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Identity Consciousness and Performance: Liminality

IDH 3035, U39 Spring 2023

The Honors College

Florida International University

Wednesdays 3:30 – 4:45pm

AHC 4, Rm 202

Course Overview

This course analyzes the root and development of three of the most common terms used to describe cultural and/or racial mixing or blending and uses them as a starting point to examine the performance and literature about the experience of the “third” or liminal spaces. You will learn about these three distinct terms for mixed cultural expressions and what they mean in a series of fields like sociology, religion, gender studies, ethnography, performance and the arts, to name a few. We will critically examine both theoretical and first-hand accounts of this cultural experience, as well as, live and mediated performances centered on these themes. We will look at specific case studies of identity expression and artistic/activist performance and will examine how these terms are relevant today, particularly in our understanding of our own identities and performance.

This course is a blended course. As such, we will meet each Wednesdays in person to discuss some of the specific case studies and most recent and cutting-edge ideas around these topics. Between classes, you will read and discuss some of the more pertinent theories online in preparation for in-class discussions. Each week we will address a different topic (see the schedule below). **You are expected to come to class prepared** (i.e., read/listened to assigned material, and complete any online tasks) and to participate fully in class discussions and activities. IDH 3035 is a web-assisted course using the learning management system **Canvas**.

Assignments, electronic readings, the discussion board, video, music and supplementary material will be found there. You **MUST** use **Canvas** to be able to participate in the course. Your usage is diligently tracked by the Canvas system and is available to your professors. For more information on **Canvas** and e-Campus, visit <http://ecampus.fiu.edu/> ([Links to an external site.](#)).

Course Learning Outcomes

- Discuss the evolution of the terms hybridity, *mestizaje* and transculturation in at least three disciplines
- Explain the practical applications of said terms in distinct socio-cultural, socio-political and artistic discourse and be familiar with other terms that intersect in these discussions including decolonization, identity consciousness and formation, and embodiment
- Identify both, recognized proponents of each of these terms, and lesser known theorist who challenge them
- Discuss at least five case studies focused on different aspects of the “performance” of identity that fall in these three categories and what embodiment of identity means in this context
- Explain the implications of these terms and their nuances in intercultural understanding and performance, and what this means for concepts such as universality within these contexts
- Identify and explain texts/performances by artists and writers self-identifying as hybrid, *mestiza(o)* or “other” and compare the ways in which liminality is discussed, integrated and “performed.”

Required Text

There is no required text for this course. All readings will be provided on Canvas under the corresponding module.

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Letter Grade Distribution Table					
Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%
A	95 or above	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 94	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	59 or less

Classwork

In addition to readings, class and online discussions and case studies, you will learn various approaches to critical response processes in order to view performance with a critical eye and to develop the capacity to ask questions that lead to critical discussions in performance. You will later utilize these same methods to critically discuss each other's "work."

Because the course is proposed as a hybrid course, the class will be divided into a series of online modules where you will have a chance to read a series of theorist on the topic, as well as consider some of the more pertinent questions in the on-going discussions on hybrid identities and the "third space." In class you will engage in a series of discussions and examine specific case studies as examples of applied theory.

Graded Assignments

Thesaurus of Differences and Likes – 15%

Interlude (500 words) – 10%

Eye-body (images as text) – 15%

Mapping your Experience – 15%

Final Project – 20%

Wednesday Presentations/Participation – 10%

Online tasks (includes self-assessments) – 15%

Thesaurus of Differences and Likes (15%) Due: Ongoing throughout the course (I will collect without previous warning)

Throughout the course, you will work on your "thesaurus of difference and likeness." You are thinking of this as your archive, the place where you "work out" what you believe these terms to mean and where you will continuously create new correlations as we move along in our "unpacking" of terminology. You will gather terms used by authors who theorize, those who live in the liminal spaces and those who sit between the lived and theorized space. This ongoing assignment is intended to provide a space to dump terms, but also a place to begin to see the connections and patterns in the use of these terms and the flexibility of their use.

Interlude (10%) Due: February 26, 2023

By this point in the course you should have a sense of the flexibility, multiple levels of awareness and code-switching that is necessary to inhabit the discussed "identities." For this assignment, you will create a piece of creative writing (prose, poetry, spoken word, prayer, chant). Its format is entirely up to you and should be dictated by the content. Consider how hybrid identities and liminality ask us to reconsider how we write and express ideas. This is

your chance to consider how content and form weave together in liminal experiences. Get as creative as you want, but you must be able to explain it. There is no word limit to the piece of creative writing, but it must be accompanied by a 500-word reflective analysis of your content and process.

Eye-body (15%) Due: March 12, 2023

This assignment will be interactive and peer-reviewed. Beginning in late January, you will track how you “see” the world around you. Not only with your eyes, but with your entire self (more information provided in assignment description). On the due date, you will bring your “photo album” to class and will do a short 3-minute presentation to your group. You will provide your group members with three hash-tags that synthesize your “view” and as a group, you will determine how aligned these are with your content. This assignment will be an exercise to see how aligned is our perception with the content we put out. You will need a camera (phone is fine) to capture the images and some sort of online photo album software of your choice to organize and decide on presentation. More details and specific instructions provided in assignment.

