The focus of this course will be to analyze the ways in which ethnic and gendered identities are represented in American film since the early twentieth century, and to gauge the effects of those representations. Although this course focuses on the traditional interlocked representations of African Americans and European Americans in classic American films, we will also analyze the representation of other ethnic groups so that we may construct a narrative of race in American film, gleaned from a variety of perspectives. Themes covered include: the origins of racial and gendered stereotyping in film, interracial family romance, film and social activism and Civil Rights, representation in film, model minorities, Whiteness, tokenism, coming-of-age, sexuality, labor, and the white savior, among others.

Course Objectives:

- Learn to distinguish between film representation and historical reality
- Learn the relationship between film theory and film images
- Learn to analyze films as literary and historical narratives
- Acquire specialized vocabulary to discuss and analyze film
- Learn to write a film response essay
- Improve writing and critical thinking skills
- Sharpen public speaking skills through an oral presentation
• Sharpen skills working as part of a team through two group projects
• Learn to create a virtual analytical narrative using multimedia sources
• Develop skills for creating educational and creative content on social media sites such as Tumblr
• Interpret the various intersections of race, gender and sexuality
• Develop a rhetoric for discussing race that manifests sensitivity and care

Note: This syllabus may be subject to change. The instructor will make students aware of changes via email.

Course Requirements

➢ Required Texts:

The majority of films and other texts are posted on the course’s Canvas site. There may be one or two films that you will need to watch via Netflix or rent via Amazon or iTunes. I will let you know in advance if this is the case.

➢ Office Hours

My office hours are for you. Stop by with any questions you have about assignments, course materials, other pertinent topics, or just drop by to say hello. The only thing I discourage is visiting to cover material from a missed class period; for that, consult fellow classmates. All else is warmly welcomed. This is an open and safe space for continuous dialogue, and there is no such thing as a “stupid” question. If your schedule conflicts with my office hours, we can set up a Zoom appointment at a mutually agreeable time.

Regarding emails, I will try and get back to students within 24 hours (many times, sooner) Mondays-Fridays. However, I may not respond to emails on Saturdays and Sundays.

➢ Grade Breakdown:

Group PowerPoint Presentation: 20%
Quizzes #1-13: 20%
Group Videos #1-2: 20%
Tumblr Journal: 20%
Final Group Project: 20%

➢ Group PowerPoint Presentation

Each week, a group of students will introduce an assigned film to the class via PowerPoint. Group PowerPoints must be emailed to me no later than 9:00 AM on the Monday of the week your presentation is due. Your PowerPoint presentations must cover the following information:

1. Historical context: what was going on in the United States at the time the film was released?
2. Reason for making: who made the film? why was the film made? and for what kind of audience?
3. Reception: how was the film received by popular media and news outlets (what kind of press did it get)? Did it receive any awards?
4. Key words: After having researched and watched the film, what are 2-3 key words the class should know before they watch the film? These words should highlight the film’s main themes. Examples include melodrama, interracial marriage, reconstruction, model minority, etc. You should be sure to provide a definition for each word you choose.
5. Introduce two discussion questions for the class to think about as they watch the film.
6. Answer each of the two discussion questions on individual slides. Your answers to these questions should be in paragraph form (roughly 1-2 paragraphs for each question)

All of these criteria require that you watch the film in its entirety and conduct outside research before the day your presentation is due.

The group presentation is worth 20% of your final grade. All members of the group will receive the same grade for this assignment (I will make few exceptions). It is the group’s responsibility to divvy up the workload as fairly as possible. I highly recommend that groups meet via Zoom or WebEx once or twice before they submit the presentation.

I will do my best to assign you to a group presenting on a date/film that appeals to your interests. Email me three choices, including date and film title, stating your preferences for leading class discussion. In selecting your three choices, consider which topics/films most appeal to you and your schedule (i.e. don’t select a date when you have a paper due in another class). You may also email me specific dates when you prefer not to present. In order to consider your preferences, I must receive your choices by Thursday, September 2 at 6:00 PM. I will do my best to accommodate everyone’s preferences, but this will not always be possible. I will assign dates in the order in which I receive your emails.

