Course: 4150 6.0A (Y) Critical Psychology: Theory, Research, and Practice

Course Webpage: http://www.yorku.ca/tteo/index/Courses.html

Term: Fall and Winter 2015/2016

Prerequisites: see Calendar

Course Instructor
Thomas Teo
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Course consultation hours: By appointment

Time and Location
Wednesday: 11:30-14:30, Founders College 103

Course Description
This course provides an introduction to the international movement of critical psychology, which developed in the context of challenging the mainstream’s ontological, epistemological, and ethical-political assumptions, as well as its practices, in order to provide more comprehensive theories and interventions.

• In the fall term we analyze critiques of psychology and practice critical reflexivity regarding the foundations of the discipline and profession.
• In the winter term we focus on alternatives developed by critical psychologists in various subdisciplines of psychology and look at critical topics such as globalization, liberation, subjectivity, and resistance.
• The course involves lectures, seminar presentations, participation, and discussions. Films and videos may supplement some lectures.
• The readings are central to the course. The lectures and presentations serve to enrich, clarify, and illustrate crucial issues from the assigned readings.

• Course Learning Objectives: The purpose of this course is to assist students in developing an overview of critical psychology and of alternative approaches developed in psychology. Students will be able to compare and contrast mainstream and critical psychology and gain knowledge about theories, concepts, methods, and practices in critical psychology. The course contributes to students’ understanding of the limitations of psychology as well as to applying critical psychology to their various fields of interest.

• Purpose of the course: The course is designed to develop the competence of analyzing and evaluating psychological ideas, understanding the significance of hidden assumptions in psychology, learning about the consequences of science, applying reflexivity, improving presentation skills, critical thinking, and the written expression of ideas.

Course Texts / Readings and Tentative Outline in the Fall Term

“The logic of the human sciences is a logic of the question” (Gadamer 1960/1997, p. 370).

September 16, 2015
1. Introduction

September 23, 2015
2. Can we learn anything from history?

First Fall Comment for September 23 meeting is due on September 21 (Monday) at 13:00 (see below)!

September 30, 2015
3. Ontological reflections: What is the nature of the discipline of psychology?
First student presentations in the fall term on September 30!

October 7, 2015
4. Ontological reflections: What does it mean to be human?

October 14, 2015
5. Ontological reflections: What is the nature of psychological concepts and theories?

October 21, 2015
6. Epistemological reflections: What are the consequences of positivism in psychology?

October 28, 2015
7. Epistemological reflections: Do social characteristics influence knowledge?
   • Optional: Search for standpoint theories and social epistemology

October 29 – November 1: Fall reading days
8. Epistemological reflections: What does culture contribute to knowledge?


November 11, 2015
9. Ethical-political reflections: What are the influences of money, (a lack of) morality, and moral praxis in psychology?


November 18, 2015
10. Ethical-political reflections: Does psychology care about social justice?


November 25, 2015
11. Ethical-political reflections: Does psychology make people into problems?

- Optional: See heteronormativity, gender-based violence, homophobia, etc. in the Encyclopedia of critical psychology.

December 2, 2015
12. Optional individual or group meetings in course director’s office: Discussion about papers, presentations, etc. (BSB 231).
Course Texts / Readings and Tentative Outline in the Winter Term

January 6, 2016
1. Critical psychology around the world.

First Winter Comment for January 6 meeting is due on January 4 (Monday) at 13:00 (see below).

January 13, 2016
2. Doing critical theory.

First student presentations in winter on January 13!

January 20, 2016
3. Doing liberation psychology.

January 27, 2016
4. Doing participatory action research.
   - Lykes, M. B. (2013). Participatory and action research as a transformative praxis: Responding to humanitarian crises from the margins. *American Psychologist, 68*(8), 774-783. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0034360

February 3, 2016
5. Beyond “clinical:” Critical community psychology.

February 5, 2016: Last date to drop course without receiving a grade.
February 10, 2016

February 13-19: Reading week

February 24, 2016:
7. Class and beyond: Power and inequality.

March 2, 2016:
8. “Race” and beyond: Power and whiteness.

