PHIL 103-1000: Philosophy and the Looking Glass
MTWTR 11-1:45
Chafee 244
May 22-June 24

“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

—1 Corinthians 13:12

Instructor: Professor Haile
Office: 231 Chafee
Office Hours: MW 1:45-3

Course Description
This course is about perception (social, political, personal) and how perception shapes identity (national and individual). We will be asking questions about the nature of reality (what is real?), the nature of social arrangements (are we as a society who we really think we are?), the possibility that reality is a ‘joke’ (are we fooling ourselves in thinking identity is stable), and whether or not history really does repeat itself.

Course Texts
F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby
James Baldwin, Giovanni’s Room
Nella Larsen, Passing
*All other readings will be posted on Sakai
**Course objectives:** At the end of the course, students will

- Be more conversant in ‘race’ theory
- Be more conversant in the spaces between theory and filmic representation
- Be more conversant in the nuances of the race ‘passing’ literature

**Expectations for class**

1. **Attendance, Preparation, Participation:** Your success in this class depends upon your being in class and ready to actively and energetically engage in our collective readings and discussion. That also extends to actively listening, taking notes and reflecting on material covered in the readings and in classroom discussion. Participation encompasses more than just sharing your thoughts—you should additionally be asking questions, taking notes in class and while you read, as well as responding to the thoughts and comments of your fellow students. I simply expect that you will be in class every time, arrive punctually and be prepared.

   I will do my best with lectures and out-of-class assignment to help you be prepared for in-class discussions and assignment, but it is up to you to complete the assignments and the readings to the best of your abilities to contribute to a fruitful classroom experience.

   You will be allowed 3 unexcused absences during the term, no questions asked—more than that and your final grade will be negatively affected. **Excused Absences** must be accompanied with supporting documentation or arrangement in advance, again with documentation.

2. **Reading Assignments:** Readings are to be done prior to class and fully. You should come to class with your book and/or reading in-hand, along with your notes from reading, and always something to say and/or ask. **READING JOURNAL QUESTIONS SHOULD BE DONE BEFORE CLASS!**

3. **Late Work:** All work is expected to be turned in according to the Deadline or will lose 5 points each day that it is late unless otherwise arranged **prior to due date and in consultation with professor.**

4. **Classroom Culture:** Respect and civility are expected at all times, for the professor as well as your fellow classmates. Our readings in the course will touch on sensitive issues, so we all need to keep open minds and respect the free exchange of ideas. You can disagree with someone, but you must thoughtfully express your disagreement with reasoned and responsible language. Do not interrupt the professor or fellow classmates while they are talking, and remember a productive conversation is never dominated by one voice.

   The key word is professionalism—this is both a formal and informal environment, but it is above all else a place of work and that requires civilities and discourages behavior that disrupts those civilities. Come to class on-time and prepared; arriving late is disruptive for everyone in the room; additionally, do not get up and leave class continually.
5. **Technology:** Please put your cell-phones away and turn off sound; usage of tablets and/or laptops will not be allowed in-class, unless necessary for a documented learning disability

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**Course Policies and Statements**

1. **Disability:** Any student with a documented disability is welcome to contact me as early in the semester as possible so that we may arrange reasonable accommodations. As part of this process, please be in touch with Disability Services for Students Office at 302 Memorial Union, Phone 401-874-2098.

2. **Plagiarism:** Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. Cheating is the claiming of credit for work not done independently without giving credit for aid received, or any unauthorized communication during examinations. Any record of scholastic integrity infractions where actions have been taken (i.e., assignment of an "F" on an assignment and notification of the student's dean, dean's authorization to assign an "F" for the course, referral to the University Board on Student Conduct) will be forwarded to the Office of Student Life. A cumulative file will be maintained in that office. The Dean of Students shall notify the student's dean of subsequent infractions. **For a more comprehensive statement regarding plagiarism, please consult your student handbook, “Cheating and Plagiarism” sections 8.27.10-8.27.20.**

3. **Food:** EATING AND/OR DRINKING will not be permitted in class, unless provided by professor.

