LIT 2XX

#ACTIVISM:

Literary Technologies of Social Justice, Then and Now

Spring 2020

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Course Description:

#Activism is a class about the technologies behind viral social justice movements, then and now. It situates what is happening now in a broader historical, political, economic, and social context by comparing contemporary issues with their origins in 18th and 19th century activist thought. In this course, we will read about #metoo and #blacklivesmatter, and then students will have the opportunity to research and read about and any other contemporary activist movements (such as #noDAPL) that the class wants to explore. Much of this activism can be traced to unresolved issues from the nation's inception, so to better understand today's activism, we will pair historical with contemporary autobiographies, essays, stories, and novels. The course will also discuss questions such as: What is #activism? In what ways have activist technologies evolved from the 18th century to the Digital Age, and in what ways have they remained the same? How have these technologies affected the spread or message of the reforms they sought? How might studying the origins of American abolitionism, feminism, and environmental justice movements shed greater light on today's protests? For their final project, students will use research to support a literary argument concerning a social justice hashtag (#) of their choosing to create a 1619 Collective Project.

Technology & Communication:

Learning Management System

This class uses Canvas as a Learning Management System (LMS); it does *not* use blackboard.

Canvas has an app for ios and android. To use the app, first log in to canvas in a web browser and set up your email/password. Then, download the app, and when it prompts you to "find your school," type "canvas.instructure.com." If you are prompted for a code, enter the class code, [code]

This course has enabled open enrollment. Students can self-enroll in the course via: https://canvas.instructure.com/enroll/[code]. Alternatively, you can sign up at https://canvas.instructure.com/register and use the following join code: [code].

Please write down your login information, as you will need to check Canvas daily & I cannot reset your passcode.

Communication

This class uses the app Remind to communicate. Here's the Remind link to join: [link]. The joincode for Remind is [code].

Course Goals:

- Students should be able to articulate the main ideas of contemporary social justice movements.

- Students should be able to articulate the main ideas of corresponding historical social justice movements.

- Students should be able to compare/contrast the concept of "activism" as it was articulated in early American literature versus today.

- Students should be able to discuss their own, unique interpretations of literature.

- Students should be able to write clear and astute researched-based arguments about characters, patterns, and/or themes for their interpretations of literature.

- Students should be able to support their literary arguments with textual and peer-reviewed evidence that they analyze. Ideally, that evidence will also be synthesized with other material that students have learned in this class or in other classes.

- Students should be able to show digital literacy by using virtual technologies to write about and reflect upon class concepts.

Required Texts:

1. *Autobiography of Frederick Douglass* **by Frederick Douglass**
2. *Beloved* **by Toni Morrison**
3. *The Hate U Give* **by Angie Thomas**
4. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* **by Mary Wollstonecraft**
5. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* **by Harriot Jacobs**
6. *The Handmaid's Tale* **by Margaret Atwood**

*Please see weekly assignments for other articles/texts contextualizing each movement, which will be provided to the student via Canvas.

Primary Projects:

> **#👆Thread (25% of the grade):** Students will write their reactions and questions about the day's reading by posting a thread to Twitter each day a reading assignment is due. A thread (as all of you surely know, but just in case you don't) is a linked series of comments about a single topic; students will decide on what topic to focus on for that day's reading. The thread should include pictures of the day's annotations – marginalia, highlighted passages, underlined / defined words, or any other proof of the student's reading of the text – along with comments, questions, reflections, and analysis of the day's assignment. The student is also welcome to @ other students, link to outside sources, or embed videos, links to articles, or any other hypertextual media they find appropriate for their reflection. To get credit for this assignment, students must append #👆**Thread @kacytillman** to their initial twitter post. Students can create any handle they prefer to maintain their anonymity.

> **#Literaryhistory (25% of the grade):** Students will trace the development of #metoo and #blacklivesmatter in a research project/presentation that will introduce each new unit. They will write a 5 page reflection that discusses how, when, and why the hashtag began to trend. They will then write a literary history of that hashtag, tracing its early American origins using the class's primary texts and peer-reviewed secondary sources; this paper will be the foundation of their unit introduction.

> **1619 Project (50% of the grade):** Students will create a research-based argument about a contemporary social justice movement, which will be part of the larger class collective 1619 Project. Modeled after the *New York Magazine's* interactive, virtual 1619 Project – which traces the connections between the history of enslavement in America to racial inequality in America today – our 1619 Project will use technology to suggest that all gender-, race-, and class-based iniquities are interconnected.

Grading Scale:

The grading system below is the official one used by the University of Tampa. Please pay careful attention to the descriptive adjectives associated with each grade; for example, note the clear distinction between an "outstanding" grade, which literally means that it stands apart from the main group, and an "excellent" grade, which suggests that one's work excelled, but was not clearly distinguished from the rest.