Quizzes

You will be given 13 quizzes over the course of the semester. These quizzes are meant to assure that you keep up with the workload and to test your comprehension of key themes in the films we watch. You will take the quizzes directly on Canvas and can take them any time from Thursday at 6:00 AM until Friday at 6:00 PM. These quizzes should not take longer than 10 minutes of your time; however, you will have 20 minutes total to complete the quiz once you open it. Note: you will only have one attempt to take each quiz. Be sure that you are prepared before you open the quiz, because you will not be able to open it a second time.

These quizzes are worth 20% of your final grade. I will drop your two lowest quiz scores when calculating your final grades. If for some reason you do not take a quiz one week, that quiz will count towards one of your dropped scores. For this reason, you will not have the opportunity to make up a missed quiz for any reason including illness. The quizzes will close at exactly 6:00 PM each Friday, so be sure to begin by at least 5:40 PM.
**Tumblr Journal**

Each student is required to start a Tumblr account dedicated to this class; it will function as a journal of sorts. Each week, after you watch the assigned film, you should add three posts to your Tumblr page. The first post must speak to both your interpretation of the film and its relationship to the theme of the class: “race and gender in American film.” The second post must draw a connection between this film and the previously assigned film (the film assigned directly before this one). For the first film, please discuss it in relation to any other film of your choosing. The third post must connect the film to an outside media source such as a song, artwork, news or journal article, short story, poem, novel, current event, legal or historical document, etc. In the third post, you must be sure to explain how your chosen media source relates to the film and its themes. All three posts must be accompanied by an image or video clip that relates to the written content of your post (for post #3, your chosen media source will suffice).

You are required to create your Tumblr account and follow my course account (handle: drlombardi) by Thursday, September 2 at 6:00 PM. I will create a list with everybody’s handles and post it to Canvas. Ideally, you will follow and interact with each other.

While I expect that you will post each and every week, there are three check-in dates listed on the syllabus where I will look to see that you are up to date on your posts and issue you a grade based on their quality. This assignment is worth 20% of your final grade and will be calculated as the average of your three check-in grades. The three check-in dates are: Sunday, October 3, Sunday, November 6, and Sunday, December 12, all at 11:00 PM.

**Group Videos**

You are required to create two 10-12-minute group discussion videos throughout the term (this does not include your final group project video). For each assignment, you and your groupmates will meet virtually (Zoom, Skype, WebEx, etc.) and discuss 4 assigned films. You will record this discussion, edit it down to 10-12-minutes, and send it to me via e-mail by the time/date that it’s due. I will send you a set of discussion questions about a week prior to the video’s due date. You will be graded based on your group’s capacity to answer these questions throughout the discussion. Note*** You should not record yourselves simply reading the answers to these questions into the camera. While you are encouraged to plan and use a script, I want to see how your answers evolve out of your discussion (I want to see how your answer builds off of everyone’s ideas and contributions). Therefore, throughout the discussion, you should be responding to each other’s thoughts and asking each other follow-up questions.

You are welcome to add graphics, animation, and other effects to your videos, though this is not required. Also, everyone’s camera must be turned on so that you can see each other and so that I can see you. Lastly, everyone must participate in the conversation—this means, at minimum, everyone must offer their thoughts to at least two of the discussion questions and respond (at least once) to another classmate’s contribution with a statement or question. These videos are due on Sunday, October 24 at 11:00 PM and Friday, November 19 at 11:00 PM. I will put you into groups during the first few weeks of the semester.
Final Group Project

For your final project, you are required to work in groups (the same groups you’ve been working with all semester) to create a discussion video where you collectively respond to each other’s Tumblr collage journals. I will give further instructions for this project at some point during Week 11 (November 8 -12). Basically, you will each individually analyze your groupmates’ Tumblr collage journals and then come together for a discussion via Zoom, WebEx, Skype, etc. My instructions will include guidelines for how to structure the discussion, along with a set of questions to consider that reflect the themes and goals of the class. You will be expected to record the Zoom session and edit it down to 10-15 minutes. You are welcome to be creative with the editing and formatting if you are comfortable with such technology, though your grade will not be negatively affected if you don’t have these skills. You are encouraged to hold mock (practice) discussions before recording the final version of your discussion so that you are able to submit something that is clean and cohesive. Submitting a sloppily executed video will negatively affect your grade. Lastly, everyone’s camera must be turned on so that you can see each other and so that I can see you. These videos are due by Thursday, December 16 at 10:00 AM.

