Social Inequality in South Asia Through Literature and Film
English 3440 (NCCU)
Time: TBA
Location: TBA

Professor:
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Course Description:
This course employs literature and film to focus on culture and society in South Asia (i.e., India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal). It specifically addresses the issue of caste as a form of social inequality. Despite anti-discrimination laws, caste remains a powerful socio-cultural institution in South Asia. In addition to playing an important role in many individual relationships, caste identity forms the basis of various social and political organizations. By reading the stories of individuals and groups in social context, this course explores cultural forms of discrimination in South Asia and people’s strategies for bettering their everyday lives through social justice. It utilizes life history, the novel, political critique and other literary genres to examine the cultural and material foundations of inequality in contemporary South Asia.

Student Learning Outcomes:
1. By means of five critical book reviews and four reaction note assignments, students will acquire the ability to identify the cultural and material factors that underlie social inequality in South Asia.
2. Based on reading the assigned course texts, students will be able to identify the social characteristics of caste and define how they institutionally inform discrimination in South Asia.
3. After participating in class discussions of readings and lectures, students will be able to distinguish the similarities and differences between social inequality and discrimination (as well as forms of resistance) in South Asia and the United States.
4. By doing class presentations and powerpoint enhanced podcasts, students will further enhance their analytical and critical thinking about society in South Asia through multi-format communication skills.
Required Texts:

(Students **must** buy **all** the books for this course. The books are ordered through the NCCU bookstore.)

Prerequisites: N/A

Attendance and Late Work:
Students are expected to timely attend every day of the course. Absences and/or tardiness will negatively impact a student’s grade. If a student is absent more than five classes, he/she will be withdrawn from the course (as per university rules). Multiple tardies will result in the deduction of participations points. **ALL LATE WORK WILL RECEIVE A REDUCED GRADE!** Students who attend to cell phones during class will lose participation points. If a student needs to leave in the course of a class, it is courteous to inform the professor. Students who leave in the middle of class without notifying the professor will be considered absent.

Plagiarism:
Plagiarism, according to the University Catalogue, is the “intentional use of the ideas, words, or work of another without attribution, when the information they provide is not common knowledge.” It includes: quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing or borrowing a person’s work without appropriate attribution. For assignments of less than 25% of the final grade, the penalty for plagiarism is a grade of F or Zero. For assignments of more than 25% of the final grade, the penalty for plagiarism is an F for the course.

Course Work:
1. Five critical book reviews (five **full** pages each) of this course’s required texts.
2. One **full** page of reaction notes for audio-visual items listed on the schedule.
3. A 10-minute power point presentation that compares social inequality, discrimination and resistance in South Asia and the United States. The presentation must cite examples from **ALL** the course’s required texts.
4. A final multi-media project that analyzes caste in Satyajit Ray’s film *Sanganti*.
Students must post on Blackboard the rough draft of their critical book review by 8am the day it is due. A REVISED version of the review is due one week after discussing it in class and on the date written in the syllabus (before 8am). Students must use the services of the University Writing Studio when revising critical book reviews. If students do not provide documentation of having visited the Writing Studio, it will negatively impact their grade.

The five critical book reviews must be four FULL pages long, double-spaced, in 12 point Time New Roman font with 1.25 margins and formatted as a MS Word Document. The reviews’ margins must be justified to both the left and right (i.e., block margins). Students’ names and course information should appear only in the header section. ASSIGNMENTS WILL RECEIVE ONE FULL LETTER GRADE REDUCTION IF THEY ARE NOT PROPERLY FORMATTED!

Grade Breakdown:

| Review Draft 1.1: | 3 points. |
| Review Draft 1.2: | 5 points. |
| Review Draft 2.1: | 3 points. |
| Review Draft 2.2: | 5 points. |
| Review Draft 3.1: | 3 points. |
| Review Draft 3.2: | 5 points. |
| Review Draft 4.1: | 3 points. |
| Review Draft 4.2: | 5 points. |
| Review Draft 5.1: | 3 points. |
| Review Draft 5.2: | 5 points. |

Reaction Notes: 20 points (5/5/5/5).
Power Point: 15 points.
Multi-media Project: 15 points.
Participation: 10 points.

TOTAL: 100 points.

Course Schedule

Week 1: India Today I
1/X Course Introduction
1/X “India’s Miracle?” on YouTube

Week 2: India Today II
1/X Discussion of India’s Miracle?/Reaction Notes Due
1/X South Asia: Geography of a Nation State
Week 3: Memoirs of a Dalit
1/X University Holiday/No Class
1/X Discussion of Jadhav’s “Untouchable” (Post Draft Reviews on Blackboard)

Week 4: The Ethnography of Social Inequality I
1/X Inequality in Hindu Society 1
1/X Inequality in Hindu Society 2 (Revised Review of Jadhav Due)

Week 5: Social Inequality in South Asian Literary Film
2/X Film: Satyajit Ray’s Sadgati
2/X Discussion of Sadgati/Reaction Notes Due

Week 6: The Ethnography of Social Inequality II
2/X Inequality in Hindu Society 3
2/X Discussion of Bhagawan/Feldhaus “Claiming Power” (Post Draft Reviews on Blackboard)

Week 7: Social Inequality in Documentary Film
2/X Film: Lesser Humans
2/X Discussion of Lesser Humans/Reaction Notes Due (Revised Review of Bhagawan/Feldhaus Due)

Week 8: Cultural Principle of Social Inequality
2/X Cultural Concepts of Purity and Pollution 1
2/X Cultural Concepts of Purity and Pollution 2

Week 9: Caste in the First Voice
3/X Unreported World: India & Caste/Discussion (No Notes)
3/X Discussion of Macwan’s “Stepchild” (Post Draft Reviews on Blackboard)

Week 10
3/X Spring Break/No Class
3/X Spring Break/No Class

Week 11: Social Inequality in South India
3/X Day in the Life of Sweeper/Discussion (No Notes)
3/X Discussion of Bama Faustina’s “Sangati” (Post Draft Reviews on Blackboard & Revised Review of Macwan due)

Week 12: Caste Violence on Film
3/X Film: The Die is Caste.
3/X The Die is Caste Discussion/Reaction Notes Due

Week 13: The Sudra Critique of Caste In South India
4/1 Cultural Differences Between North and South India
4/3 Discussion of Ilaiah’s “Why I Am Not a Hindu” (Post Draft Reviews on Blackboard)
Week 14: Caste Outside of Hinduism
4/8 Race and Caste
4/10 Ethnicity and Caste (Revised Review of Ihaiah Due)

Week 15: Power Point Presentations.
4/X Student Presentations & Discussions 1
4/X Student Presentations & Discussions 2

Week 16: Final Week
4/22 Last Day of Class/Final Multi-media Project Due
Student Oath

I ____________________________ (print name) completely understand the contents of the course syllabus and the requirements of this class. If I have any questions regarding course content and/or what is expected of students in this class, I will approach the instructor during office hours, after the completion of a lecture and/or by appointment.

Signature:
Date: