than 75 words. More information on how to produce an annotated bibliography is provided in the module and under assignments on Canvas.

## **Reading Reflection Assignments**

You will write three 1-2 pp (500-1000 words) essays, and create one “comic strip” (in response to the graphic text) in which you reflect upon assigned readings. No additional research will be required. All papers will be due on Friday at noon on the week they are due. A prompt for each assignment will be available on Canvas. Paper prompts will open up on Canvas on the weekend before the paper is due. These assignments will fulfill the general education requirement for “critical analysis” and “inquiry and analysis.”

## **Final Exam**

A take-home final exam question will be provided on November 28th. The completed essay (which should be typed and should be well organized and adhere to the norms of English grammar and syntax) should be 3-6 pages (1500-3000 words) and will be due by Wednesday December 7 at **11:59pm**. Grades will be penalized by one-third of a letter grade by the hour after that. This assignment will fulfill the general education requirement for “inquiry and analysis.”

**Participation—Discussion Boards and Quizzes, Games, and Padlets.**

All students are expected to participate in the online modules and discussions, quizzes, Padlets and games. You will be given a grade worth 25% of your final mark for participation. All weekly discussions (as well as Padlets, quizzes and games) will be closed at 11:59 pm on Friday. Normally, for discussion boards, stand-alone comments of at least 50 words, plus responses to other student comments of at least 25 words will be eligible for full credit. Additional responses will count more towards your overall participation grade. Two of the 50 word discussion boards will be dropped from the final grade. There are two required discussion boards that should be a minimum of 150 words. These longer discussion boards cannot be dropped and are clearly indicated in the modules. Comments and engagement with the course over the entire semester will be used to calculate participation grade. Remember that participation involves active engagement, which requires attentive listening (reading) and written (Canvas) contributions to discussions that demonstrate engagement with other students and instructors.

**Late Papers:**

All papers must be turned in by Friday at midnight during the week that they are due. Late papers *will be accepted* until Sunday night at 11:59pm. Late papers will be penalized by one full letter grade.

**Criteria for Grading:**

All written work will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- (1) Knowledge of course materials, and ability to understand and work with concepts and ideas of the course
- (2) Quality of critical analysis
- (3) Creativity and originality
- (4) Clarity of writing and organization of assignment.

While writing ability is not more important than the other evaluation criteria, our ability to evaluate your work accurately depends on your ability to articulate your knowledge and ideas. That is, we cannot credit you for what you “meant” to say if you are unable to express yourself clearly.

**Good things to know:**

\*\* Although I am very strict about late papers, I am not unapproachable. Please talk to me as early as possible if you are having trouble fulfilling the requirements for this class.

\*\*I do not need medical or other personal information unless it constitutes an ongoing problem that interferes with your ability to be successful in this class.

\*\*Please attempt and turn in all assignments. Even the worst paper will merit significantly better than the “0” you will receive for missing assignments.

**Course Outline:**

**UNIT ONE—MODERNITY AND THE ENLIGHTENMENT**

**Week of January 9**

Complete online module: Getting Started

Complete online module: Module # 1 The Enlightenment and “modernity.”

+++++

**Week of January 16th**

Modernity and Modern Art (Visual Art)

Complete online module: Module # 2 -- Modernity and Modern Art—visual arts

+++++

**Week of January 23rd**

Modernity and Complex Identities

Complete online module: Module # 3-- Complex Identities

Watch: *Moonlight* (2016--Jenkins)—feature film (Film)

+++++

**Week of January 30th**

Modernity--Marxism and Positivism

Complete online module: Module # 4—Positivism and Marxism.

Read Rius, *Marx for Beginners*-- graphic text (“comic” book)

**Submit: Reading Reflection I (comic strip) on Rius (by Friday February 3-- midnight)**

+++++

**Week of February 6th**

Evaluating Information I.

The right to a free media and to “truth.”

Complete online module: Module # 5-- Evaluating Information I

**Submit: Evaluating Information Assignment I (by Friday February 10--midnight)**

+++++

**Week of February 13th**

Evaluating Information II.

What are scholarly sources?

