

Fall 2024

SOC 163

Popular Culture

Class: Anthro/Art Practice Bldg 160, TuThu

Instructor: Prof. Marina Romani (she/they)

Email: marinaromani@berkeley.edu

Office: Social Sciences Building 498

Office hours: Wed 2 - 4 and by appointment

Sign up for office hours: marinaromani.youcanbook.me

(in person or on zoom at <https://berkeley.zoom.us/my/marinaromani>)

Graders:

Johannah Hansen, johannah.hansen@berkeley.edu

Raymond Clifton Hartjen, rhartjen@berkeley.edu

Course Description

Popular culture has a profound impact on the lives of many people in different social groups – we know our favorite songs by heart, we watch and rewatch our favorite series, we consume videos and podcasts. In this course, we'll examine various forms of popular culture for their aesthetic, political, and sociological content. We will begin the course by examining the definition of popular culture and analyzing how texts, artifacts, and behavior come to be seen as popular. We'll then address and criticize the hegemonic role of American popular culture from a comparative perspective, and we'll take into consideration its reception and effects on different communities.

The course will be taught through a multidisciplinary, multimedia, and intersectional approach, and popular culture will be explored in a wide range of expressions – from melodramas to TV series, from true crime podcasts to queer icons, and more. Together with our case studies, we will focus on different sociological theories that will guide and inform our understanding of the materials.

Some of our guiding questions will be: what makes something “popular”? How is “popular culture” defined alongside (and sometimes against) “culture”? Why are some forms of popular culture thought of as lowbrow, unsophisticated, trashy? How are structures of power inequalities reproduced or challenged through popular culture? Can popular culture be a space for resistance?

Readings

All readings and course materials will be available on bCourses. Please check bCourses for the most updated version of the readings schedule.

An important note about the structure of this course

While this is a large class and I will give several lectures, in-class discussion will be an important part of the course. I welcome you all to participate by sharing with the class or during office hours any particular reflections or examples relevant to our course.

Grading, Assignments, and Deadlines

This class can be taken for 3 or 4 units.

Students taking the course for 4 units will write longer essays for each exam. The exact wordcount for 3 and 4 units will be specified on each exam's guidelines.

Grade Distribution

ASSIGNMENT	WEIGHT	DUE DATE
Participation	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Beginning-of-semester questionnaire due September 7- Weekly reading responses between Week 2 and 13
Exam 1	20%	September 26
Exam 2	30%	November 7
Exam 3	30%	December 18

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Range
A	100% to 94%
A-	< 94% to 90%
B+	< 90% to 87%
B	< 87% to 84%
B-	< 84% to 80%
C+	< 80% to 77%
C	< 77% to 74%

C-	< 74% to 70%
D+	< 70% to 67%
D	< 67% to 64%
D-	< 64% to 61%
F	< 61% to 0%

Students are expected to thoroughly and carefully read the course policies below.

Reading List and Semester Schedule

May be subject to changes. Please consult bCourses for the most updated version of the readings

Readings should be completed before the class in which they are assigned.

All readings are available on our bCourses site.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Week 1: Introduction to the course

August 29

- Introduction: syllabus, policies, course details.
- Complete the [Beginning of Semester Questionnaire](#) by September 7

Week 2: Popular culture as social practice

September 3

- Carefully read the syllabus: any questions?
- Storey, John, 2009. "Chapter 1: What is Popular Culture?" (pp. 1-16) in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction*. 9th Edition. Pearson.

September 5

- Grazian, David, 2017. "Chapter 1. Everything Counts: The Social Organization of Popular Culture" (pp. 3-22) in *Mix It up : Popular Culture, Mass Media, and Society*. 2nd Edition. Norton.

Week 3: Hegemony and the construction of "authenticity"

September 10

- Grazian. "Chapter 2. We Are the Champions: A Functionalist Approach to Popular Culture" (pp. 24-33 and 40-45).
- Grazian. "Popular Culture and the Search for Authenticity" (pp. 167-171).

