NARRATIVES AND NUMBERS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Issues such as racism, poverty, and incarceration are complex. To understand them, we may study data on national trends and patterns, but it is also important to examine the singular stories of people who exist behind the numbers. This class will zoom in on both the numbers and narratives to achieve a quantitative and qualitative understanding of critical issues in the world today.

COURSE INFORMATION

Honors 3900, CRN 31264
Taught by
Dr. Christy Call and Dr. Heather Chapman
Library, Honors Classroom
Class held on TR, 9:00 to 10:15

REQUIRED BOOKS

Between the World and Me
by Ta-Nehisi Coates
Evicted
by Matthew Desmond
The New Jim Crow
by Michelle Alexander

RECOMMENDED

The Best American Infographics
By Gareth Cook
Beautiful Evidence
By Edward Tufte
LEARNING OUTCOMES

• to practice clear and compelling written and/or creative expression
• to engage in critical thinking that is open-minded, objective, and as free as possible from prejudice and presupposition
• to comprehend abstract arguments and move between the general and the particular
• to encounter a variety of human experience, exploring both its universality and its diversity.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) Attendance and Participation:
Due to this course’s emphasis on class discussions, attendance is critical. Roll will be taken each day. Daily participation will be worth 5 points, for a total of 70 points. Sixty-five of these points will constitute the attendance portion of your final grade, which leaves 5 points of extra credit for those with perfect attendance.

2) Leading Discussions:
On Tuesdays, we will focus on discussing the assigned readings. On Thursdays, we will discuss statistical data. Reading Discussion Leaders: Each week teams of 2 or 3 students will take the lead on conducting class discussions. Leading the conversation means you will highlight key passages, ask critical questions, and raise important issues. Statistical Topics Leaders: As in the discussion on readings, you will also lead the discussion on data. This will mean locating and talking through items of statistical information. Each week, teams of 2 or 3 students will bring in items of data so that they can be discussed and analyzed for validity and for consideration regarding the framing or point of view.

3) Analytical Papers:
You will submit a written analysis on the 3 required texts. These will be one page, single spaced papers in the standard 11 or 12-sized font. Instead of merely rehashing insights from class conversations, your papers should expand and develop a critical analysis of these texts.

4) Discussion Posts:
At three different points during the semester, you will post a short response on photographs from a collection of galleries. In addition to posting your own response, you will reply to a peer as well.

5) Way of Seeing Project:
At the end of the semester, each of you will present a photograph you capture from Ogden or a surrounding community. This photo will visually connect to some textual theme or point of statistical data. Your presentation will articulate this connection.

6.) Final Project: Info-graphic and Paper (205pts): The final project is submitted in 5 stages.
Part I. Topic Selection (15pts):
Due: Feb. 14th - Provide a brief description of a topic that engages your interest.
Part II. Discussion of Data (25pts):
Due: March 14th - Submit a short list of the top 5-10 pieces of information you plan to use in your info-graphic.
Part III. Info-graphic Poster (15pts)
Due: April 4th - Submit a draft that is complete with data and images.
Part IV. In-Class Presentation of Info-graphic (75pts)
Due: April 18th and April 23rd – For approximately 10 minutes present your info-graphic to the class.
Part V. Paper (75pts)
Due: April 23rd - While the info-graphic will concisely and compellingly present ideas, the final paper will allow you more space to explore your ideas.
LATE WORK POLICY:
Late assignments are accepted with a penalty. Assignments turned in prior to the next class period will receive a 10% penalty. Those turned in within 2 class periods of the due date will receive a 20% penalty. Late work will not be

COURSE GRADING:

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UNIVERSITY POLICIES:
Academic Dishonesty: As specified in PPM 6-22 IV D, cheating and plagiarism violate the Student Code. Plagiarism is “the unacknowledged (uncited) use of any other person's or group's ideas or work.” Students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism are subject to failure of a specific assignment, or, in more serious cases, failure of the entire course.

Core Beliefs: According to PPM 6-22 IV, students are to “[d]etermine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with a student’s core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a resolution from the instructor. This policy does not oblige the instructor to grant the request, except in those cases when a denial would be arbitrary and capricious or illegal. This request must be made to the instructor in writing and the student must deliver a copy of the request to the office of the department head. The student's request must articulate the burden the requirement would place on the student's beliefs.”

Disability Accommodation: PPM 3-34 notes: “When students seek accommodation in a regularly scheduled course, they have the responsibility to make such requests at the Center for Students with Disabilities before the beginning of the quarter [semester] in which the accommodation is being requested. When a student fails to make such arrangements, interim accommodations can be made by the instructor, pending the determination of the request for a permanent accommodation.”

I will accommodate the needs of hearing impaired students by proving closed caption access to any audio or visual materials as well as the delivery of instruction and ensuing class discussions.

Emergency Closure: If for any reason the university is forced to close for an extended period of time, we will conduct our class via the course Canvas page.

Workload Expectations: As specified in PPM 4.1, you should expect to do 2 hours of work outside of class for each regularly scheduled hour of class.

Starfish: Weber State University uses Starfish to help identify students who may need additional support in order to achieve academic success. Throughout the term, you may receive emails from Starfish regarding your course grades or academic performance. If you receive one of these alerts, please keep in mind they are meant to help you achieve success—they do not affect your grade, or carry any punitive action. Students may also raise flags in Starfish that signal to the instructor and academic advisor that they need additional help. Advisors are available to connect students with a variety of campus resources and answer questions. You may find the Starfish program at your eWeber portal.