

Oppression and Liberation (Psyc 142) Syllabus



La Nopalera
By Irene Juárez O'Connell

“ I painted this with tears in my eyes, thinking of all the generations of women in my lineage and beyond who have endured so much, carried so much burden, have pressed on with so much resistance to oppression. Yet, they continue to rise with strong spines filled with courage, bearing fruit in even the harshest of conditions. La Nopalera is a prayer and a tribute to the matriarchs of borderlands everywhere-from Mexico to Palestine- los nopales are symbols of self sufficiency, self-determination and resilience.” (As cited in Hurtado, 2022,p. xiv)

Table of contents

Course and instructor info	Pg 2
Description & Materials	Pg3
Assignment & Evaluation	Pg 4
Contract Grading	Pg 5-6
General Schedule	Pg 7
Accessibility	Pg 8

“[Liberation, change, and well-being] must operate in concert. In order to carry out changes in the world around is, we must have the necessary consciousness to know where to act, why, when, and how. In doing so, well-being may emerge out of people’s actions. Consciousness will help define what well-being is, while at the same time, provide enough dissatisfaction with the status quo as to keep the change process going.” – (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010 p.524)

“Liberation is the horizon of psychology” (Ignacio Martín-Baró)

Welcome

Pialli/Hola/Hello!

I am very excited for our time together in this course. So much is happening in the world and in our communities and this course has the potential to help us understand each other better. I got to TA for this class and it helped me become a better writer, and a more critical thinker. Lastly, this class can be paradigm shifting too! I hope this course is impactful for you all and that we get to learn about each other. I truly believe you all have something to teach your peers. I hope you feel welcomed to share and contribute to class. Be well and safe!

Tiahui/Vamos/Lets do this!

Course and Instructor info

Course

Summer Session 2 2022

Meeting time: T/Th 9:00am-12:30pm

Zoom:

<https://ucsc.zoom.us/j/97680734934?pwd=QXh5TDVERFEzTm9oUGdhdmJLVnQ5dz09>

Password: liberation

Instruction will be over zoom all summer for this class.

Instructor

S. Sylvane Vaccarino-Ruiz

E-mail: Svaccari@ucsc.edu

Office: SS2 Rm 201

Zoom:

<https://ucsc.zoom.us/j/97680734934?pwd=QXh5TDVERFEzTm9oUGdhdmJLVnQ5dz09>

Student Hours: Friday 10:00am-11:30am, or by appointment

Email is the best way to contact me. Please start the subject line: "Psyc 142..."



My approach to teaching this course comes from my experience as a transfer student, UCSC alumni, TA for this course, and a scholar activist. I value flexibility and empathy for any conditions we might face as a class. For example, I am very aware of the impacts of social distancing, COVID crisis, upsurge in colonial and white supremacist violence, and potential wildfire season.

Furthermore, my pedagogical practice is centered on the perspective that my job is to guide your learning into social science writing and thinking about development as a cultural process.

Lastly, as a community psychologist in training, I will also be guided by antiracist, decolonial, feminist principles and will be implementing this in my pedagogy. If there are ways I can attend to these principles better, I welcome your feedback!

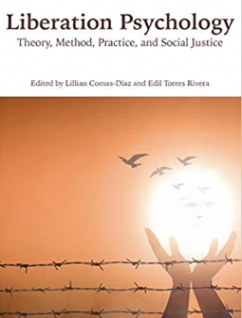

Course description

This is not your typical psychology course. As a community of learners, we will delve under the surface of traditional/mainstream psychology to examine the deeper relations of the “self” to “society.” The concepts of oppression and liberation will be the guideposts on this educational journey. Specifically, this class’ focus is on systems of oppression, i.e. racism, patriarchy, colonization, capitalism, and their impact on psychological consciousness & well being, as well as how communities develop tools for social and psychological resistance and liberation. The course integrates a praxis (engaged) model of education, thus students will be given the opportunity to demonstrate learning and knowledge in multiple ways.