September 12

Read the texts in this order:

- Storey, John, 2009. "Hegemony" (pp. 83-86).
- Gramsci, Antonio, 1971 [1929-1935]. "Hegemony: Intellectuals and the State" in *Selections from Prison Notebooks* (trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith), Lawrence & Wishart. Read just the initial section, pp. 85-87.
- Kalia, Ammar. 2019. "[So flawed and problematic: why the term 'world music' is dead.](#)" *The Guardian*.
- Bhutto, Fatima, 2019. "[The End of America's Cultural Hegemony Is Here,](#)" *Time*.

Week 4: "What Is This 'Black' in Black Popular Culture?"

September 17

Exam 1 distributed.

- Hall, Stuart, 2019 [1993]. "What Is This 'Black' in Black Popular Culture?", in *Essential Essays. Volume 2*, ed. by David Morley. Read the excerpts indicated on the pdf.
- Cooper, Bertrand, 2019. "Who Actually Gets to Create Black Pop Culture?", *Current Affairs*. Read pp. 1-11 and 23-30.
- Morris, Wesley, 2019. "[Why Is Everyone Always Stealing Black Music?](#)", *The New York Times*.

September 19

- Collins, Patricia, 2002. "Mammies, Matriarchs, and Other Controlling Images" in *Black Feminist Thought*, New York: Routledge (Read: 69-84 and 93-96).

Week 5: Review Session

September 24

Review of materials from Week 1 to 4 in preparation for Exam 1.

September 26

NO CLASS: Exam 1 due (grace period until September 29).

CLASS AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

Week 6: “What Is This ‘Black’ in Black Popular Culture?”, cont’d

October 1

- Khabeer, Su’ad Abdul, 2016. “Introduction” in *Muslim Cool : Race, Religion, and Hip Hop in the United States*. New York University Press. Read pp. 1-22.

October 3

- Shani, Jamila, 2002. “Can I Get a Witness? Testimony from a Hip-Hop Feminist,” in *Colonize This! Young Women of Color on Today’s Feminism*, ed. Daisy Hernández and Bushra Rehman. Seal Press.

Week 7: Taste

October 8

- Bourdieu, Pierre, 1979. Excerpts from *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Routledge. Read the excerpts on bCourses (pp. 1-7, 28-33).

October 10

- Grazian. “Chapter 7. Living in the Material World: Cultural Consumption and Social Class in America” (pp. 144-181).

PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION:

IDENTITIES, BODIES, EMOTIONS

Week 8: Celebrity culture and the construction of the self

October 15

- Douglas and McDonnell, 2019. *Celebrity: A History of Fame*, “Ch. 1: Theories of Celebrity.” NY Press. Read pp. 21-49.

- Dyer, Richard, 1986. Read the excerpt from *Heavenly Bodies. Film Stars and Society*. Routledge.

October 17

- Douglas and McDonnell. "Ch. 1: Theories of Celebrity." Read only the section titled "Celebrity and Identity", pp. 53-61.
- Tolentino, Jia, 2020. "[The I in the Internet](#)", CCCB LAB (also in Tolentino, 2019, *Trick Mirror: Reflections on Self-Delusion*). Optional: watch the videos in the article by Tolentino.

Week 9: Celebrity culture and parasocial relationships

October 22

- Douglas and McDonnell. "Ch. 1: Theories of Celebrity." Read only the section "The Psychology of Fandom", pp. 49-53.
- Hoffner and Bond, 2022. "Parasocial Relationships, Social Media, & Well-being," *Current Opinions in Psychology* 45.

October 24

- Taylor, Diana, 2020. "False Identifications: Minority Populations Mourn Diana" (pp. 133-60) in *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Duke University Press.
- Paredes, Deborah, 2019. "[Celia Cruz: The Voice Of Experience](#)", NPR.
- Shih, Paris, 2021. "[Divafication: A Queer of Color Memoir](#)". *Los Angeles Review of Books Blog*.

