Syllabus Spring 2022
CompSci 240: Race, Gender, Class, and Computing

Course Details

Location:	Jan 5-17: Online via Zoom
	Jan 18: Old Chemistry 116
Hours:	Tues/Thurs 1:45-3:00 pm
Units:	1
Website:	https://courses.cs.duke.edu/spring22/compsci240

Course Materials (Sakai): https://sakai.duke.edu/portal

Instructor Details

Instructor:	Dr. Nicki Washington
Email:	nicki@cs.duke.edu
Office Hours:	Wed 3:00-4:30 pm (Zoom only)

Course Description
This course explores how identity impacts and is impacted by computing. The course first explores identity, forms of oppression, social justice movements, and policies related to people from various identities. Identity is then explored in the context of computing/tech environments and the technologies developed, including their impact on people and policies developed.

Prerequisites
None.

Areas of Knowledge and Modes of Inquiry Fulfillment
This course fulfills the Social Science (SS) Area of Knowledge and Cross-Cultural Inquiry (CCI); Science, Technology, and Society (STS); and Writing Modes of Inquiry requirements (W).

Required Text
Required-The MLA Style Manual (https://bit.ly/2NqpyG8) will be used for all formal paper submissions (Book Reflection Draft #1, #2, and Final Draft).

This course leverages news articles, podcast episodes, Ted Talks, interviews, documentaries, and books that are available via either the web or the Duke Library at no charge.

Additional Resources
- This course will use Sakai. All course material and submissions will be via Sakai.
- This course will use various articles, podcast episodes, videos, and other publicly accessible information via the Internet.
- The instructor team will use iThenticate to ensure written submissions are original work.
- ***This term we will be using Ed for class discussion (Piazza replacement) (linked through Sakai).*** The system is highly catered to getting you help fast and efficiently from classmates, the TAs, and myself.
- ***Please do not email the instructor team (unless it is a confidential matter).*** All general questions should be posted via Ed. Other questions re: something specific to you should be sent via private message in Ed.

Course Objectives/Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define identity (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual identity, and ability) and intersectionality.
2. Understand historical trends that impact organizational cultures and technology development.
3. Examine the impact of different technologies on different identities.
4. Identify strategies for creating more equitable and inclusive technical environments and software for diverse identities.

Topics Covered

This course covers but is not limited to the following topics:

- Race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, and class
- Intersectionality
- Privilege, white supremacy, racism, xenophobia, sexism, misogyny, misogynoir, homophobia, transphobia, classism, and ableism
- Social justice movements (Suffrage, Civil Rights, Feminist, MeToo, Black Lives Matter, Stonewall, Farm Workers, Disability Rights)
- Policy
- Facial recognition, surveillance, predictive policing, recidivism, search, job, FinTech, gig economy, and voice recognition systems

Course Requirements

- **Attendance/Participation**-Because the nature of the course centers class discussions, students are expected to attend class and actively participate in class discussions, including discussion threads.
- **Position Paper**-Students are expected to write one position paper at the beginning of the semester.
- **Weekly Reflections**-Students are expected to provide weekly writing assignments based on class discussions and reading material, which also serve as informal writing preps.
- **Book Reflection**-Students are expected to submit two reflection papers on two books they read from a pre-approved list. A draft submission is required for each.
- **Peer Reviews**-Students will complete two peer reviews of book reflection drafts.
- **Final Presentation**-Students must complete an end-of-course presentation.

This course was intentionally and appropriately curated using factual information to teach concepts that are often not taught in computing courses. It is extremely important that this course is prioritized as a safe space for learning/growing. The course discusses sensitive topics that impact people with different identities in different ways. As such, it requires participation that is respectful of all identities. Failure to abide by this (including verbal and written language that is found to be abusive, offensive, threatening, and/or hateful) will result in reporting to the proper university officials. Repeated incidents will result in appropriate university grievance harassment procedures and additional actions, as necessary. For more information, refer to the [Duke Community Standard: A Guide for Students.](#)

Grading Policy

Position Paper:	5%
Book Selections	2%
Invisible Knapsack	2%
Weekly Reflections:	30%
Book Reflections	40%
Peer Reviews (Reflection)	6%
Final Presentation:	15%

Final grades are reported based on the following scale:

Total Points Scored	Final Grade Range	Reported Grade
637-650	98-100%	A+
611-636	94-97.9%	A
585-610	90-93.9%	A-
572-584	88-89.9	B+
546-571	84-87.9	B
520-545	80-83.9	B-
507-519	78-79.9	C+
481-506	74-77.9	C
455-480	70-73.9	C-
442-454	68-69.9	D+
416-441	64-67.9	D
390-415	60-63.9	D-
0-389	0-59.9	F

Grading for Book Reflection Assignments

Below is a clear discussion of the grading criteria for writing assignments in this course.

