

IDH 2930 Section: 0216

Thursday Period 10 (5:10-6:00pm)

Hume 0119

Instructor: Matthew Paul Cowley, M.Ed.

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Office Hours: By request – Please email me to schedule an appointment

Required Texts:

Wilkerson, Isabel (2020). *Caste: the Origins of Our Discontents*. New York: Random House.

Book & Course Overview

Isabel Wilkerson's 'Caste' makes a compelling argument that the United States of America has operated under a caste system from the days of its founding. She argues that "like old houses, America has an unseen skeleton, a caste system that is as central to its operation as the studs and joists that we cannot see in the physical buildings we call home" (p.17). The text examines this four-hundred-year-old artificial construction through a series of vignettes from her own life and the lives of others. She compares racism in the United States - which subjugates Black people on the bottom of society and exalts White people – to India's caste system, which oppresses Dalits and exalts Brahmin.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will learn a unique theory of social construction in the U.S. that provides an alternative to traditional theories of race and racism.
2. Students will learn to identify caste machinations in the U.S. and learn to proactively and pragmatically combat them.
3. Students will gain a global understanding of oppression and the commonalities in social ordering between India and the United States.

Assignments & Expectations

- **Class Participation (30%)** | Students are expected to attend class and provide meaningful contributions to the class discussion. Attendance, evidence that the student is prepared for class, and earnestly participating in the dialogue will comprise a significant amount of the student's final grade.
- **Journals (20%)** | Students will submit four journal entries to Canvas over the course of the semester. Journals are expected to reflect on and respond to the chapters read since the last journal entry. Students are encouraged to connect the readings to other literature, popular media, or personal experiences. Journal entries should be between 1-2 double-spaced pages (12-point standard font style). Journal entries will be due at 11:59pm on the Thursday after class meets each week.
- **Midterm Paper (20%)** | "Seeing Caste" - Students are asked to summarize their understanding of a U.S. caste system as presented by Wilkerson in the text. Additionally, students should discuss examples/manifestations of the U.S. caste system based on their own experience or observation. If students have not experienced or witnessed manifestations of the U.S. caste system, this should be considered worthy of reflection for the purposes of this paper. The midterm paper should be between 3-4 double-spaced pages (12-point standard font style).
- **Final Paper or Project (30%)** | "Creating a Casteless Future" – Students are asked to reflect on the whole of Wilkerson's text and discuss how they see their role in creating a future without caste. Students should consider their future career/profession, civic/community engagement, family, and other relevant aspects of their lives. *Caste: the Origins of Our Discontents* should serve as the primary source for this paper, but students should incorporate sources from other academic journal articles, books, popular media, and personal experiences. Final papers should be between 5-6 double-spaced pages (12-point standard font style).

Alternatively, students may propose a creative project to serve as their final. Projects must be approved by the instructor. Projects must include a short whitepaper (1-2 pages) outlining the purpose of their project, describing their approach, and reflecting on their plans, successes, challenges, and progress.

Date	Reading	Due
August 26 th	Introductions & Course Overview	
September 2 nd	Man in the Crown; Chapters 1 – 3 & An Invisible Program (pp. xv-35)	
September 9 th	Chapters 4 – 6 (pp. 39-72)	
September 23 rd	Chapters 7 – 9 & Foundations of Caste (pp. 73-99)	Journal Entry Due
September 30 th	Pillar Number 1 – 5 (pp. 101-140)	
October 7 th	Pillar Number 6 – 8; Brown Eyes Versus Blue Eyes (pp. 131-170)	Journal Entry Due
October 14 th	Chapters 10 – 13 (pp. 171-207)	
October 21 st	Chapters 14 – 16 (pp. 208-244)	MIDTERM PAPER DUE
October 28 th	Chapters 17 – 20 (pp. 245-278)	
November 4 th	Chapters 21 – 24 (pp. 279-308)	Journal Entry Due
November 11 th	VETERANS DAY – NO CLASS	
November 18 th	Chapters 25 – 28 (pp. 311-352)	Journal Entry Due
November 25 th	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS	
December 2 nd	Chapters 29 – Epilogue (pp. 353-388) / Students Share Final Papers/Projects	
December 9 th	Reading Days	
December 16 th	NO CLASS	FINAL PAPER DUE

Grades

94.0 – 100 A	77.0 – 79.9 C+
90.0 – 93.9 A-	70.0 – 73.9 C
87.0 – 89.9 B+	67.0 – 69.9 D+
84.0 – 86.9 B	64.0 – 66.9 D
80.0 – 83.9 B-	60.0 – 63.9 D

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:

[UF Graduate Catalog](#)
[Grades and Grading Policies](#)

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and is a significant percentage of students' final grade. Students should make every effort to communicate with the instructor for accommodations related to attendance and assignment due dates. Official policies for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Class Recording: Class meetings will be facilitated in-person. To create a safe environment conducive to learning and growth, students are asked not to audio or video record class meeting.

Course Evaluation:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here](#).

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all

work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” [The Honor Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see the [Notification to Students of FERPA Rights](#).

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: counseling.ufl.edu/cwc, and 392-1575

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or police.ufl.edu.

Academic Resources

[E-learning technical support](#), 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu.

[Career Resource Center](#), Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

[Library Support](#), Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

[Teaching Center](#), Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

[Writing Studio](#), 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

[Student Complaints Campus](#)

[On-Line Students Complaints](#)