

**PSYC 100**  
**Underrepresented Scholars in the Academy**  
Fall 2016

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**Course Description**

This course focuses on what it means to be underrepresented in higher education from historical, contemporary, and future perspectives. In this class, we will explore the history of and psychological constructs affecting underrepresented scholars at our school, in a discipline of your choice, and in the broader area of higher education. Over the semester, in reading and evaluating a variety of works, you will obtain an understanding of research and begin to develop your own research questions. This class focuses on general as well as community-based research.

**Course Objectives**

Students in this course will:

- Identify and understand the historical and contemporary contexts of what it means to be underrepresented in the academy
- Understand the psychological constructs that underrepresented scholars face, such as solo status, stereotype threat, and impostor syndrome, as well as how to address these challenges
- Identify the fields in which underrepresented scholars conduct their research
- Understand the purposes of empirical research including community-based research
- Develop research goals and questions, and understand how to move toward obtaining these goals
- Articulate academic goals
- Develop library, digital, writing, and time management skills
- Contribute to a class WordPress site focusing on underrepresented scholars in the academy
- Create a portfolio with a personal statement, written assignments addressing course topics, and a web presentation for future scholars

**Class Meetings**

Our class will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30-4:50 where we will discuss the essential questions listed below. Class will involve a discussion of the readings in which all students are expected to participate regularly. The Wednesday class will meet in a group setting with the WMSURE program, which will provide information and resources on each of the topics covered throughout the class. These sessions are also intended to help you learn about academic support resources and to build a network of academic/professional contacts across the college. Finally, you will have a 50-minute meeting with one of two teaching assistants to whom you will be assigned. This session is

intended to provide you with individualized support in reaching the objectives of the course through the building of your final portfolio. The small group setting will also provide you with a structured opportunity to give and receive peer feedback.

### **Essential Questions**

Below are the questions that the course will address throughout the semester. You will express your answers to these questions through class papers, contributions to a class WordPress site, and a class presentation. You will address these questions on three levels: the College of William and Mary, your intended discipline, and broader academia.

#### **1. Historical:**

- a. What is the history of underrepresented students, scholars, and faculty?
- b. What are the psychological barriers that underrepresented faculty, scholars, and students have faced? What research has been conducted on these topics?
- c. Who were the first underrepresented faculty, scholars, and students? What unique challenges did they have? What accomplishments did they have?
- d. What has been the progression of underrepresented faculty, scholars, and students, including their political, social, and academic functions? How does the psychological research on intergroup relations help us to understand these relationships?
- e. What topics have underrepresented scholars chosen to research or been encouraged to research? Which of these topics interests you?
- f. How have underrepresented faculty, scholars, and students influenced academia?
- g. How have underrepresented scholars been involved in community-based research?

#### **2. Current**

- a. How do underrepresented faculty, scholars, and students experience course work, research, the academy, and the campus climate at their institution?
- b. What does research reveal about the psychological and behavioral experiences of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination of underrepresented faculty, scholars, and students?
- c. How do underrepresented faculty, scholars, and students experience and address psychological challenges such as solo status, stereotype threat, and impostor syndrome?
- d. What are the current political, social, and academic functions of underrepresented student and faculty organizations? What research has been conducted examining the psychological and academic benefits of these organizations?
- e. Who are the contemporary leading underrepresented faculty and scholars? How are they involved in community-based research?
- f. What fields and subfields do underrepresented faculty, scholars, and students typically enter? In what fields and subfields is it most difficult for underrepresented individuals to become students, faculty, and scholars?

### 3. Future

- a. How do underrepresented faculty, scholars, and students build a pipeline to the academy for the next generation of underrepresented individuals? What are the next steps in building such a pipeline?
- b. How will the role of underrepresented scholars continue to evolve?
- c. What do underrepresented scholars see as the next important research goals and questions? How do these research goals and questions align with yours?

