

Creating a Community for Women of Color (WOC) Students

WOMEN OF COLOR FEMINISM INTRO COURSE

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OVERVIEW

RETENTION RATES

- Last year I analyzed the retention rates for WOC students. The rates prove that the University needs to invest in retention methods and resources for WOC students.
- Following the 2013-2014 cohort from their first year to second year, the rates are as followed:
 - 80-83% for the general student population
 - 79-80% for students of color
 - 60-70% for WOC students

COURSE PURPOSE

- To provide the knowledge, resources and support to help students build intersectional solidarity between their peers and faculty. This course would create a foundation for students to think critically on their own experiences with systems of subjugation through WOC feminist theory. Students and faculty would monitor students' progress through weekly reflections.
- Refer to separate sheet for course topics

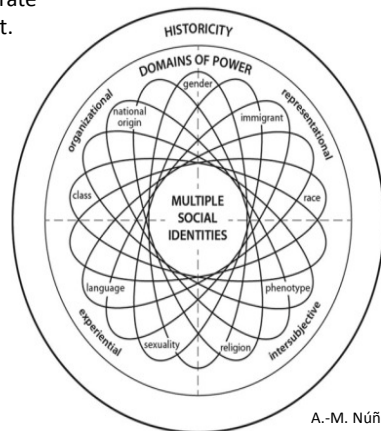
POTENTIAL MATERIALS

- This class will draw from WOC activists and theorists such as: Audre Lorde, Gloria Anzaldúa, Angela Davis, Cherrie Moraga, Mitsuye Yamada, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Dean Spade, Michelle Alexander, Dark Matter, Vine Deloria Jr.
- Texts and media: Exerpts from *This Bridge Called my Back*, *Good Hair*, *FREE CeCe*, *Babakiueria*, JamilaLyiscott's *3 Ways to Speak English*, *Gran Torino*, *The House I live in*, *Made in L.A.*, *Bamboo Among the Oaks*
- Movements: Chicana Por Mi Raza, Stop Telling Women to Smile, INCITE!, South Asian American Digital Archive

INTERSECTIONALITY

For definitions of terminology, refer to separate sheet.

This diagram does not represent all identities present in our society



A.-M. Núñez

PROS AND CONS

PROS

- Centering around WOC.
- Looking past multiculturalist pedagogy and incorporating power dynamics. Would incorporate culturally relevant pedagogy.
- Reflecting WOC in the faculty and curriculum.
- Intersectional class curriculum
- Collaboratively created by students and faculty to meet students' needs.

CONS

- "Outsider-within" concept (Duncan).
- Deflection of discussions on racism and systems of subjugation.
- False sense of inclusion
- Might paint WOC as a homogenous group.
- Course could excuse the program from centering on WOC.

REFLECTION

- I began this research with my mentor, Dr. Asha Sen, because we noticed there is a lack of resources and support for WOC on this campus. We want this course to be a space where people who do not benefit from white or male privilege can find peer and faculty support, claim their education, and reclaim histories that have been erased. I have many concerns in regards to implementing an introductory WOC Feminism course. Throughout my research process, I began to wonder if this class would even be possible at UWEC. I worry that the University, like the program, could use this course to tokenize students of color by promoting a false sense of diversity and resources for potential, incoming, and current students. This course should be a living project and continually reframed based on current student needs. I would like to see this course taught in a way that challenges white professionalism, internalization of subjugation, and the institutionalization of social constructs. This course has the potential for collaboration with other programs and departments.

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- [Project sponsored by ORSP Diversity Mentoring Grant. Special thanks to LTS for printing this poster.](#)