A   Outstanding   (94-100)

AB   Excellent   (88-93)

B   Very Good   (84-87)

BC   Good   (78-83)

C   Average   (74-77)

CD   Below Avg.   (68-73)

D   Passing   (60-67)

F   Failure   (0-59)

NF   No Show   (Failure to attend)

Absences:

Students who do not attend class regularly (i.e. students who miss more than 4 days of class) will receive an F for participation. Being late twice equals one absence. "Late" is defined as any time after the roll sheet has circulated and I have picked it up. Those who arrive after 10 minutes of class cannot be counted present. If you leave early, unless you have extenuating circumstances, you will also be counted absent.

Plagiarism:

Please see the University of Tampa's statement of "Student Rights and Responsibilities" for a discussion of plagiarism in all its forms. Students who plagiarize any work in this class will be taken through the judicial review process and may fail the course. They will definitely fail the assignment they attempted to plagiarize.

Disruption of the Academic Process:

Disruption of the academic process is defined as the act, words, or general conduct of a student in a classroom or other academic environment which in the reasonable estimation of the instructor: (a) directs attention away from the academic matters at hand, such as noisy distractions, persistent, disrespectful or abusive interruption of lecture, exam, academic discussion, or general University operations, or inappropriate use of technology in the classroom, or (b) presents a danger to the health, safety or well-being of self or other persons. References to classroom or academic area include all academic settings (in class or online, and including field experiences). References to Instructor include the course instructor, other faculty, administrators, and/or staff. *For more information about the procedures for handling cases of academic disruption please consult the current UT Catalog.*

Technology:

This course will use online technology for assignment submission. If your technology fails, you may turn in hard copies by the beginning of class on the day the assignment is due & receive full credit for that assignment.

Please refrain from messaging (of any kind) during class, on any device. Please do not take phone calls during class time. Doing so may result in participation deductions.

Late Work:

Late homework will not be accepted, since you will have advance notice of your assignments. However, if you know ahead of time that you will be missing a class, you may turn your work in early and receive full credit. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate about what you need to know for the next discussion.

ADA Compliance:

If you are a student who has special needs because of any disability, please go to the Academic Success Center in North Walker Hall for information regarding registering as a student with a disability. You may also call (813) 257-5757 or email disability.services@ut.edu. Please feel free to discuss this issue with me, in private, if you need more information.

Saunders Writing Center:

The Saunders Writing Center provides free tutoring to all students interested in improving their writing abilities. The Center Tutors will assist with all aspects of **writing**. For example, they help students to identify paper topics and generate ideas, plan and organize drafts, rewrite, and edit. The Center's purpose is not to correct or proofread final drafts, but to aid in learning strategies that good writers use during the process. The Center**,** in Plant Hall 323, is available for assistance with any writing project for any class. Hours are posted. Students may make an appointment or simply drop by **(ext. 6244)**.

 Assignments:

 This syllabus may be subject to changes and addendums. It is the student's responsibility to check the Canvas announcements and assignments daily to make sure he/she has the most up-to-date information.

All assignments are due the day they are listed. Please note due dates and times.

Course Introduction

Week 1:

An introduction to #Activism
#Literaryhistory Presentation Assigned
Discussion of peer-reviewed resources for literature projects/library visit.
1619 Project Introduced

Unit One: #Blacklivesmatter

Week 1:

Selections from Marc Lamont Hill, *Nobody: Casualties of America's War on the Vulnerable from Ferguson to Flint and Beyond*; Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*; Ibram X. Kendi *Stamped from the Beginning: A History of Racist Ideas*; Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*

 #LiteraryHistory Paper and Unit Presentation

Week 2:
Autobiography of Frederick Douglass by Frederick Douglass

Week 3:
Beloved by Toni Morrison

Week 4:
The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

Week 5:

Review, Exam, and Reflection

1619 Project – Examine *New York Magazine's* 1619, Discuss class models for similar project

Unit Two: #MeToo

Week 6:

Selections from Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will*; Matthew Green, "Before #MeToo: The Long Struggle Against Sexual Harassment at Work," Danielle McGuire, Danielle McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance: A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power*, Laura Kipnis, "Has #MeToo Gone Too Far, or Not Far Enough?"

#LiteraryHistory Paper and Unit Presentation

Week 7:
A Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft along with selections from Truth, Stanton, & Anthony

Week 8:

Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl by Harriot Jacobs

Week 9:

Selections from Audre Lorde, Combahee River Collective, Gloria Anzaldua, Lizzo, Beyonce, and Joy Harjo

Week 10:

The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood

Week 11:

Review, Exam, and Reflection
Group/Instructor Meetings for 1619 Class Project

Week 12:

Draft on 1619 Class Project

Week 13:

Workshop 1619 Class Project

Week 14:

Present 1619 Class Project