Week 10: Algorithmic anxiety: who consumes the consumer?

October 29

- **Exam 2 distributed**
- Airoldi, Massimo, 2022. "Chapter 1: Why Not A Sociology of Algorithms" in *Machine Habitus: Towards a Sociology of Algorithms*. Polity Press. Read pp. 1-2 and 18-31.
- Noble, Safiya Umoja, 2018. "Conclusion" (pp. 171-182) in *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism*. New York University Press.

October 31

- Chayka, Kyle, 2022. "[The Age of Algorithmic Anxiety](#)," *The New Yorker*.

- Nguyen, Terry, 2022. "[Everything is trending all at once on TikTok](#)", Vox.
- Chayka, Kyle, 2022. "[How the Internet Turned Us Into Content Machines.](#)" *The New Yorker*.

Week 11: Review and Workshop

November 5

Workshop for Exam 2.

November 7

Exam 2 due. No class.

POP CULTURE AND RESISTANCE

Week 12: Queer cultures and methods

November 12

- Foucault, Michel, 1981. "Method" in *History of Sexuality*, Vol 1. Penguin. Read pp. 92-102.
- Stone, Amy. 2018. "The Geography of Research on LGBTQ Life: Why Sociologists Should Study the South, Rural Queers, and Ordinary Cities." *Sociology Compass* 12.11. Read pp. 1-3 and 7-14 (starting from the section titled "The stakes of expanding our research").
- O'Flynn, Brian, 2018. "[Is It Possible to Escape the Commercialization of Pride?](#)", *Them*.
- Banks, Beck, 2021. "[Small-town Pride celebrations emerge - and show that LGBTQ life in America is flourishing outside of cities.](#)" *The Conversation*.

November 14

- Piepzna-Samarasinha, Leah Lakshmi, 2019. "Disability Justice/Stonewall's Legacy, or: Love Mad Trans Black Women When They Are Alive and Dead, Let Their Revolutions Teach Your Resistance All the Time," *QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking*, 6(2), 54-62.
- In-class exercise:
"We don't live in a society whose culture is without conflict. So, how do people mark difference and resistance? In thinking about this, consider the following: how

many subcultures can you name? Are these demonstrating resistance to mainstream values? If so, how do they communicate this? Look at their media representation and interview your family and friends to see how they view various subcultures. Do they find them interesting? Threatening? Why? What might gear the appropriation of difference by the mainstream? Crucially, what happens to its meaning once appropriated? Or do you think that, with new media technologies, alternative ways of demonstrating resistance have emerged? Is the idea of an anti-mainstream subculture a little outdated given online interaction across multiple forums and connections to a range of interest groups? Do we have a concept of 'self' that is far more multiple and complex these days? Can a Gramscian approach explain this or does this approach fail to adequately account for twenty-first-century identities?" (Adapted from Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*).

Week 13: Visual cultures

November 19

- Treuer, David, 2022. "[How 'Reservation Dogs' Exploded the Myths of Native American Life](#)", *The Atlantic*.
- In class: watching two episodes of *Reservation Dogs*.

November 21

- Readings and screening TBD.

Week 14

Thanksgiving week: no class.

Week 15: Review Sessions

December 3

Exam 3 distributed.

Review in preparation for the final exam.

December 5

Review in preparation for the final exam.

RRR Week

December 9-13. I will hold extra office hours.

Finals Week

Final Exam due December 18.

Course Requirements and Policies

Participation

Participation is crucial to the learning experience in our course. You are responsible for studying all the materials we cover during class, including on days when you are absent. I will not take attendance every day, but your participation and engagement with the materials will be evaluated by each student posting weekly responses on bCourses (see below).