Learning outcomes

- To understand psychology's role in oppression and its implications
- To acquire or sharpen perception and recognition of oppression in the world and in one’s life engage positionalities/social biography praxis to their own lives and will have a solid draft of a positionality statement.
- To gain an understanding of the social and psychological effects of various forms of oppression.
- To describe the various historical roots, articulate various key concepts, conceive of visions of liberation psychology.
- Conscientization: to acquire tools for liberation and begin to put them into practice

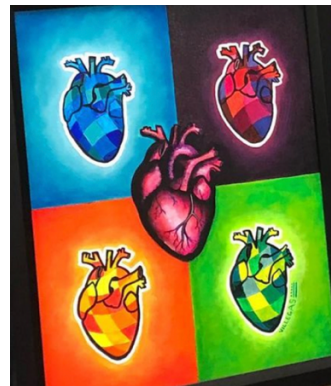
Class resources and materials

<p>Comas-Diaz, L. & Torres Rivera, E. (2020). <i>Liberation psychology: Theory, method, practice, and social justice</i>. APA. Available for free at https://ucsc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CDL_SCR_INST/epairr/alma991025711198204876</p>	<p>Other pdf articles will be provided via Canvas</p>
	

Assignments & Evaluation

My hopes for you as a scholar at the end of this course is that you not only have a well-developed understanding of the psychological aspects of oppression and liberation but can also learn how to learn. So, *regurgitation of information is not my highest priority for you.* Further, I believe that each of you have the capacity to teach our class community something relevant to your lives and questions. Each of you will practice extending the ideas from the course and will identify a social issue or social justice movement that is interesting and teach the class about this by connecting to liberatory values. What we learn about liberation psychology will be applied to your interests through one main project due at the end of the course.

To best guide learning in this style, **letter grades will not be used on assignments.** Assignments will be assessed for completion. Also, I will provide narrative performance evaluation during the class and your final grades will be earned based on our contract. (More will be explained later).



Main project

Like liberation psychologists, we are likely a mixture of researchers, activists, community members, artists, and teachers. So, the skills needed for those roles are varied. This main project will help develop the skills that are relevant to you. For example, you can decide to engage with a topic through either a presentation, an activist project, a research paper, or a zine. Depending on your goals, you can tailor this final project to practice the skills most relevant to you through the topics most relevant to your community or your needs.

While you have many choices for this assignment, you will however, be expected to practice applying critical analyses and liberatory psychology principles.

Note: Almost all the other assignments in this class are designed to work up to this project. In other words, this project will be scaffolded throughout the course.



“Grades reinforce teacher/student hierarchies (and institution/teacher hierarchies) while exacerbating other problematic power relationships. Women, POC, disabled people, neurodiverse people are all ill-served by a destructive culture of grading and assessment.”- (Stommel, 2020)

Contract grading is based on the research of Asao Inoue (2015; 2018) and it differs from traditional grading in that you do not receive a grade based on the quality of your work, but instead based on the labor (or work) you complete within the course. However, the quality of your work will receive lots of attention from me. In other words, you will receive feedback from me, comments, suggestions for revision, encouragement, and support on your ideas, but you will not receive an “A, B, C, D, or F” based on how “well” you completed the project. I hope this will detach grades from learning.

Grading contracts are valuable for a number of reasons, including the fact that they:

- Offer you the opportunity to be experimental and exploratory in your writing—to take risks, rather than only producing writing that is thought to be “correct” or doing exactly and only “what the assignment requires”;
- Value the time and labor you decide to commit to the class;
- Provide you with a clear and concrete understanding of your grade at all times throughout the semester; grades are simple and easy to calculate;
- Do not penalize or reward you for the level of knowledge about and experience you have with writing and language prior to entering our class; all students have the same potential to earn an A;
- Privilege students who are investing the time, energy and effort into literacy learning.

While grading contracts focus on quantifiable outcomes (attendance, participation, completed work), that does not mean that you will not be expected to work on the quality of your work (e.g. revising your writing). Grading contracts function on the belief that quality writing is the result of one’s efforts at drafting, getting and understanding feedback from others, and revising.

Types of labor

Your grade will be based on your labor in this class. There are three types of labor needed to pass this class: project labor, practice labor, and community labor.

<i>Project Labor</i>	<i>Practice Labor</i>	<i>Community Labor</i>
Identify a topic assignment	5 reading responses	2 peer reviews
Social Biography/Positionality assignment	5 discussion surveys	4 group glossary additions
Project Proposal assignment	Several free write activities	9 In-class attendance points
Conference with instructor	Other activities	Other discussion activities
Rough draft of your project	literature synthesis matrix	Tutorials or guides OR optional reading review

Extra credit work

Types of Labor cont.

Project labor consists of 4 major building block assignments that work up to your final project. Detailed requirements will be listed for each assignment. Any submission that has missed requirements will mean an “incomplete” evaluation which will allow for a revision and re-submission within 48 hours.

