TE982: Examining Critical Race Theory in Education  
Mondays, 4:00pm – 7:00pm  
133D Erickson Hall, Spring 2011  

Instructor: Dorinda Carter Andrews  
Email: dcarter@msu.edu  
Mailbox: Erickson, 3rd Floor  
Phone: (517) 432-2070  
Office Location: 358 Erickson Hall  
Office Hours: By appointment  

NOTE: This syllabus is a draft and is subject to changes.

Course Description:  
This course will allow students to explore Critical Race Theory as an analytical framework that provides race-based epistemological, methodological, and pedagogical approaches to the study of everyday inequalities in P-20 education. Key foci of this seminar are to help students understand CRT as a theoretical framework, examine its utility and limitations, and consider its application to students’ own research and practice.

We will begin by exploring the historical development of CRT from Critical Legal Studies (CLS) and move through its contemporary nuances. In addition, we will work to expose the ideological construction of race and education in the U.S. As such, we will also work through the oppressive nature of education and boldly confront notions of colorblindness. Throughout this course, we will grapple with the challenges surrounding the inclusion of multiple voices and perspectives in the complex intersections among race, gender, class, and sexual orientation. Other intersecting analytical frameworks discussed include TribalCrit Theory, LatCrit Theory, Critical White Studies, AsianCrit, QueerCrit, and Critical Race Feminism.

Specifically, we will critique the strengths and limitations of CRT as theoretical framework for addressing educational inequalities. As to be expected there is a substantial amount of reading assigned in this course. To successfully accomplish and engage with the readings, you will need to manage your time wisely.

Student Responsibilities:  
In addition to completing the readings and assignments for the course, you are expected to fully engage in the learning experience throughout the quarter. As a seminar, this course will consist of presentations, guest speakers, and critical discussions. Therefore, students will need to draw upon active listening skills, make a strong effort to critically self-reflect, and locate their voices to engage in dialogue with their colleagues.

Course Objectives:  
1. We will explore how racial inequities are produced, reproduced, and maintained within social institutions of education.
2. We will strive to create affirming spaces for counter discourses that refute ideological constructions of “truth” and “reality.”
3. We will work to understand and value the similarities and differences among the experiences of people with different racial backgrounds in P-20 education.
4. We will use CRT to inform our personal, social, political, and intellectual experiences as racial beings.
5. We will engage in CRT with the end goals of heightened social consciousness and social transformation.

Required Texts:

Additional Texts (reading will be split across class):

Course Evaluation
Grades will be determined as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Briefs (6)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRT Political Autobiography</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature Review/Analytic Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media Analysis (in groups)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Class Participation:
Class participation is assessed based on attendance, preparedness, and engagement. Attendance is expected at all class sessions. Missing class can affect depth of understanding and is frequently reflected in the quality of written analysis and in the overall learning experience. Your presence is important, and missing class sessions will be reflected in your final grade. As a member of this class, you are responsible for the learning that takes place during each class meeting. Meaningful class discussion is a crucial part of the learning experience for students and the professor; therefore, you are expected to complete all assigned readings and course tasks prior to the class meeting. Your participation in class will be evaluated based on your contribution to other students’ learning, clarity of your contribution, demonstrated knowledge of course content, and your willingness to assume responsibility for making the discussion work in our learning community.
For this class, high-quality participation is characterized by the following.

1. **What are you learning?** Students demonstrate an understanding of facts, concepts, and theories presented in the class readings and other materials.
2. **How clearly do you express yourself?** Students ask questions, answer questions or otherwise contribute in a comprehensible manner.
3. **How do you work with others?** Students offer constructive criticism during discussions and build on each other’s ideas. Students also assume leadership and maintain active participation in small groups.
4. **How do you go beyond what is given?** Students relate concepts from class to their experiences as a teacher and learner, generating new insights and applications.

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**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

**Briefs:**
Students are expected to write six (6) single-spaced, briefs during the course. Each brief should range between 300-500 words and should include at least one citation from the course syllabus. In each brief, students should make reflective and analytical responses to the readings. This means developing defensible interpretations, negotiating meanings, and drawing connections to other works, concepts, or phenomena. You are also encouraged to make connections between theory, research, and practice by drawing on your life experiences as a student, professional, and learner. Briefs SHOULD NOT summarize the readings. The following questions might help guide your thinking when preparing the briefs.