Notes on Late Assignments and Course Engagement

In the event that you know an assignment will be late, you should inform me at least three days prior to the assignment due date. If I consider your reasoning legitimate, I can choose not to penalize for lateness (this is completely up to my discretion). If you are ill or unable to complete an assignment due to a serious family matter, you should provide me with appropriate documentation, such as a doctor’s note.

You should have a plan to ensure that you will have access to the internet on a daily basis throughout the semester. Technical problems, failed internet connections, and computer crashes are not excuses for not completing course work or submitting assignments late. You should plan for what you will do if you have any technical problems.

Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism)

Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. The standard minimum penalties for students who cheat or plagiarize include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University. If I find that you have used other people’s ideas (e.g., Wikipedia, Amazon reviews, book jacket descriptions, etc.), I will not accept the assignment because I will not be able to consider it your own work. You will get a failing grade (0 points) for that assignment and will not be able to make it up.

You are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy, available at http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any use of the ideas or words of another person without proper acknowledgment of credit will result in penalties up to and possibly including a course grade of F. Likewise for cheating on exams and quizzes. Note that the uncited use of uncopyrighted material such as Wikipedia entries still constitutes plagiarism.
The department REQUIRES that the following honor pledge is written and signed on every exam, paper, or other major course assignment that is submitted for grading: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).”

Accommodation and Support Statement

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students and the University as a whole. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

For Individuals with Disabilities: The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu. Contact ODS at (973)353-5375 or via email at ods@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Individuals who are Pregnant: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy. Students may contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance at (973) 353-1906 or via email at TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Absence Verification: The Office of the Dean of Students can provide assistance for absences related to religious observance, emergency or unavoidable conflict (e.g., illness, personal or family emergency, etc.). Students should refer to University Policy 10.2.7 for information about expectations and responsibilities. The Office of the Dean of Students can be contacted by calling (973) 353-5063 or emailing deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Individuals with temporary conditions/injuries: The Office of the Dean of Students can assist students who are experiencing a temporary condition or injury (e.g., broken or sprained limbs, concussions, or recovery from surgery). Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury should submit a request using the following link: https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu.

For English as a Second Language (ESL): The Program in American Language Studies (PALS) can support students experiencing difficulty in courses due to English as a Second Language (ESL) and can be reached by emailing PALS@newark.rutgers.edu to discuss potential supports.

For Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance can assist students who are experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking. Students can report an incident to the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance by calling (973) 353-1906 or emailing TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. Incidents may also be reported by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. For more information, students should refer to the University’s Student Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Related Misconduct located at http://compliance.rutgers.edu/title-ix/about-title-ix/title-ix-policies/.
For support related to interpersonal violence: The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance can provide any student with confidential support. The office is a confidential resource and does not have an obligation to report information to the University’s Title IX Coordinator. Students can contact the office by calling (973) 353-1918 or emailing run.vpva@rutgers.edu. There is also a confidential text-based line available to students; students can text (973) 339-0734 for support.

For Crisis and Concerns: The Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team works with students in crisis to develop a support plan to address personal situations that might impact their academic performance. Students, faculty and staff may contact the CARE Team by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNCARE or emailing careteam@rutgers.edu.

For Stress, Worry, or Concerns about Well-being: The Counseling Center has confidential therapists available to support students. Students should reach out to the Counseling Center to schedule an appointment: counseling@newark.rutgers.edu or (973) 353-5805. If you are not quite ready to make an appointment with a therapist but are interested in self-help, check out TAO at Rutgers-Newark for an easy, web-based approach to self-care and support: https://tinyurl.com/RUN-TAO.