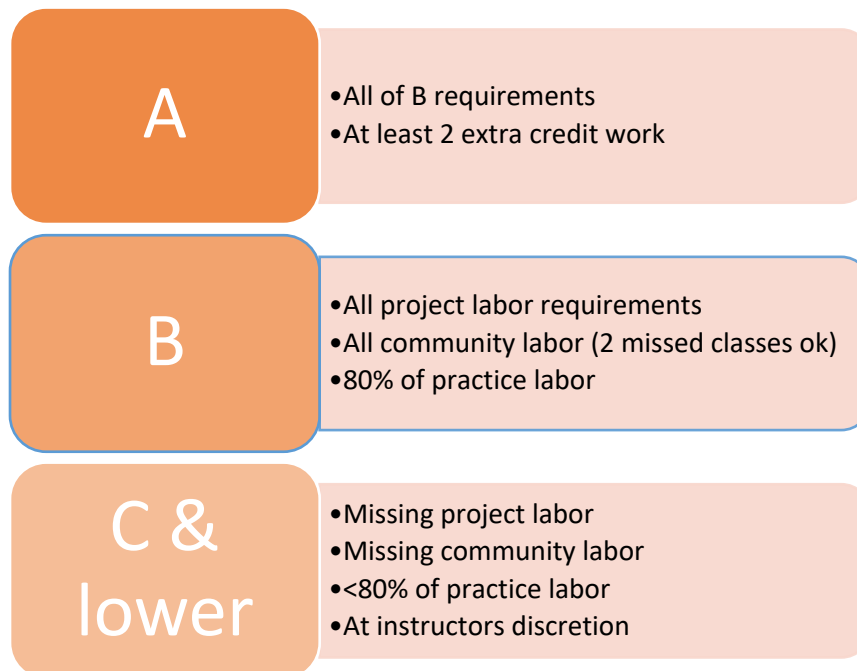
Missed/ Late assignments: Since this class is fast and accumulative, late assignments will still be accepted for completion if an extension is requested before the due date. If no extension is requested, the missed assignment can be turned in with the following project assignment. However, I do not suggest you rely on this since my feedback will be doubled.

Practice Labor entails reading, writing, and brainstorming activities. These are also meant to build up to your assignments for your project labor. Think of this as the everyday work: doing the readings, processing the lectures, and participating in the activities in class.

Community labor consists of your attendance and engagement which are important for supporting your learning and that of classmates. Engagement includes being present (and on time), attentive, participating in activities, sharing ideas that contribute to the topic, listening to each other, and helping others participate so we can learn from everyone’s knowledge and views. It will also be required that you offer feedback to your group on their ideas.

Absences: You are allowed 2 unexcused absences and still get a B as long as you make-up the practice labor within 48 hours.

Grade Breakdown



Do the work,
guaranteed B

General Schedule

(Will be updated)

	Readings to be done before class	Assignments due
Week 1- July 25 th -29 th Introduction, What is oppression, what is privilege, What is liberation?	Tuesday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus & Brave Space guidelines • Comas-Dia& Torres Rivera ch 1-2 	Tuesday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CL- Brave Space Guideline response
	Thursday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moane 2011, • Bailey 1998 	Thursday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face card • PL- reading response Thursday morning • PJJ- Identify a topic Thursday night
Week 2- Aug 1- 5 th History of colonialization, decoloniality in Psychology, Internalized oppression.	-Dirth and Adams 2019 - Bulhan (2015) - Lugones (2010) - Comas-Diaz & Torres Rivera ch 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PJJ- Social/bio positionality • PL- reading response Thursday morning • CL- Group Glossary- Due Tuesday night
Week 3- Aug 8-12 th Resisting Oppression, Counterspaces, Coalitions	Rosales & Langhout (2020) Rios (2012) Comas-Diaz Torres Rivera Ch 3 Johnson Reagon 1983 Case & Hunter 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PJJ- Project Proposal • PL- reading response Thursday morning • CL- Group Glossary- Due Tuesday night
Week 4- Aug 15 th - 19 Spiritual activism, activist research, Role of psychologist in revolution	Anzaldua (2002) Strega & Brown (2015) White (2007) Martin-Baro (1994)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PJJ- Conference & Extra Credit Rough draft • PL- reading response Thursday morning • CL- Group Glossary- Due Thursday night •
Week 5 Aug 22- 26 ^h Decolonial healing, Final projects, special presentations, wrap-ups	Comas-Diaz & Torres Rivera Ch8 French et al 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PJJ- Final project due

Accessibility:

I aim to make our learning community as accessible as possible. This means that I aim to provide accessible materials and to create opportunities for different kinds of engagement in our classroom space. If you come across materials that are not accessible to you, or experience a barrier to your participation in a class or meeting, please bring this to my attention and I will gladly work with you to ensure accessibility.

You have the right to submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me. Please do so privately or during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. At that time, I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact the DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.