### Course Requirements

**Participation:** You will be graded on your participation in all class meetings. Please come to class prepared to discuss the week's readings, engage with guest speakers and panels, and explore course questions across historical, contemporary, and future contexts. Attendance at all class meetings is mandatory. Your overall course grade will be lowered by 5 points for each unexcused absence and by 1 point for each unexcused lateness. Religious and spiritual related absences will be facilitated.

**Office hours:** You are expected to come to office hours at least twice for your professor and twice for your TA and are encouraged to come more often. You will schedule this minimum number of office hour visits in your calendar as part of your assignments. In addition, in preparation for specific assignments and your final portfolio, you will be required to meet with at least two other professors during their office hours or a time that you schedule with them.

**Required Readings:** You will be assigned weekly readings, including book chapters, journal articles, and review papers. You are expected to complete the readings before coming to class.

1. Books:
  - a. Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. C., & Williams, J. M. (2008). *The craft of research*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
  - b. Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Herder and Herder.
  - c. Evans, S. Y., Taylor, C. M., Dunlap, M. R., & Miller, S. D. (Eds.) (2009). *African Americans and community engagement in higher education: Community service, service-learning, and community-based research*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
2. Essays, book chapters, research papers, and news articles will be made available to you electronically via Blackboard.

**Assignments:** Written assignments are due on the day of your group meeting that immediately follows the class on the corresponding topic. Oral assignments will be presented during class. All written assignments are to be turned in electronically as Word documents. Assignments should be double spaced in 12 point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins on all sides. If an assignment is unexcused and late, you will receive a zero for that assignment, but all assignments must be turned in for you to receive a final grade in the class.

1. **Digital assignments:** As a class, we will create a WordPress website. WordPress is a blogging system that supports multiple users and provides a space to collaborate and share ideas with one another and engage with those

outside the College. You will be responsible for posting material to the course site throughout the semester. This material will include summaries of relevant research on the weekly topics, links to relevant websites providing more information about what we talk about in class, and discussions about the topics. You should work closely with your classmates in gathering and posting the relevant material to ensure good organization of the site. At the beginning of the semester, a staff member for Information Technology will visit our class and teach you how to create and add materials to the wiki. Assessment of this assignment will be your contribution to the class site in terms of meeting a minimum number of posts as well as the quality of those posts. You will have the option to use a pseudonym when you publish to the site if you do not want your contributions to be publicly identified.

2. **Class papers:** You will be responsible for turning in biweekly papers over the course of the semester on course topics. For these papers you will summarize what you have learned during instruction and in the readings, and you will find and report research relevant to these topics. For example, when we learn about the psychological construct of stereotype threat, you could find empirical research on this topic and summarize the main findings of this work, relating it to how it affects underrepresented faculty, scholars, and students. For these papers, you will use the library's resources such as databases like PsycInfo to find relevant journal articles, books, and other works. A librarian will visit our class at the beginning of the semester to instruct you in the best ways to collect relevant material for these papers. Each paper is expected to be approximately 2 pages. You will be graded on your ability to summarize the course material, your ability to find and summarize relevant research on the topic, and your writing skills. You are encouraged to use the Writing Center in preparing your documents. You will receive feedback from your professor as well as your TA on the strengths and weaknesses of your papers and will be able to revise them for your final portfolio. You should upload the research articles you find, or links to relevant work, on the class WordPress site.
3. **Class presentations:** Throughout the semester, you will be responsible for leading a class discussion on a course topic regarding one or more of the essential questions described above. This presentation will involve a PowerPoint presentation but should not simply be a lecture on a topic. Rather, this is an opportunity for you to practice your facilitation skills by engaging your classmates in a discussion of the material. You will be graded on the quality of the relevant research you provide on the topic, as well as your ability to ask discussion questions and to answer questions from the instructor and the students. Your classmates and instructor will provide written feedback to you about your presentation.
4. **Final portfolios:** The assignments in this course are cumulative; each of your assignments will contribute to your final portfolio which will include:
  - a. Revised versions of your papers. Feedback from your TA and the professor will help you revise your papers and preparing your material for your final portfolio. Your grade for these final papers will be based on your ability to incorporate this feedback and improve this work.