'A' Paper	A paper in this category demonstrates a clear and consistent competence with only a few minor errors. Such a paper ● Represents the best writing from a student ● Effectively and insightfully address the writing task ● Is well organized and fully developed with clearly appropriate supportive ideas, details, and references (as required) ● Displays consistent facility with language, demonstrating variety in sentence structure and range of vocabulary
'B' Paper	A paper in this category demonstrates reasonably consistent competence with occasional errors or lapses of quality. Such a paper ● Represents a good essay ● Effectively addresses the writing task ● Is generally well organized and adequately developed, using appropriate details to support ideas ● Displays facility with language, syntactic variety, and a range of vocabulary

'C' Paper	A paper in this category demonstrates adequate competence and is not marred by frequent or major errors of organization and style. Such a paper ● Represents the minimum passing grade for a student ● Addresses the writing task but with less sophistication of thought and analysis than other upper-half papers and may be pedestrian ● Is organized and developed with generally appropriate detail, but may be more superficial, simplistic, and mechanical ● Displays a basic facility with language without frequent or major errors in syntax, mechanics, spelling, or vocabulary/usage
'D' Paper	A paper in this category is unacceptable, marked by inconsistent control over thought, language, and organization. Such a paper ● Represents work that does not meet criteria, as specified by the assignment and/or general course expectations, including appropriate student conduct. ● Addresses the topic ineffectively or inaccurately ● Is somewhat organized and developed, but may be diffuse, vague, or marked by inappropriate examples ● Contains an accumulation of errors in grammar, diction, spelling, mechanics and sentence structure
'F' Paper	A paper in this category is completely unacceptable, marked by weakness of thought, language, and organization. Such a paper ● Represents a paper that falls well below expectation ● Is poorly organized, if organized at all ● Is marked by consistent errors in grammar, diction, sentence structure, mechanics and spelling ● Is unacceptably brief

Late Work
All assignments are due via Sakai at 1159pm EST on the specific due date. All assignments have a one-day grace period, which is 1159pm EST of the day after the original due date. Anything submitted after this grace period will not be graded unless an approved extenuating circumstance.

Student Code of Conduct
Students are expected to abide by the Duke Community Standard in terms of academic integrity, respect, fairness, accountability, and more. A complete discussion of the Duke Community Standard, expectations, and procedures in the event of violations are discussed in the Duke Community Standard: A Guide for Students.

Students Requiring Accommodations
Duke University is prepared to make reasonable academic adjustments and accommodations to allow students with disabilities full participation in the same programs and activities available to students without disabilities. The Student Disability Access Office assists students with disabilities who are enrolled in Trinity College and the Pratt School of Engineering. To receive consideration for reasonable accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a student must have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as, but not limited to, hearing, seeing, speaking, breathing, performing manual tasks,

walking, caring for oneself, and learning. Substantially limiting refers to an impairment that prevents an individual from performing a major life activity or significantly restricts the condition, manner, or duration under which an individual can perform a major life activity. Students requesting accommodations under the provisions of Section 504 or the ADA (e.g., academic, housing, etc.) must consult Leigh Fickling, Director, Student Disability Access Office, 919-668-1267 or 919-668-1329 TTY, to explore possible coverage. Students with medical conditions not covered under the provisions of ADA must consult Duke Student Health Services at 919-681-9355 for further information.

Office of Student Affairs
Students are also encouraged to raise concerns or questions related to harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, and related retaliation to the Office of Student Affairs at conduct@duke.edu.

Syllabus Change Policy
This syllabus is a guide and every attempt is made to provide an accurate overview of the course. However, circumstances and events may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester and may depend, in part, on the progress, needs, and experiences of the students.