1. How, if at all, have the readings enhanced your understanding of how racial inequities are produced, reproduced, and maintained within education and society?
2. In what ways, if at all, have the week’s readings enhanced your thinking about your personal, political, and intellectual experiences as a racial being in society?
3. How, if at all, have the week’s readings helping you make sense of race-based theories as useful theories, epistemologies, and methodologies for examining racial inequality and inequity in education?
4. How, if at all, have the week’s readings enhanced your understanding of the schooling experiences of students of color as racialized experiences in educational institutions?

Your briefs will help the professor prepare for class discussions. **Briefs should be uploaded to the appropriate ANGEL Discussion Forum no later than 6:00pm on Sunday evening prior to Monday’s class** so that the professor and your classmates have ample time to respond. I will not assign weeks for you to write your brief. You have the option of choosing which six weeks you will submit briefs. However, don’t get yourself caught in a trap of having to do all six consecutively at the end of the semester. Pace yourself.

**Team Assignments**
You will be divided into teams of 4-5 students. These will be your Critical Reading and Work Groups for the duration of the course. You can find these assignments in a document called, "Class Teams Spring 2011" in the ASSIGNMENTS folder on ANGEL. Each week you will use
this space to read the briefs that your colleagues have posted for the week and write a response to at least one of your team colleagues (raising critical questions, underscoring support for their arguments/thinking, and/or making connections to their reflections based on your insights from the reading for the week -- to push their thinking further). We'll also use these groups for in-class work. **Responses (of no more than 250 words) should be written by 9pm on Sunday evening prior to class.** These responses count toward the Participation portion of your course grade.

**Media Analysis – presented on Mondays during March**
Part of our study of CRT includes understanding how to use it as an analytical tool for examining racism as normative in our society. How are individuals from traditionally marginalized racial and ethnic groups portrayed and understood through popular culture and the media? What connections can be made to schooling, teaching and learning? Peer Teams will select a media artifact (movie, documentary, television show, political issue/current event, etc.) to examine using CRT. Each group will construct a 30-minute interactive presentation to be implemented in the class. More details to follow.

**CRT Political Autobiography – draft due February 14th; final copy due March 28th**
As a leader within the field of education, it will be necessary and beneficial for you to continuously assess your personal development, confront your weaknesses, and acknowledge your strengths. The purpose of this assignment is to grant each of you the opportunity to personally, politically, and intellectually reflect on the content of this course and your experiences (or lack of experiences) as a racialized being. As such you will be expected to maintain a continuous narrative reflecting upon your personal journey through our course. In your entries (weekly, I advise), I expect that you will utilize course readings, discussions, presentations, etc…to reflect. Within your reflections, please consider addressing areas of personal resistance, new knowledge/perspectives, change, and/or insights. To inspire your thoughts, please consider questions such as:

1. How have my educational experiences been racialized?
2. How have my life experiences contributed to my understanding of myself and others as racialized beings?
3. What significant life experiences have I had that have contributed to my perceptions of racial, gender, sexual orientation, class, etc. identities in education?

While it is required for you to explore your racial identity given the nature of our course, please incorporate additional aspects of your identity as well. This essay is intended to be an approximately 8-10 page reflection in which you process through your thoughts and experiences relying upon APA Format to reference our course readings.

**Literature Review/Analytic Paper – due April 4; Paper Outline due March 4**
Each student will submit a 10-12 page paper focused upon an area of interest pertaining to CRT and education. The main objective of this assignment is to create an original research project utilizing CRT as a guiding framework. It is expected that each final paper will:

- Critique an area (i.e. teachers, students, administration, curriculum, pedagogy, structure, policy, etc…) of education using CRT.
- Use CRT to address an educational inequality or dilemma.
o Demonstrate a clear understanding of CRT as a theoretical and methodological framework.
o Highlight the implications of your analysis for education and future possibilities for further inquiry.

**Composite Presentations – Last class (April 25th) and Final Exam Session**
During the last class and final exam session, students will have an opportunity to share their research topic and political autobiography with the class. Your presentation should evidence how your identity development and professional work intersects with the issues that are central to this course. More details to follow.

**COURSE PROTOCOLS**

**Late Assignments:**
Students are expected to meet writing deadlines. Any work submitted after its due date will be considered late. Late papers will be reduced by one-half letter grade for the first day of lateness and a full grade any time later, except in extreme cases. Assignments are due at the **beginning** of class.

**Writing Guidelines:**
Writing proficiency is a minimum requirement for satisfactory completion of this course. All written work must reflect adequate writing skills in order to receive a grade.