- b. Web presentation for future scholars. The goal of this presentation is for you to provide information on the topics you have researched throughout the class to undergraduate students who have not taken this course. You have two options for this presentation. First, you can create a self-recorded video and post the link on the class WordPress site. The video, which will be hosted on W&M's YouTube channel, should provide future undergraduate students with information about the past, present, and future of underrepresentation in the academy. Your presentation should provide information about specific topics you have focused on throughout the class and explain the relevance of these topics to future scholars. You will be graded on your summary of this previous work and not on your technology skills. In fact, making a social media-type video in which you are speaking directly to the camera (can be a camera on a cell phone) might be particularly appealing to your peers rather than a video with high-quality production value, although your video should feature well-lit conditions with a steady camera and audio that is easily intelligible. Second, you can amass a compilation of a few other short videos that have been previously recorded by others (e.g., researchers or students at other universities) and provide a written commentary on the videos. The videos and your commentary should provide information about specific topics discussed in the clips and you should explain the relevance of these topics to future scholars. Whichever option you choose, you will post it as your final contribution to the class WordPress site.
- c. Personal statement. In this statement, you will reflect on and describe how your personal history led you to come to William and Mary; who you are as a researcher and scholar; what your main research, academic, and professional goals are; how you will seek out support to help you accomplish your goals; and what you see as your role in your field.

### **Grading**

- Participation: 15%
- Office hours: 5%
- Digital contribution to wiki: 15%
- In-class presentation: 15%
- Papers: 25%
- Final portfolio: 25%

### **The Lemon Project**

This course is designated as a Lemon Project course. The Lemon Project (<http://www.wm.edu/sites/lemonproject/>) is a research project focused on the history of African Americans in relation to William and Mary and the college's role in slavery and segregation. In *Underrepresented Students in the Academy*, students will gain understanding of the role of underrepresented faculty, staff, and students at William and

Mary. Students are encouraged to participate in the Lemon Project symposium and talks throughout the semester.

### **Class Policies**

You are permitted to use laptops in order to take notes and do other class-related tasks. However, the use of laptops for e-mail, instant messaging, Facebook, or other nonacademic tasks is not allowed during class so as not to distract other students and the professor. I reserve the right to ban laptop use by individual students or the entire class if this rule is not followed. It should go without saying that mobile phone use – including text messaging – is not allowed. Please be sure to turn your phone ringer off before class begins.

I encourage you to come to my office hours or send me an e-mail if there's anything you'd like to discuss about the course. It's generally a good idea to get in touch with me sooner rather than later – the sooner we talk, the more help and advice I can provide. If you decide to contact me via e-mail, please leave me at least 24 hours to respond. In your e-mail, please use full words and sentences and be sure to sign your message with your full name. Also, if you think that my response will require more than a two-sentence answer, you should probably schedule a meeting so I can respond fully and attentively.

It is the policy of The College of William and Mary to accommodate students with disabilities and qualifying diagnosed conditions in accordance with federal and state laws. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a learning, psychiatric, physical, or chronic health diagnosis should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Students will also need to contact Student Accessibility Services staff at 757-221-2509 or at sas@wm.edu to determine if accommodations are warranted and to obtain an official letter of accommodation. For more information, please see [www.wm.edu/sas](http://www.wm.edu/sas). If you have a disability or any personal circumstance that will affect your learning in this course, please let me know as soon as possible. I recommend that we meet during office hours to discuss the best way to meet your needs and so I can provide you with my support.

I reserve the right to change the schedule of the class if we get ahead or behind of schedule.

### **Recommended readings**

Stanley, C. A. (Ed.). (2006). *Faculty of color: Teaching in predominantly White colleges and universities*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.

Strand, K., Cutforth, N., Stoeker, R., Marullo, S., & Donohue, P. (2003). *Community-based research and higher education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.