March 9, 2016:
9. Gender and beyond

March 16, 2016:
10. Futures: Indigenous psychologies and globalization

March 23, 2016:
11. Conclusion: Critical psychology as a reflexive psychology of human subjectivity.
12. Review of the course

Additional readings may be assigned or recommended during the course.

Grading, Assignment Submissions, Lateness Penalties, and Missed Tasks

Regular attendance and participation

- There are no exams in this course.
- In order to ensure that the material has been reflected upon adequately, regular attendance and participation are necessary.
- **If more than 2 meetings in the Fall term are missed, the student must write an essay (or essays) regarding the missed meetings** (regardless of the reasons for missing class) to be handed in on the same day as the fall paper. If you miss 3 meetings, then you need to hand in one additional paper; if you miss 4 meetings then you need to hand in two additional papers. If you miss more than 4 meetings, then you automatically receive an “F” for the term. Each additional paper is worth 15% and changes the composition of the fall grade accordingly.
- **If more than 2 meetings in the Winter term are missed, the student must write an additional essay (or essays) regarding the missed meetings** (regardless of the reasons for missing class) to be handed in on the same day as the winter paper. If you miss 3 meetings, then you need to hand in one additional paper; if you miss 4 meetings then you need to hand in two additional papers. If you miss more than 4 meetings, then you will automatically receive an “F” for the term. Each additional paper is worth 15% and changes the composition of the winter grade accordingly.
- Missed meetings or lack thereof in the Fall term do not carry over to the Winter term!
- **Attendance** will be taken around 15 minutes after class begins. A signature missing at that time counts as a missed meeting. Attendance is required until the end of class.
- **Participation means active engagement during the meetings. Participation counts towards 15% of the fall grade and towards 15% of the winter grade.**
- The course director reserves the right to ban the use of laptops (phones, tablets, etc.) in class or may ask you to close your electronic devices.

Presentations in class

- **One presentation in the Fall term and one presentation in the Winter term!**
- The course not only increases knowledge of a particular subject matter but also trains academic qualifications such as presentation skills and leading class discussions.
- Presentations should be educational for peers.
- The duration of the presentation (and leading a class discussion) for each student should be approximately **20-25 minutes.**
- **Assessment of the presentation by the whole group is taken into account (peer evaluation). Written assessments by class include sections on "Strengths," "Suggestions for Improvement," and a "Grade."**
- Averaged grades and feedback are provided usually one week after the presentation (e.g., after class).
- In the peer-evaluation process do not grade your own presentation or a collaborator. If you did not collaborate with a presenter (on the same day as your presentation) you may grade his or her presentation.
• The presentation must go beyond class reading material and include **additional** sources. The presentation may include audiovisual material and class discussions should involve specific questions (or quizzes, games, etc.) derived from the reading material.
• Presentations can be done individually or as a group effort.
• PowerPoint (or a similar presentation software) is recommended.
• **Provide an electronic copy of your PowerPoint presentation at least 12 hours before your presentation (send to instructor via e-mail).**
• **List all sources (reference list) at the end of the PowerPoint presentation.**
• Use at least 25% primary sources in your presentation.
• The presentation (and leading a class discussion) in the Fall term counts towards 25% of the Fall grade.
• The presentation (and leading a class discussion) in the Winter term counts towards 25% of the Winter grade.
• Grading for each presentation: Instructor: 50% -- Peers: 50%.
• Letter grades will be used (A+, A, B+, etc.) which are converted into numbers (A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, etc.) which are averaged (for instance, B+ ranges from 6.5 to 7.49).
• Postponing a presentation (exception: documented medical reasons) carries an automatic deduction of 1.5 points.