Please edit your work carefully and check for spelling/typographical errors before turning it in. Many of you will be teachers and you will need to be able to clearly communicate ideas to parents, other teachers, administrators, community news sources, etc. In light of this, it is our policy to support you in the development of your writing. If you feel you need outside support with writing, the Writing Center in 300 Bessey Hall (tel: 432-3610; website: http://writing.msu.edu/default.html) can be of assistance). I may refer you there if I feel they may be of service to you. If you already know that you have weaknesses in your writing, please see me as soon as possible, so we arrange assistance. Please do not feel embarrassed about coming to me for help – assisting you is my job as your instructor.

**Academic Honesty:**
Article 2.3.3 of the *Academic Freedom Report* states that “the student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards.” In addition, the College of Education adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and in the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, which are included in *Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide*. Students who commit an act of academic dishonesty may receive a zero on the assignment or in the course.

**Special Accommodations:**
Students with disabilities should contact the Professor to discuss any accommodations needed to fulfill the course requirements and achieve learning objectives. In order to receive reasonable accommodations from the Professor, students must have certified eligibility through the
NOTE: The reading outline is subject to change.

HISTORY AND FOUNDATIONS OF CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Week 1 – January 10: History and Foundations of CRT

Required Readings: (Required in preparation for first class)


Week 2 – January 17: History and Foundations of CRT in Education

NO CLASS MEETING THIS DAY – MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY

Required Readings:
Taylor et al., Part One (pp. 17-69)


Recommended Readings:


Week 3 – January 24: CRT and Educational Policies

Required Readings:


Taylor et al., *Chapters 4 and 8.*


**Recommended Readings:**


**Week 4 – January 31: CRT and Critical Pedagogy**

**GUEST LECTURER: David Stovall, Associate Professor, University of Illinois at Chicago**

**Required Readings:**


**THE BRANCHES OF CRITICAL RACE THEORY**

**Week 5 – February 7: LatCrit and AsianCrit: Examining the Educational Experiences of Latinas/os, Asian Americans, and Asian Pacific Islanders**

**Required Readings:**


**Delgado & Stefancic**, pp. 81-86.


**Recommended Readings:**


**Week 6 – February 14: TribalCrit and Queer-Crit**

**Required Readings:**


**Delgado & Stefancic**, Chapter 4


**Recommended:**


INTERSECTIONS: GENDER, CLASS, AND CULTURE

Week 7 – February 21: Examining Critical Race Feminism and Colorblindness

GUEST LECTURER: Adrien Katherine Wing, Professor, The University of Iowa, College of Law

Required Readings:
Each student should be prepared for a discussion of their respective text. More details to follow.

**Leonardo, Chapters 2&3**
Malagón, M. C. (Win-Spr, 2010). All the losers go there: Challenging the deficit educational discourse of Chicano racialized masculinity in a continuation high school. *Educational Foundations, 24*(1-2), 59-76.

Recommended Reading:

Week 8 – February 28: CRT, Whiteness, and Critical White Studies

Required Readings:
Leonardo, Chapters 5-7

Recommended Readings:
Taylor et al., Chapter 16

Week 9 – March 7: SPRING BREAK
NO CLASSES!!! ENJOY YOUR BREAK!!!

Week 10 – March 14: Critical Race Epistemology and Methodology

GUEST LECTURER: Tara J. Yosso, Associate Professor, Chicana and Chicano Studies Dept, University of California, Santa Barbara


Delgado & Stefancic, Chapter 3

Taylor et al., Chapter 9

Recommended Readings:

**RACE, TEACHER EDUCATION, AND CLASSROOM EXPERIENCES**

**Week 11 – March 21: Using CRT to Examine Aspects of Teacher Education**

**GUEST LECTURER: Adrienne Dixson, Associate Professor, The Ohio State University**

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:
Week 12 – March 28: Students of Color in K-12 Classrooms

Required Readings:

Leonardo, Chapter 8

Recommended Readings:

Week 13 – April 4: Students of Color on College Campuses

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:


**Week 14 – April 11: CRT and Faculty of Color**

**Required Readings:**


**Recommended Readings:**


**CRITIQUES AND LOOKING AHEAD**

**Week 15 – April 18: Critiques of CRT**

**Required Readings:**

*Delgado & Stefancic*, Chapter 6

*Taylor et al.*, Part Eight (Chapters 17-19)

**Recommended Readings:**

**Week 16 – April 25: CRT Future Directions**

**COMPOSITE PRESENTATIONS**

**Required Readings:**

**Delgado & Stefancic**, Chapter 8


**FINAL EXAM SESSION: COMPOSITE PRESENTATIONS**