Participation includes:

1. **Bringing your annotated readings to class** (electronic version is fine – that’s what I’ll be using as well).
2. **Completing the Beginning of Semester Questionnaire.**
3. **Every week between Week 2 and Week 13, submitting your weekly response (between 250 and 350 words each) related to the weekly readings.**

IMPORTANT: Some weeks I might require you to write slightly longer responses or work on specific prompts, therefore make sure to check the guidelines on bCourses for each weekly response.

This assignment will be graded for completion (credit/no credit) and you will receive full credit only if you:

- submit all required questions. You are allowed one excused response. A total of 10 entries – including the Beginning of Semester Questionnaire – is required to receive full credit.
 - write responses that are reflective, not simply a summary of course content. Your responses may refer to: major arguments or propositions in the readings, specific details or passages that you’d like to consider together, extra materials or topics related to the readings, how the readings relate to current events.
 - respond to the week’s prompt, when one is assigned. When a specific prompt is assigned, the response cannot be skipped.
4. **Engaging in in-class discussion, activities, and active listening.** This means taking part in small-group discussions, engaging with other students’ comments, and sharing your group’s comments and reflections with the whole class.

Readings

In this course, readings and assignments will take a substantial amount of time, and you should plan accordingly. Annotating your readings and note-taking are crucial in order to keep up with the class materials.

All reading and viewing assignments need to be completed prior to the scheduled class. All materials are available on bCourses, and you are expected to bring the assigned readings to every class (paper or electronic copy).

If you'd like to print your readings, you can print for no charge at [Open Computing Facility \(OCF\)](#) in the MLK Student Union. OCF is a volunteer-run computer lab where you can print your assignments and papers.

You can print for a fee at several UC Berkeley libraries:

<https://studenttech.berkeley.edu/campus-libraries>

<https://www.lib.berkeley.edu/visit/print-scan>

Exams

The three exams for this course will be timed, take-home, open-book, examinations that consist of questions or short essays that assess students' mastery of the course materials. Exams will be cumulative (covering material from the entirety of the semester) and will be geared towards asking students to synthesize the scholarship and case studies covered in the course. Students who keep up with the course materials and lectures will be well prepared to successfully complete the exams.

Grade distribution and due dates for the reading responses are indicated above on this syllabus. Before deciding to remain in this course, make sure you check all the deadlines and make sure you are able to meet them.

Course Policies

Public Health Guidelines

We will follow UC Berkeley's public health measures related to the coronavirus pandemic and any other circumstances. You'll find the most current information here:

<https://coronavirus.berkeley.edu/>. Let's take care of each other and our communities.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all lectures, which is crucial for understanding course content and performing well in the class. In class, I will cover the most important topics from the readings, as well as complement the readings with extra materials with which students will be expected to be familiar.

I will not take attendance every class meeting, but being present and actively participating in class is central to the learning process.

Class begins promptly at 10 minutes after the scheduled hour. Please be present on time as late arrivals disrupt the class.

If you miss more than five classes, please come talk to me in office hours to discuss your situation.

If you can't attend because of a religious observance, emergency, sports schedule, or health issue, please talk to me as soon as possible.

If you are feeling sick, or experiencing symptoms, please err on the side of caution and don't come to class. Given the current public health situation, I understand if, at times, we'll need to find creative ways to make sure that everybody is able to participate and meet the course requirements. For example, if you get sick, we'll discuss your situation together, and we will find appropriate ways to make up any missed classes.

Grading Philosophy

I will provide you with extensive guidelines for each assignment during the semester. The graders will grade your work with the utmost care and respect, and in the most unbiased way possible. I believe that the grade you get is the grade you earn. I also believe that your final grade in the course should reflect an accurate assessment of the entire body of work

you submit for the class. If something unexpected or tragic occurs with one assignment (e.g. you do much worse on an assignment due to personal circumstances, you were unable to turn it in on time and received a 0, etc.), I will still evaluate the rest of your coursework to see what grade you deserve for the entire course – in other words, focus on the other assignments and show you deserve an A in the course in spite of one major slip-up. You will never receive a grade *lower* than what you earned by sheer point calculation, but you may receive a grade *higher* if your work proves it (e.g. improvement during the semester, exceptional final paper, etc.).

