UGS 303
Difficult Dialogues: Cultural Identities and Differences
University of Texas at Austin
Fall 2017
Unique number: 62465

Professor Pauline Strong
Department of Anthropology
College of Liberal Arts
email: through Canvas

Instructor's office hours:
Tuesdays, 11:00am – 12:30pm, and by appointment
SAC 4.130

Class meets:
Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30-11am
SAC 5.102

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES
In this course we will consider cultural identities and differences, both in the US and in other parts of the world. We will develop ways of thinking analytically about culture, cultural identity, cultural representation, and cultural difference. We will discuss the impact of globalization on cultural identities and differences, and some of the issues that arise between people holding and constructing different cultural identities. Among the topics we will consider are borders and migration, race and incarceration, and class and homelessness.

As a Difficult Dialogues course, this class is designed to teach you to engage in informed and respectful dialogue with people who have different beliefs, values, perspectives, or ways of communicating. As a UGS signature course it is also designed to introduce you to University resources as well as to perspectives and issues that transcend traditional disciplines. Course content draws on the following disciplines: Anthropology. Sociology. Communication. Law. Public Health. Ethnic Studies.

SIGNATURE COURSE MISSION & COURSE ESSENTIALS
The Signature Courses at the University of Texas at Austin connect students with distinguished faculty members in unique learning environments. By way of this rigorous intellectual experience, students develop college-level skills in research, writing, speaking, and discussion through an approach that is interdisciplinary, collaborative, experiential and contemporary.

This course will address the Signature Course essentials in the following ways:

- **Writing:** Students will prepare 4 response papers; complete in-class writing assignments; and write a research memo for their group's oral presentation.

- **Oral Communication:** Students will develop skills in conducting informed, respectful dialogues on difficult issues. Students will also work in small groups to prepare an oral presentation on a current issue related to the course content.

- **Information Literacy:** Students will conduct research on a controversial issue, preparing a research memo that contributes to their group presentation.

- **University Gems:** Students will visit a performance presented by the Department of Theatre and Dance and write a response paper on its point(s) of view.

- **University Lecture Series:** Students will attend and write a response paper on the Difficult Dialogues public forum, "Going In, Coming Out: Race and Incarcertaion in the US," to be held on the evening of October 30. This forum will including a screening and discussion of Ava DuVernay's documentary, "13th."

CORE OBJECTIVES

This course carries two "flags," which the University describes as follows:

- Cultural Diversity in the United States. Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization.

- Writing. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one assignment, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers' work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work. Writing Flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

REQUIRED READINGS

The following books are required, and have been ordered from the University Coop. Additional readings will be posted on Canvas. Please complete the reading *before* class on the date it is assigned, and be sure to bring the assigned reading to class.

- Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen. *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most,* 2nd edition. Penguin Books, 2010.
- Seth Holmes, *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States.* University of California Press, 2013.
- Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness.* The New Press, 2010.
- Matthew Desmond: *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City.* Crown, 2016.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING POLICY
This course is graded on a scale that includes pluses and minuses. Success in the course depends on timely completion of the reading and writing assignments; attentive, active and respectful participation in class discussions; and thoughtful consideration of the issues considered in the course. The final grade will be based on the components listed below.

- Attendance and participation (20%): Students will engage actively in dialogue, learning to employ various techniques for conducting productive dialogues. You will be expected to come to class with discussion questions on certain dates, and these will be part of the participation grade. In-class writing assignments will also be part of the participation grade. There will be two required evening activities, "Building The Wall" (**between September 1 and September 10**) and the Difficult Dialogues forum on **October 30.**

- Oral presentation (20%): Students will work in small groups to prepare and present a presentation on a current issue related to cultural identity and difference. As part of your work on the oral presentation each student will prepare a 500-word research memo.

- Writing assignments (60%). The writing component of the grade includes:

    - Writing assignment #1 (15%): A 500-word response to the point(s) of view expressed in "Building The Wall."
    - Writing assignment #2 (15%): A 500-word paper on the point(s) of view presented in one of the chapters of *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies.* Chapter assignments will be agreed upon in class; you will serve as a discussion leader for the chapter you are assigned.
    - Writing assignment #3 (15%): A 500-word paper on the point(s) of view presented in one of the chapters of *The New Jim Crow.* Chapter assignments will be agreed upon in class; you will serve as a discussion leader for the chapter you are assigned.
    - Writing assignment #4 (15%): A 500-word paper on the point(s) of view presented in one of the chapters of *Evicted.* Chapter assignments will be agreed upon in class; you will serve as a discussion leader for the chapter you are assigned.