**Papers**

• The written elaboration of the presentation in a manuscript is required: **One** paper in the Fall term and **one** paper in the Winter term.
• Each paper must be written in APA format. The minimum is 3500 words without references, title page, and abstract (maximum is 4000 words).
• References must be drawn from at least 12 different academic sources. Use subheadings but do not add empty lines. Wikipedia does not count as an academic source!
• Use at least 25% primary sources in your paper.
• The paper must have a psychological perspective!
• The deadline for the Fall paper is **December 11, 2015, 23:59**. Send e-mail attachment and hand in a hardcopy within a couple of business days. There will be deductions for late submissions.
• The deadline for the Winter paper is **April 8, 2016, 23:59**. Send e-mail attachment. Hand in hardcopy within a couple of days. There will be deductions for late submissions.
• Deductions: Each day late will count as a deduction of 0.15 for the first two days, 0.25 for the next two days, 0. 35 for the next two days, etc. This means: If you receive an average A for the paper and you are two days late you would receive: 8 – 0. 30 = 7.7 (which is still an A).
• **All** papers must be sent as **e-mail attachments** to the instructor.
• More information on guidelines for the paper will be provided in one of the class meetings in the fall.
• The Fall paper represents 35% of the Fall grade.
• The Winter paper represents 35% of the Winter grade.
• Grading: Letter grades.
• Organization: 1. **Title page** (p. 1): Title of paper, name, student number; course title; term). 2. **Abstract** (p. 2) (150 - 200 words). 3. **Paper** (pp. 3-16) and 4. **References** (p. 17 and 18 if necessary) [Start a new page for the reference section]. Typing: Papers should be typed in Times Roman. Use a 12-point font and double spacing for the entire manuscript. Use 1-inch margins on the left, right, top, and bottom of the page. The text is to be left-aligned and not right-justified. Proofread the paper. Staple finished manuscript].
Comments (Questions)

- **Fall and winter: 750 words** for all readings (excluding optional readings) (use the word count function in your word processing program and list the number of words at the end of the section). Do not count references! Do not count direct quotes.

- **Comments:** Identify significant issues (2-3) in the texts and ask questions about them. Or, alternatively, ask a set of questions regarding the central idea in both readings. A comment should be provocative, demonstrate comprehension of the concepts, and challenge a viewpoint. **Do not summarize material.** Referencing is not required but **necessary** if you use additional sources.

- You should be aware of the difference between primary and secondary sources [Wrong {reading Teo (2005)}: "Kant argued …;" Correct: "According to Teo (2005), Kant argued …"] [Reason: Teo provides an interpretation that might be adequate or inadequate].

- Answers/comments are due on each **Monday at 13:00** and must be sent as 1 attachment to my e-mail address (see above) (or in the main text). Send as a **Word** file (or Pages file or PDF file).

- **Write your name at the top of the comments!**

- Write 4150 in the "subject" heading of the e-mail.

- There will be **deductions for late submissions** (one full letter grade every 3 hours) and questions/comments received on Tuesday after 12:00 will not be accepted anymore (Exception: documented medical reasons).

- The first possible comments are due on Monday, September 21 at 13:00 for the September 23 Wednesday meeting. Questions/Comments are usually returned not later than Wednesdays.

- It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that all questions/comments were received back.

- If the day of comment submission falls on a holiday, comments should be submitted 1, 2, or 3 days earlier (but not later).

- Questions/Comments represent 25% of the grade in each term.

- Grading: Each “question / comments” will receive a qualitative grade: Outstanding (exceptional) = A+; excellent = A; Very good = B+; Good = B; etc. These qualitative comments are converted into numbers (A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, etc.) and averaged.

- **For the day of one’s own presentation, no questions/comments are accepted!**

- You need to submit **6 comments per term.** If you submit more than 6 comments, only the highest rated 6 comments will be used.

The final grade in this course is based equally on the grades of the Fall and Winter terms.

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Final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or Faculty grades distribution profiles!
IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION AND DUTIES

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with York’s policies/procedures/regulations:
http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/

• Academic Honesty Policy
• Academic Integrity for students
  http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity/students/index.htm
• **It is a requirement that all students** take the Online Academic Integrity Tutorial within the first 4 weeks of class containing information about plagiarism
  http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic_integrity/
• **Make sure that you familiarize yourself** with Faculty of Health Academic Integrity Tutorial and Quiz
  http://www.yorku.ca/health/yquiz/academicintegritytutorial.pdf
• Academic accommodation for students with disabilities
• Religious Observance Accommodation, etc.
  https://w2prod.sis.yorku.ca/Apps/WebObjects/cdm.woa/wa/regobs/

See also:

• Disability Services in CDS: http://ds.info.yorku.ca 416-736-5297
• Teaching Commons: http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca 416-736-5754
• York’s Centre for Human Rights www.yorku.ca/rights 416-736-5682