Mapping your experience (10%) Due: April 9, 2023

This will be an ongoing project as well. You will continue to journal through the duration of this course, but this time, consider this a map or how-to manual that someone else may read for how to get through this course. In this journal (form of your choice), you will give yourself time and space to reflect on what you are reading, what we are discussing in class, and what connections you are making to other classes or lived experiences.

More details provided on the first day of class. Note that only the first journal prompt is included in the Course Outline. This will be updated as our discussions develop throughout the semester.

Final Project (20%) Due: April 26, 2023

Further details will be provided later in the semester. Project will be submitted online and there will be no class on this date.

Presentations/participation/online tasks (10% Tuesday & 10% Online)

Participation both in live class times and online is essential to success in this class. Each of you will be responsible for at least one 5-minute presentation at the top of class each time we meet where you will present a synopsis of the material we are covering along with two questions as potential discussion prompt. A list of assigned dates will be shared on the second week of class. You may also be asked to complete a one-minute paper on certain days anonymously and these will serve as review for the following class period. Part of this will include at least two self-assessment exercises. This will be done as a check-in to see where

we are as a group. **Attendance** will be taken every day, so being on time and present throughout the entire class is crucial.

Guidelines for Written Work

- All written work must consistently adhere to the [MLA Formatting and Style Guide \(Links to an external site.\)](#) when appropriate. Students are advised to carefully proofread *all* papers before submitting them. All students are encouraged to take advantage of the University resources for writing to be found in the Center for Excellence in Writing, a full-service writing center providing writing assistance and feedback to university students. For more information, go to [http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/ \(Links to an external site.\)](http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/).
- All written work is submitted through *Turnitin* links on Canvas. Plagiarism can result in expulsion from the Honors College and will have a negative effect on your entire academic career. All written work must include on the title page the following: your full name, Panther ID, course number, course section, and the name of the professor. All papers must be double spaced, use one-inch margins, and in 12-point font, with either Times New Roman or Calibri font type, except where this format simply doesn't make sense.

Attendance/Classroom Etiquette

Class attendance is mandatory, this course is heavily reliant on student participation and interaction. Failure to attend class on a regular basis will deprive you of the needed context from which to understand the readings and assignments. It is your responsibility to check with your peers regarding missed work or discussions. It is not the responsibility of the professor to repeat lessons or announcements to students who missed class time.

There will be **no make-ups for missed work**. You are responsible for all material presented and all announcements made in class. You are expected to read all emails sent by the professor and it will be assumed that you are aware of all material and calendar changes and other messages communicated through email or via Canvas.

Class time is NOT the place to be checking emails, texts, watching TV shows, or being on social media. Please be respectful, not just of the person presenting, but also of your classmates near you. If I see that there is an abuse of electronics, I will deduct points from your participation grade.

Religious Observances

Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students whose religious practices coincide with class requirements or scheduling. Please make sure to notify your instructor *at the beginning of the semester* of which dates you will be absent or any anticipated problems with completing course work.

Disability Resources

Students with disabilities who feel they may need accommodations in class should visit the Office of Disability Services (website: <http://drc.fiu.edu> ([Links to an external site.](#))) and ensure the appropriate accommodations. Please be certain to present your instructor with the documentation as soon as possible.

Honors College Policies and Requirements

Academic Misconduct Procedures and Policies

In The Honors College, the term “honor” refers both to academic accomplishment and character. Students in Honors should therefore adhere to and be held to the highest standards of personal academic accountability. Academic dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, is antithetical to the very definition of being an Honors student at FIU. Consequently, an Honors College student found responsible for academic misconduct will be dismissed from the College.

An Honors faculty member may bring charges of academic misconduct against an Honors student if the faculty member suspects plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. The faculty member will decide whether to pursue informal resolution, file formal resolution charges, or take no further action, and will follow the procedures outlined in the Academic Misconduct Procedures available at <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/academic-integrity/index.php>. Please refer to the following documents for additional information:

FIU Student Handbook: <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/student-handbook/index.php>

Student Portfolios

The Honors College will be using a portfolio method to assess students’ learning outcomes. The portfolio allows for maximum flexibility in gauging student learning. Students decide (with instructor consultation) what “artifacts” or assignments to include for consideration in their portfolios to demonstrate successful achievement of each of five key student learning outcomes over the 4-year Honors experience. Portfolios provide a rich context for students to show what they have learned and to explain their learning process. Because the Honors curriculum is meant to be thought-provoking and reflective, student self-assessment through portfolios will facilitate learning and provide in-depth assessment. Each Honors College

course includes at least one assignment that could potentially fit portfolio requirements.
<http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/portfolio/>

Honors Education in the Arts (HEARTS)

The HEARTS program is designed to give Honors College students opportunities to “explore and appreciate different artistic and cultural traditions and modes of artistic expression. HEARTS will also serve as a clearinghouse (and curatorial framework) for our students to experience the arts on campus and in the community by providing them with information about cultural activities and access to performances with free or discounted tickets. <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/hearts/>

Resources:

Panthers Care & Counseling & Psychological Services

If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you have, for the classmate’s well-being or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with FIU’s Panthers Care website.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress, and other concerns that life brings. Learn more about CAPS at caps.fiu.edu. Professional counselors are available for same-day appointments. Don’t wait to call 305-348-2277 to set up a time to talk or visit the online self-help portal.