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**Student Evaluation**

**Writing Portion:**

- **Key Questions Journal (30%)**
  - Students will purchase a 1 or 3-inch binder. Assignments must be typed and properly headed and placed in the binder in sequential order. (Proper heading includes Assignment Date and Question). **ASSIGNMENTS NOT TYPED, HOLE PUNCHED, PROPERLY HEADED, IN ORDER WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**
  - Answers are expected to be **AT LEAST** one paragraph.
  - Journals will be collected **EVERY FRIDAY**. Students must be in attendance to turn in their journal unless otherwise arranged in advance. Journal assignments will be graded on a 0-5 scale.

- **Midterm Exam 25%**
- **Final Paper 35%**

**Writing Goals:** Writing assignments are to develop and demonstrate the following skills:

- Student understanding regarding various question/essay prompts
- How students process information, plan, strategize and organize their thoughts
- Practice how students generate a thesis statement and carry it through an essay format
- To create for students many different opportunities for development in thinking and writing for success after early failure
**Writing/Project Evaluation**

Papers and/or projects will be judged by the following criteria. Papers/projects that meet some but not all of these criteria is a satisfactory (‘C’) paper. A paper that meets all of these criteria is a good (‘B’) paper. A paper that meets and exceeds these criteria is an excellent (‘A’) paper. (See below.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Possible Grades:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposition</td>
<td>The paper/project answers the question(s) posed in the thesis statement correctly with superior efficiency and clarity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>The paper/project exhibits a maximally clear and logical structure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coherence</td>
<td>The paper/project is maximally coherent.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>The paper/project exhibits superior critical analysis, argumentative rigor, and logical acumen.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>The paper/project is extremely well-written and contains no major spelling or grammatical errors</td>
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</tbody>
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Course Grading

Course Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-95</td>
<td>A-: 94-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-83</td>
<td>B-: 82-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75-73</td>
<td>C-: 72-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65-63</td>
<td>D-: 62-60</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>60 and below</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Grade Breakdown:

Attendance/Participation 10%

Key Questions Journal 30% Reading Journals will be collected every Friday at which time all assignments must be completed in full. Late or incomplete assignments will not be accepted.

Midterm Exam 25%

Final Paper 35%
Course Readings

**Theory I: Simulation and Simulacra**  
**Week One: May 22-26**  
**Mon:** Introduction  
**Tues:** Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulations* (16 pages)  
**Weds:** Plato, *Republic*, Book VII (Allegory of the Cave); Plato, *Republic* Book IV, (Divided Line); *Pheado* (79c-100) (The Forms)  
**Thurs:** Plato, *Republic*, Book X (Art/Mimesis); Aristotle, *Politics* (the family is a simulation of society; man is by nature social; man but the natural extension of “Nature”; what is freedom?)

**JOURNALS DUE FRIDAY**

**Theory II: American Identity is a Joke**  
**Week Two: May 29-June 2**  
**Mon:** Marcel Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past* (selections)  
**Tues:** Ralph Ellison, “Change the Yoke, Slip the Joke”; “Tell it Like it is, Baby” (On Abraham Lincoln)  
**Weds:** Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Self-Reliance” (development of a unique American identity)  
**Thurs:** Midterm exam  
**JOURNALS DUE FRIDAY**

**Theory III: History Repeats Itself**  
**Week Three: June 5-9**  
**Mon-Thurs:** F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*  
**JOURNALS DUE FRIDAY**

**Week Four: June 12-16**  
**Mon-Thurs:** James Baldwin, *Giovanni’s Room*  
**JOURNALS DUE FRIDAY**

**Week Five: June 19-23**  
**Mon&Tues:** James Baldwin, “Stranger in the Village”  
“Jay Gatsby's Passing in F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby” in *The Tragic Buck*  
**Weds:** Gilles Deleuze, “Introduction” in *Difference and Repetition*  
**Thurs:** Movie, *Elegy*; *Final Paper DUE*