



Centre for the Study of Theory
and Criticism

Your Professor

Dr. Lucas Savino
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Class meetings

This class meets once a week,
every **Wednesday** from 9:30am
to 12:30pm in **StvH 3165**.

Office hours

My office is in **O'Neil 143C** at
Huron UC. *By appointment.*

Cosmovisions from the South: Decolonial Epistemologies and the Praxis of Decolonization

THEOCRIT9224

Winter 2024



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Course description

This course is built on the calls made from the Global South to engage with the Western theoretical critical traditions of historical materialism(s), post-structuralism(s), and postcolonialism(s). It does so by introducing the interpretative framework of decoloniality and practices of anti- and de-colonization.

Decolonial theory proposes the modern/colonial world system as a colonial matrix of power with origins in 1492 during the Renaissance. By doing so, decolonial theory articulates its critiques of colonialism in an extended temporal depth and geographical scope that goes beyond the histories and geographies usually covered in postcolonial perspectives on colonialism. By integrating the material and symbolic dimensions of domination, decolonial thought focuses on the discourses, institutions, and social practices that enabled the construction of Western Europe's geopolitical and epistemic hegemony.

To avoid the interpretation that the decolonial alternative consists of an essentialist move opposed to Western knowledge production or that the Global South has a privileged epistemic vantage point, the course also engages with the decolonization traditions that build more explicitly on "liberationist" modes of reasoning and practices than some decolonial interpretations may originally allow.



Classes will be conducted under the assumption that you have completed and studied the required readings before class.

All required readings are available in OWL.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify key concepts related to “decoloniality” and their analytical power to understand ongoing colonial relations of power and domination;
- Demonstrate critical analytical skills and awareness on the ways in which notions of decoloniality and decolonization are deployed;
- Examine the possibilities and (and limitations) of decolonial ontologies for decolonization practices;
- Mobilize (i.e., apply) a critical and interdisciplinary approach to understand practices of decolonization and how they challenge hegemonic social formations.



Class Schedule & Topics	Required Readings
Week 1 (Jan. 10) Introduction to Decoloniality	Fanon [1963] Cesaire [1950] Wynter (1995)
Week 2 (Jan. 17) Coloniality of Power	Quijano (2007) Quijano (2000) Quijano (2000b)
Week 3 (Jan. 24) Decolonial Feminism	Lugones (2010) Lugones (2020) Lugones (2008)
Week 4 (Jan. 31) Delinking and the Geopolitics of Knowledge	Mignolo (2007) Mignolo (2018) Mignolo (2002)
Week 5 (Feb. 7) Decolonial Pedagogies	Walsh (2023) Walsh (2007) Walsh (2010)
Week 6 (Feb. 14) Coloniality of Being	Maldonado-Torres (2007) Maldonado-Torres (2020) Maldonado-Torres (2006)
Spring Reading Week (Feb. 19 - 23)	
Week 7 (Feb. 28) Unsettling the Coloniality of Being	Wynter (2003) Wynter (1992)
Week 8 (Mar. 6) <i>Ch'ixinakax</i>	Rivera Cusicanqui (2012) Rivery Cusicanqui (2010)
Week 9 (Mar. 13) Racism and Transmodernity	Grosfoguel (2016) Grosfoguel (2013) Grosfoguel (2011)
Week 10 (Mar. 20) Ethics of Liberation	Dussel (2013) Dussel (2013b)
Week 11 (Mar. 27) Conclusions	Mignolo (2018b)
Week 12 (Apr. 3)	Conference Presentations

Course Assignments: Summary

Seminar Presentations	15%	Sign-up Sheet
Class Engagement	15%	Ongoing
Research Proposal	20%	Week 7
Research Essay	35%	Week 11 or 12 (see below)
Conference Presentation	15%	Week 12

Seminar Presentation

Each student will be responsible for leading and facilitating one seminar discussion this term. Sign-up sheets will be available on the first day of class.

Students have the freedom to be creative in how they deliver their seminar presentation and how they engage with the rest of the class but please note that the seminar presentation should not offer mere summaries or reports of what is written in the assigned readings.

Presentations are graded on substance, not style. The presenter must engage with the arguments and core concepts from the readings and provide a critical interpretation of the texts assigned for that week. It should also include questions for further class discussion.

Each presentation should last approximately 45 minutes. It is *highly recommended* that presenters provide the class with a one-page handout, including the questions prepared for discussion.

Class Engagement

Each week, students are expected to engage in the seminar in a meaningful manner. As such, it is expected that you will provide some brief commentary on the weekly readings before coming to class and contribute to class discussions.

Before class, you are expected to submit, via OWL, a brief note on all required readings (150 words min.) You do not need to submit this note on the day you are leading the seminar – the grade received for the seminar presentation will be used for this entry.

Weekly entries must include questions that merit, in your opinion, further engagement. Be prepared to share these notes in class as they can help direct discussion.

Each week, the grade for “class engagement” will be based on the note you submit in OWL and your contributions in class.

Contact

Email. The best way to reach me is via email. I will do my best to reply as soon as possible. If you do not get an immediate reply, please allow at least 48 hours if you need to send me a reminder. I usually do not check my emails after 5pm or on weekends.

Important! Please use the course number as part of the subject line for your emails. This will ensure a faster reply as my electronic correspondence gets sorted automatically. Due to privacy guidelines, you must use your university email account for contacting me.

Make an appointment

I will not hold regularly scheduled office hours but I am happy to schedule individual appointments as necessary. Please email me to set a date and time

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously. Students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Mental Health Resources

www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Research Proposal

The research proposal is the first step in your ongoing preparation of a final research essay. Its goal is to narrow down a topic of interest and present relevant bibliography that addresses such topic in order to support a main argument.

The proposal should be grounded in at least one key author featured in the course and it should be very clear that you have found enough sources to prepare the final essay.

Handout # 1 (“Proposal”) offers additional guidelines for this assignment (available on OWL).

Research Essay

The main objective of the research essay is to give students an opportunity to elaborate a clear argument and provide strong scholarly evidence to support it. The final essay must draw from the research proposal and feedback provided by instructor.

This assignment is due on the last day of class (“Conference Day”). However, you have the option to submit the week before (Week 11) in which case the instructor will provide preliminary feedback before the Seminar Presentation. This feedback will be in person or via Zoom (i.e., not written).

Handout # 2 (“Essay”) provides additional guidelines for the preparation of this assignment (available on OWL).

Conference Presentation

The last day of class will be organized as an end-of-semester Conference in which you will prepare a 15-minute presentation of your Research Essay. Please avoid reading from your paper; this presentation should be engaging. The use of a visual component (e.g., slides, handouts) is optional.

A note on deadlines

Assignments must be submitted by the deadline established in OWL. If you do not think that you are able to have your assignment ready for submission by the deadline, please reach out to the instructor in advance – 24-hr preferred – to request an extension. Assignments submitted after the deadline may not receive full feedback. **No assignments will be accepted after the final day of class without academic accommodations.**