COURSE SCHEDULE
This is an approximate schedule. You are responsible for any changes announced in class and posted on Canvas. Be sure to check the email registered with the University regularly so that you are aware of any announcements posted on Canvas.

<u>A. Introduction to Dialogue: Create a Learning Conversation</u>

8/31 Introduction to the course

*****Attend "Building the Wall."** Oscar G. Brockett Theatre, UT Campus. The play is showing between September 1 and September 10 at 7:30pm. The class will agree on a date to attend together. Any students not able to attend on the selected date are asked to purchase their own tickets (at $15.00) for another performance.

9/5 *Difficult Conversations,* pp. 1-57
9/7 *Difficult Conversations,* pp. 58-82
9/12 *Difficult Conversations,* pp. 83-128
9/14 *Difficult Conversations,* pp. 129-162
9/19 *Difficult Conversations,* pp. 163-216
9/21 *Difficult Conversations,* pp. 217-234, 268-273

*****9/24 (Sunday) Writing Assignment 1 Due on Canvas*****

B. Difficult Dialogue I: Borders, Migration, & Social Suffering

9/26	*Fresh Fruit,* Chapters 1-2, pp. 1-44
9/28	*Fresh Fruit,* Chapter 3, pp. 45-87
10/3	*Fresh Fruit,* Chapter 4, pp. 88-110
10/5	*Fresh Fruit,* Chapter 5, pp. 111-154
10/10	*Fresh Fruit,* Chapter 6 & Conclusion, pp. 155-198
10/12	No additional reading

*****10/15 (Sunday) Writing Assignment 2 Due on Canvas*****

C. Difficult Dialogue II: Race and Incarceration in the US since the 1960s

10/17	*The New Jim Crow,* Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. 1-58
10/19	*The New Jim Crow,* Chapter 2, pp. 59-96
10/24	*The New Jim Crow,* Chapter 3, pp. 97-139
10/26	*The New Jim Crow,* Chapter 4, pp. 140-177

*****10/30 (Monday) Attend Difficult Dialogues Forum, "Going In, Coming Out: Race and Incarceration in the US," Avaya Auditorium, 6:30-9:00 pm**

10/31	*The New Jim Crow,* Chapter 5, pp. 178-220
11/2	*The New Jim Crow,* Chapter 6, pp. 221-262

*****11/5 (Sunday), Writing Assignment 3 Due on Canvas*****

D. Difficult Dialogue III: Class and Homelessness

11/7	*Evicted,* Prologue and Chapters 1-4, pp. 1-52
11/9	*Evicted,* Chapters 5-8, pp. 53-110
11/14	*Evicted,* Chapters 9-12, pp. 111-166
11/16	*Evicted,* Chapters 13-16, pp. 167-206
11/21	*Evicted,* Chapters 17-21, pp. 207-258
11/23	Thanksgiving Holiday
11/28	*Evicted,* Chapters 22-24 and Epilogue, pp. 259-314
11/30	No additional reading

*****12/1 (Friday), Writing Assignment 4 Due on Canvas*****

E. Putting It All Together: Creating a Learning Conversation

12/5	Group Presentations
12/7	Group Presentations

*****12/8 (Friday), Research Memo Due on Canvas*****

*****12/10 (Sunday), Last Date to Submit Optional Re-Write of Assignment #1, #2, or #3**

OTHER IMPORTANT POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Communicating with the Professor

It is important that you remain in good communication with the instructor and teaching assistant.

Please attend office hours at least once during the semester. It is important to inform me personally or by Canvas email or telephone if illness, an emergency, a disability, or an unavoidable conflict is affecting your work in this course.

Academic Integrity
Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code:

> The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are **learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility**. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through **integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.**

Any work submitted in this course for academic credit must be the student's own work. The work of others must be referenced correctly. Students who violate the Honor Code through plagiarism or other forms of cheating will receive no credit for the assignment or quiz, and may be referred to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students
It is your responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in your e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily.

Services for Students with Disabilities
Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Please notify the instructor as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible, or if other disability-related accommodations are required. See SSD's website for more disability-related information: http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)
If you are concerned about yourself or another person, please consult the instructor or call the Behavior Concerns Advice Line, 512-232-5050.

Q drop Policy
Please be aware that the State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6).

Safety and Emergency Evacuation
It is my goal to maintain a safe and welcoming classroom environment for all students, one compatible with our goal of developing skills in conducting difficult dialogues. If you hold a license to carry a concealed weapon, it is your responsibility to know and follow the Texas and University policies listed here: https://utexas.app.box.com/v/cc-info-sheet-students. Visible weapons or threatening behavior will be reported to the UT Police Department immediately. Weapons of any kind are not permitted during office hours.

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instructor's instructions.

- Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services official.