For emergencies, call 911 or contact Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) by calling (973) 353-5111.

The Writing Center has remote tutoring available: http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter

For more resources at Rutgers, Newark, visit: https://myrun.newark.rutgers.edu/covid19
Course Schedule:

**Note: I will on occasion require that you read an additional review or journal article that is not listed on the syllabus. On such occasions, I will notify you by Monday of the week you are meant to read it and post the text on Canvas.**

Remember: group presentations are due by **9:00 AM on the Monday** of the week a given film is assigned

**Week 1: September 1 – 3**

1. **Live Zoom meet and greet on Wednesday 9/1: 2:30 – 3:30 PM** where we will go over the syllabus together.

   [attendance is not required; however, attendance will be taken. If you are not present, you are required to email me directly by **Friday 9/3 at 10:00 AM** confirming that you’ve read and understand the syllabus. In the email, you can also ask me any questions you may have]

2. Preferences for the Group Presentation due Thursday at 6:00 PM
3. Create a Tumblr account and follow my course account (handle drlombardi) by Thursday at 6:00 PM

**Week 2: September 7 - 10**

1. Watch: *Ethnic Notions (1987)*
2. Read: “Cinematic Techniques”
3. Quiz #1 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM

**Week 3: September 13 - 17**

1. Watch: *Birth of a Nation: Part 2 (1915)* Part 2 begins at 1:31:30
2. Read: “100 Years Later, What’s the Legacy of ‘Birth of a Nation’?”
3. Quiz #2 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM

**Week 4: September 20 - 24**

1. **Group Presentation #1: Imitation of Life**
2. Watch: *Imitation of Life (1959)*
4. Quiz #3 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM

Week 5: September 27 – October 1

1. **Group Presentation #2: Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner**
2. Watch: *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner* (1967)
3. Quiz #4 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM
4. Tumblr Check-in #1: Have page updated by Sunday 10/3 at 11:00 PM

Week 6: October 4 - 8

1. **Group Presentation #3: The Searchers**
2. Watch: *The Searchers* (1956)
3. Quiz #5 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM

Week 7: October 11 - 15

1. **Group Presentation #4: Smoke Signals**
3. Quiz #6 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM

Week 8: October 18 - 22

1. **Group Presentation #5: Mi Familia**
4. Quiz #7 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM
5. Video # 1 due by Sunday 10/24 at 11:00 PM (on *Birth of a Nation, Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner, Imitation of Life, and The Searchers*)

Week 9: October 25 - 29

1. **Group Presentation #6: The Namesake**
3. Quiz #8 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM

Week 10: November 1 - 5

1. **Group Presentation #7: The Breakfast Club**
3. Read: “What About ‘The Breakfast Club’?”
4. Quiz #9 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM
5. Tumblr Check-in #2: Have page updated by Sunday 11/6 at 11:00 PM

Week 11: November 8 - 12

1. Group Presentation #8: *Moonlight*
3. Read: “‘Moonlight’: Is This the Year’s Best Movie?”
4. Quiz #10 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM
5. Instructions for final project will be shared

Week 12: November 15 - 19

1. Group Presentation #9: *Gook*
3. Quiz #11 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM
4. Video #2 due by Friday 11/19 at 11:00 PM (*Smoke Signals, Mi Familia, The Namesake,* and *The Breakfast Club*)

Week 13: November 22 - 26

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 14: November 29 – December 3

1. Group Presentation #10: *The Help*
3. Read: “An Open Statement to the Fans of *The Help*”
4. Quiz #12 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM

Week 15: December 6 - 10

1. Group Presentation #11: *Get Out*
3. Quiz #13 completed by Friday at 6:00 PM
4. Tumblr Check-in #3: Have page updated by Sunday 12/12 at 11:00 PM

Week 16: December 13 - 17

1. Extra Credit Assignment due by Monday 12/13 at 10:00 AM
2. Final Group Project Due by Thursday 12/16 at 10:00 AM