I review every grade submitted at the end of the course and will handle things like borderline grades, rounding, etc. based on the performance of your work as a whole. I even sometimes re-read your already graded work to see if you should be bumped up from a B+ to an A- if you are on the borderline. These are done for *every student*, regardless of whether you email me or not (to ensure a fair playing field for all my students).

Late Assignments and Extensions

All deadlines are indicated in this syllabus: please put them on your calendar and make sure to turn in your work on time. It's your responsibility to carefully check to make sure that your work is uploaded correctly on bCourses.

Late work will be downgraded one third of a letter grade per day (e.g., A to A-, B+ to B, etc.). Work submitted more than 3 days after the deadline will not be graded and will receive a zero.

Extensions will only be given in extreme circumstances, with prior notification and appropriate documentation (such as a doctor's note) explaining the reason why the assignment cannot be turned in on time.

We are living in very difficult times, and many of us are struggling in lots of different ways. Let's check in with each other when necessary and take care of our community. I understand that life is messy and complicated, and unexpected circumstances may arise, but please reach out to me as soon as possible if this is the case. I really want to support you and I want you to succeed, but in order to do that you need to keep open communication with me. Feel free to reach out!

Regrade Policy

If you want to ask for a re-grade, please follow the steps below. You have two weeks after receiving your grade to initiate this process. I do not do re-grades after this two-week cut-off (to avoid people asking for re-grades at the end of the semester because their grades are borderline).

1. Write a detailed cover letter to me that explains how you understand the instructor's perspective and why you still have an issue with the grade (not in terms of effort, but what you thought was mis-graded in terms of content, structure, guidelines).
2. I will re-grade your work (the entire assignment) and whatever grade you get becomes the final grade (either higher or lower).

Please have sober judgment over your own work and really consider the instructor's perspective. Regardless of how much time or effort you put into the assignment, if it simply did not meet the requirements or if you did not adequately communicate your argument, you may still have gotten a lower grade.

Technology

Please don't hesitate to use a laptop or tablet to take notes in class. However, checking social media or messaging friends does not constitute "participation", and I will count you absent if I find you misusing your computer during class.

Technology use excludes phones – please keep your phones away during class.

Communication and Office Hours

Feel free to come into office hours for anything! Come to introduce yourself, to talk about your academic interests, or if there are any circumstances that are making your semester harder. I'll always be happy to talk!

Please sign up at the link at the top of the syllabus if you know in advance that you'd like to come in. If you do not sign up, you are still welcome to drop in, but I do sometimes step out of the office/Zoom call when there is no appointment to run a quick errand.

If office hours are full or you cannot make the times, you may email me to set up another

time. If you have a very short question, you can try to drop by and sneak in before/after a student for a quick question (as not every student will use the entire 20 minutes they signed up for) – but be prepared to wait patiently as well.

Please expect a 24 to 48 hour turnaround for emails – this means you should not put off questions until the last minute. While I am happy to respond to specific and minor questions over email, it is more helpful to discuss substantive issues in person during office hours. Make sure to check your berkeley.edu email address for all course-related correspondence throughout the semester.

Academic Accommodations

If you need support, I am happy to help you find the right campus resource who can help, without needing to disclose private personal information to me.

The purpose of academic accommodations is to ensure that all students have a fair chance at academic success. Disability, or hardships such as basic needs insecurity, uncertain documentation and immigration status, medical and mental health concerns, pregnancy and parenting, significant familial distress, and experiencing sexual violence or harassment, can affect a student's ability to satisfy particular course requirements. Students have the right to reasonable academic accommodations, without having to disclose personal information to instructors. For more information about accommodations, scheduling conflicts related to religious creed or extracurricular activities, please see the Academic Accommodations hub website: [Berkeley Support Portal](#).

