

Women's and Ethnic Studies 2900

Introduction to Privilege

Course Instructor: Dr. Abby Ferber
719-255-4139; aferber@uccs.edu

"The nature of privilege is such that you cannot relinquish it but you can use it to the benefit of those who have none." Kathleen Saadat

This course is only open to high school students registered for the WPC Youth Action Project.

Register for the Course:

Academic credit is \$100 per credit hour for undergraduates, plus \$2 per credit hour "SIS Administrative fee" service charge. The credits can be transferred to most colleges and universities as elective credits. For academic credit, students must register with the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs.

Registration Deadline: April 13, 2012

Download registration instructions from the WPC web site

College: Letters, Arts, and Sciences

Course Information for registration: WEST 2900-702, "Youth Action Project-Leadership"
3 credit hours: \$300 tuition + \$6 "SIS Fee" service charge
Class Number 39251

Course Information for registration: WEST 2900-701, "Youth Action Institute"
1 credit hour: \$100 tuition + \$2 "SIS Fee" service charge
Class Number 39250

Register for the Conference:

Students *must* register separately for the WPC Youth Action Project- details at www.whiteprivilegeconference.com

Attending the national, award-winning White Privilege Conference is a unique opportunity to hear from some of the leading scholars and activists in this field. This course is designed to allow you to fully participate in the conference, and reflect upon the new knowledge you learn there, while gaining valuable academic college course credit from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (which may be transferred to other colleges and Universities). The WPC YAP provides three full days of specially designed youth workshops, performances, caucuses, and affinity groups. Youth Workshops use interactive activities, film, spoken word, *Theatre of the Oppressed* techniques, and small and large group discussions to address issues of heritage, identity, language, isms, labels, power & privilege, teamwork, and strategies for community action. The third day, youth

participate in the broader conference and select workshops to attend. Attendance and full participation in the White Privilege Conference YAP is required.

Required Readings:

Students are encouraged to complete as much of this reading before the conference as possible!

1. *Privilege, Power and Difference*, Allan G. Johnson, second edition
2. *Understanding White Privilege*, Frances Kendall, Routledge, 2006.

Course Requirements:

1. **Session Log/Journal:** (40% of class grade)
2. **Personal reflection paper.** (25% of class grade)
3. **Research Paper.** (35% of class grade)

May 4, 2012: All written work is due. Send via e-mail to: aferber@uccs.edu

Special note: Computer problems, internet access, and difficulty with attachments are NOT considered valid excuses for missing the deadline.

Ethical Conduct: The responsibility for ethical conduct, academic honesty and integrity rests with each individual member of the UCCS community. The Student Codes and Academic Policies (which may be found at:

<http://www.uccs.edu/~dos/studentconduct/index.html>) are followed in this class. In general, academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarism (which means misrepresenting as your own *any* work done by another), misuse of academic materials, or interfering with another student's work. Violations of the honor code may result in dismissal from the program.

Session Log/Journal:

Workshop attendees must engage in active participation in the conference. Attendees must complete and submit a formal session log that lists the title of the presenter, the title of the session(s), and the time length of each session. Additionally, a brief journal entry/description (approx. two-three paragraphs) discussing one major concept presented at the session. What was the most important take-home message for you? Make sure you take notes at the conference to use for your journals.

The Personal Privilege Paper:

This paper should be 5-7 pages. In this paper, explore your own life from the perspective of privilege. For example, you might examine any of the following issues: how has privilege, in any/all forms, shaped your life? (consider race, class, gender,

sexuality, disability, etc.) Have you been aware of privilege in your life as you were growing up? Why or why not? As you learn more about privilege, and examine your life, what do you find most interesting or surprising? How has privilege shaped your life opportunities, life chances, experiences, etc. Will your new understanding of privilege change your life, your actions, your behaviors in the future in any way? How do privilege and oppression interact in your life? Are there certain forms of privilege that have been more visible to you than others? This paper is your opportunity to relate what you are learning at the conference and in your readings, to your own life, your previous coursework, and to your independent research for the final paper.

Guidelines for Research Paper:

Begin working on your paper immediately. Choose an issue related directly to privilege that interests you. Think about a specific issue tied to race, gender, sexuality and/or class dynamics, and analyze the issue by bringing privilege into focus. How does focusing on privilege change our understanding of the issue? Has research in the field examined the dynamics of privilege? Your bibliography should include both academic books and journal articles, and sources that are as recent and up to date as possible. Limit use of websites. You should have at least five references in your bibliography.

The central purpose of this paper is to make a cogent case for a particular point of view: this is your thesis. There may be no single correct answer to the issue you address. There are, however, better and worse answers. This is a function of how well you articulate and defend your position. You must, at every step, provide reasons for your position and for your particular interpretation, occasionally backing up your arguments with quotes. The following suggestions should help you produce a thoughtful and well-written paper.

1. Begin every paper with an introduction that includes your thesis and a careful exposition of the key points you will make.
2. Make sure you support your points and arguments with sources, and you may also incorporate examples from your internship experience where relevant.
3. Provide a conclusion summarizing your arguments.
4. Provide page references or footnotes for quotes, and a bibliography with a complete list of sources. Your paper should include quotes from your sources, but you should not rely too heavily upon quotes.
5. Follow either MLA or APA format guidelines, and be consistent.
6. Go through as many drafts as necessary: no one writes a perfect paper on the first try. Be sure to carefully proofread your paper!
7. Plagiarism will result in an automatic F. Read the plagiarism policy on the UCCS LAS website, and the student academic honor code and make sure you understand what plagiarism is. *This is your responsibility!*

Guidelines for Journals:

You should complete one journal entry for each session/lecture you attend at the WPC, and tie the session in to the readings you have completed. Each entry should be approximately one-two pages long, typed, double-spaced. Your journal is your opportunity to relate what you are learning at the conference in to your readings, to your own life, your previous coursework, and to your independent research for the final paper. The journal is your opportunity to discuss how the conference and the readings are meaningful for you. Make sure you take notes at the conference to use for your journals. You should use your entries to analyze issues raised at the conference and try to tie the experiences into issues you have learned about in classes, or are reading about in your research, etc.

Questions to think about while writing your journals: Do I enjoy this conference? Why or why not? Which concepts resonate most for me? Why? Which concepts are most difficult for me to grasp? How does the experience make me feel? Do I sometimes feel uncomfortable? Do the sessions reinforce the issues raised in my readings? Am I learning about issues which reflect my own experiences or the experiences of my friends or family in any way? Do they make me think about my experiences in a new light? How do the various session tie in together or build upon each other? Has the session raised issues I have never thought about before, or make me think about it in a new way? If I have not thought about these things before, why is that? Is this experience raising issues I want to learn more about? Is this experience making me think about myself in new ways?

The Personal Privilege Paper:

This paper should be 7-8 pages . In this paper, explore your own life from the perspective of privilege. For example, you might examine any of the following issues: how has privilege, in any/all forms, shaped your life? (consider race, class, gender, sexuality, disability, etc.) Have you been aware of privilege in your life as you were growing up? Why or why not? As you learn more about privilege, and examine your life, what do you find most interesting or surprising? How has privilege shaped your life opportunities, life chances, experiences, etc. Will your new understanding of privilege change your life, your actions, your behaviors in the future in any way? How do privilege and oppression interact in your life? Are there certain forms of privilege that have been more visible to you than others?