Primary vs. Secondary Sources

Complete online module: Module # 6 Evaluating Information II

**Submit: Evaluating Information Assignment II (by Friday February 17--midnight)**

+++++

**UNIT TWO—COLONIALISM AND NATIONALISM**

**Week of February 20th**

Colonialism and Nationalism

Complete online module: Module # 7-- Colonialism and Nationalism

Read: Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians*—literature/ novel

+++++

**Week of February 27th**

Complete online module: Module # 8-- *Burn!* And Coetzee

**Watch: *Burn!* (1969) [Gillo Pontecorvo] -- feature film**

**Submit: Reading Reflection II on novel (Coetzee) and film (Pontecorvo) (by Friday March 3--midnight).**

+++++

Week of March 6<sup>th</sup>

**UNIT THREE—RACE, ETHNICITY, CLASS AND CITIZENSHIP**

Race, Ethnicity and Class

Complete online module: Module # 9-- Race, Ethnicity and Class

Read, parts 1, 2, and 3 (pp. 1-164) of Isabel Wilkerson, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*—literature/  
nonfiction

+++++

Week of March 13<sup>th</sup>

Spring Break

+++++

Week of March 20<sup>th</sup>

Ethnicity and Citizenship

Who is the “other”?

Complete online module: Module # 10-- Ethnicity and Citizenship

Read Anzaldua, *Borderlands/La Frontera*--memoir, creative nonfiction, and poetry

**Submit Reading Reflection III (by Friday March 24<sup>th</sup>-- midnight)**

+++++

Week of March 27<sup>th</sup>

James Baldwin

Complete online module: Module # 11-- James Baldwin

Read Baldwin, *If Beale Street Could Talk*-- novel

Watch *If Beale Street Could Talk* (2018--Jenkins) – feature film

**Submit: Reading Reflection IV on novel and film (by Friday March 31<sup>st</sup>-- midnight)**

+++++

**Week of April 3rd**

Art and Protest—Black Lives Matter

Complete online module: Module # 12-- Art and Activism—visual arts/public art/conceptual art

++++  
**Week of April 10<sup>th</sup>**

**UNIT FOUR—CULTURE, MEMORY AND HISTORY**

Culture, Memory, and History

Complete online module: Module # 13—Monuments, Memoir, and Memory.

Watch “Graven Image” 2018 (documentary film--12 minutes)

Watch: “Burnt Oranges” (2005) --experimental film/ film memoir

-----  
**Week of April 17th**

“Culture,” history, art, and memory

Complete online module: Module # 14--History, Art, and Memory—public art (Agroarte), and Music Video/Hip Hop (Rebeca Lane)

++++  
**Week of November 24<sup>th</sup>**

Course Wrap Up

++++

**May 1—TAKE HOME FINAL DUE—Before 11:59pm**

**Module # 15**

## **COURSE INFORMATION:**

*“Students in need of academic accommodations for a disability may consult with the office of Students with Disabilities Services to arrange appropriate accommodations. Students are required to give reasonable notice prior to requesting an accommodation.”*

*In case of inclement weather, if the USF campus is closed or class is cancelled a notice will be posted on Canvas, and I will email every student notice through their USF email account (Canvas). No student should compromise his/her safety to attend class in case of inclement weather.*

## **GENDER-BASED CRIMES: SEXUAL MISCONDUCT/SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

USF is committed to providing an environment free from sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence (USF System Policy 0-004).

### **Resources for *confidential* disclosure and assistance**

The Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention ([813] 974-5757), the Counseling Center ([813] 974-2831), and Student Health Services ([813] 974-2331) are confidential resources where you can talk about incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes including sexual assault, stalking, and domestic/relationship violence and receive assistance without the incident being reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSSR) or the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity (DIEO), unless you request that they make a report.

Websites:

Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention: <http://sa.usf.edu/advocacy>

Counseling Center: <http://usf.edu/student-affairs/counseling-center>

Student Health Services: <http://usf.edu/student-affairs/student-health-services>

### **Non-confidentiality: legal requirements for faculty to report incidents**

Please be aware that in compliance with Title IX and under the USF System Policy, educators must report incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes including sexual assault, stalking, and domestic/relationship violence. ***If you disclose any of these situations to me (for example, in an email, an assignment, a discussion forum, or a personal conversation), I am required by law to report the disclosure to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSSR) or the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity (DIEO) so that they can investigate the incident or situation as a possible violation of the USF Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Harassment Policy and provide assistance.***



**Reminders regarding the discussion of sensitive topics and the need for respect for diverse opinions:**

*It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.*

*In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what I or you do or should personally believe. "Objective" means that the idea presented is supported by credible research and is subject to review and debate. You may decide that certain ideas are worthy of your personal belief.*

*Not all ideas can be supported by objective methods or criteria. Regardless, you may decide that certain such ideas are also worthy of your personal belief. In this course, however, you will be asked to engage objectively with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding an idea does not mean that you are required to believe it or agree with it.*

[Syllabus Policy Statements from the Provost](#)