Feel free to come and talk to me any time about any issues regarding accommodations about assignments, deadlines, attendance, and anything related to our course.

Student Learning Center

The [Student Learning Center](#) offers academic support in different fields, including social sciences and writing: “The Student Learning Center supports a global community of learners as they navigate the cultural expectations and academic rigor of UC Berkeley. Through service models that honor their diverse starting points and meet them where they are, we aim to empower all students to realize their full academic potential and aspirations.”

If you would like more support with your writing, there are resources on campus to help in writing your papers.

1. Check out the Student Learning Center and their programs: [Writing | Student Learning Center](#)
2. Look on the bCourses website for our class. I will post some resources in a folder labeled “Writing Resources.” These are some rather thorough guides written specifically by and for the Sociology department.

Mental Health, Wellness, and Care

All students – regardless of background or identity – may experience a range of issues that can become barriers to learning. These issues include, but are not limited to, strained relationships, anxiety, depression, alcohol and other drug problems, difficulties with concentration, sleep, and eating, and/or lack of motivation. Such mental health concerns can diminish both academic performance and the capacity to participate in daily activities. In the event that you need mental health support, or are concerned about a friend, UC Berkeley offers many services, such as free short-term counseling at University Health Services.

[CAPS](#) is an excellent resource on campus: “UHS Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) supports the emotional, psychological, educational, social and cultural development of all UC Berkeley students through a wide range of multiculturally based counseling, psychiatric, career, consultation, training and educational services.”

If you find you are struggling, please feel free to come talk to me. I’m not a mental health professional, but I can always listen to you and direct you to the resources available on campus, and support you as best as I can. Please do not wait until you are suffering to reach out, although you can certainly do so even at that point.

Another campus website which has links to many resources is [recalibrate](#). I will add more resources for mental health and wellbeing on bCourses over the course of the semester.

Remember that seeking help is a good and courageous thing to do – both for yourself and for those who care about you.

Disabled Students’ Program

If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, you can work with the [Disabled Students' Program \(DSP\)](#) to request an official accommodation. DSP is the campus office responsible for authorizing disability-related academic accommodations, in cooperation with the students themselves and their instructors. You can find more information about

DSP, including contact information and the application process at dsp.berkeley.edu. If you have already been approved for accommodations through DSP, please meet with me so we can develop an implementation plan together.

To ask for an extension or accommodation using your DSP letter, you must first be sure that your DSP letter allows for the accommodation you are requesting. If you are asking for an extension, please suggest a reasonable due date (allowed by your letter) to turn in the assignment.

Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Services

To learn more about how to support survivors, or how to file a report and receive support services, start here: <https://svsh.berkeley.edu/>. Please note that I am not a confidential advocate; I am a Responsible Employee, which means that if you tell me about sexual violence or sexual harassment that you or another student experienced, I need to share that information with the [Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination](#). There are [confidential resources](#) I can connect you with.

Economic, Food, and Housing Support

If you are in need of economic, food, or housing support, you can find help at the [Basic Needs Center](#). You may be eligible for money to buy groceries via [Calfresh](#). If you are in need of food immediately, please contact our [UC Berkeley Food Pantry](#).

Undocumented Students Support

The [Undocumented Student Program](#) is a great resource here on campus: “UC Berkeley’s Undocumented Student Program (USP) – a component of the Centers for Educational Equity and Excellence – provides guidance and support to undocumented undergraduates at Cal. USP practices a holistic, multicultural and solution-focused approach that delivers individualized service for each student. The mental health support, academic counseling, legal support, financial aid resources and extensive campus referral network provided by USP helps students develop the unique gifts and talents they each bring to the university, while empowering a sense of belonging. The program’s mission is to support the advancement of undocumented students within higher education and promote pathways for engaged scholarship.”

Technology and Internet Support

Please check the [Student Technology Services](#) page for the latest information on university-provided support.

Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism

You are a member of an academic community at one of the world's leading research universities. Any test, paper or report submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course unless you obtain prior written approval to do so from your instructor. In all of your assignments, including your homework or drafts of papers, you may use words or ideas written by other individuals in publications, web sites, or other sources, but only with proper attribution.

If you are not clear about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or examination, be sure to seek clarification from your instructor beforehand.

Finally, you should keep in mind that as a member of the campus community, you are expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic endeavors and will be evaluated on your own merits. According to each specific case, the consequences of cheating and academic dishonesty may include failing an assignment, failing a course, or a formal discipline file.

The [Code of Student Conduct](#) defines plagiarism as follows:

A. Cheating. Cheating includes fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in an academic assignment, or using or attempting to use materials, or assisting others in using materials that are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of the academic assignment in question.

B. Plagiarism. Plagiarism includes use of intellectual material produced by another person without acknowledging its source. Plagiarism also includes self-plagiarism.

C. False Information and Representation and Fabrication or Alteration of Information. Furnishing false information, failing to identify oneself honestly, fabricating or altering information and presenting it as legitimate, or providing false or misleading information to an instructor or any other University official in an academic context.

D. Theft or Damage of Intellectual Property. Sabotaging or stealing another person's work, improper access to or electronically interfering with the property

of another person or the University, or obtaining or distributing a copy of an exam or assignment without the permission of the instructor.

E. Alteration of University Documents. Forgery of an instructor’s signature, submitting an altered transcript of grades to or from another institution or employer, putting one’s name on another individual’s work, or falsely altering a previously graded exam or assignment.”

The [Center for Student Conduct](#) “contributes to the holistic development of students by administering the Code of Student Conduct through equitable practices that promote education, foster a sense of accountability, and encourage community responsibility and mutual respect.”

Please familiarize yourself with what plagiarism is, with [the university policies on cheating and plagiarism](#), and their consequences. I encourage you to ask me questions – in class or in office hours – if you are not sure about what constitutes plagiarism.

Chat GPT and Generative AI Software

The use of these generative AI tools for brainstorming ideas, exploring possible responses to questions or problems, and creative engagement with the materials may be useful for you as you craft responses to class assignments. While there is no substitute for working directly with your instructor and with your classmates, the potential for generative AI tools to provide feedback, assistive technology, and language assistance is clearly developing.

For the use of AI tools, please refer to the following guidelines: **the use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:**

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas
- Fine tuning your research questions
- Finding information on a specific topic or theory
- Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts
- Checking grammar and style.

The use of generative AI tools is NOT permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Writing a draft of a writing assignment (including weekly comments and responses)
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs or papers to complete class assignments.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content).

Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways will be treated as plagiarism.

Please feel free to reach out to me well in advance of the due date of assignments for which you may be using generative AI tools and I will be happy to discuss what is acceptable.

Guidelines adapted from the [Center for Teaching and Learning](#), UT Austin, and the [Center for the Advancement of Teaching](#), Temple University.

Feedback

I value your feedback on our course and I aim to create a respectful, productive, and comfortable learning environment. If you'd like to share any feedback you might have about our course, feel free to come talk to me in office hours any time during the semester. Thank you!

Friendly Reminders

- **Complete and think thoughtfully about all readings prior to class.**
- **Submit your work on time.**
- **Ask questions when you do not understand.** Some of the texts we read are difficult. There will be things we each find confusing or perplexing every week. It is important that you take the initiative to work through that puzzlement. I'm happy to support you to better understand all the materials from our course!
- **Keep open communication.** If some problem is affecting your performance in the course, please get in touch with me. I am eager to help everyone do as well as possible in, and get to the most out of the course.

Remember: we are all responsible for creating a learning environment that is welcoming, inclusive, equitable, and respectful. The expectation in this class is that we all live up to this responsibility, even during vigorous debate or disagreement.