CAS/GRS New Course Proposal Form

*To be used only for proposing new CAS courses **without BU Hub credit** as well as for **all** new GRS courses.*

This completed form and all required documents should be submitted as PDF files to either Sr. Academic Administrator Peter Law pgl@bu.edu (for CAS and CAS/GRS "piggyback" courses) or to Graduate Services Associate Casey Dziuba grsgs@bu.edu (for GRS-only courses). Please contact them for information or assistance, if necessary.

DEPARTMENT OR PROGRAM: **English**   DATE SUBMITTED: **2/30/2018**

COURSE NUMBER (include college code—CAS or GRS):   **CAS EN 393 / CAS WS 393**

NOTE: A course number cannot be reused if a different course using that number has been offered in the past five years.

COURSE TITLE: **Technoculture and Horizons of Gender and Race**

INSTRUCTOR(S): **Takeo Rivera**

TO BE FIRST OFFERED: Sem./Year: **Spring/ 2019**

SHORT TITLE: The "short title" appears in the course inventory, on the Link University Class Schedule, and on student transcripts and must be 15 characters maximum *including spaces*. It should be as clear as possible.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is the description that appears in the CAS and/or GRS Bulletin and The Link. It is the first guide that students have as to what the course is about. The description can contain no more than 40 words.

Explores new media theory, postmodernist thought, social media, and video games to confront gender, race, and sexuality. Through critical reading, writing, and hands-on digital technology use, students consider how race, sexuality, and gender live in virtual worlds.

PREREQUISITES/COREQUISITES: Indicate "None" or list all elements of the prerequisites/corequisites, clearly indicating "AND" or "OR" where appropriate. Here are three examples: "Junior standing or CAS ZN300 or consent of instructor"; "CAS ZN108 and CAS ZN203 and CAS PQ206; or consent of instructor"; "For SED students only."

1. State the prerequisites and/or corequisites:

One previous literature course or junior/senior status

2. Explain the need for these prerequisites and/or corequisites:

As an intermediate-level course, EN 376 is very likely to consist mostly of students with some prior experience in the field. While we are eager to have more non-majors enroll in the course, freshman or

sophomores with no literary background whatsoever are unlikely to be prepared for its readings and classroom discussions. We assume that juniors and seniors are more likely to have the general intellectual background, maturity, and skills to do well in the course, no matter what their particular area of study; hence the inclusion of "junior/senior status."

CREDITS: (check one)
- ☐ Half course: 2 credits   ☐ Variable: Please describe.
- **X** Full course: 4 credits   ☐ Other: Please describe.

Provide a rationale for this number of credits, bearing in mind that for a CAS or GRS course to carry 4 credits, 1) it must normally be scheduled to meet at least 150 minutes/week, AND 2) combined instruction and assignments, as detailed in the attached course syllabus, must anticipate at least 12 total hours/week of student effort to achieve course objectives.

The English department plans to run the course on a normal Tuesday-Thursday schedule of 75 minutes per meeting or on MWF at 50 minutes per meeting. Given the amount of reading on the course syllabus, and given the number of assessments – a long research project, a major class presentation, a midterm and weekly written responses– the course will easily require 12 total hours per week of student effort.

DIVISIONAL STUDIES CREDIT NOTE: *If this course intended to fulfill CAS Divisional Studies requirements, do not use this proposal form.* The course must be proposed through the BU Hub process via CourseLeaf. Refer to http://www.bu.edu/cas/proposing-cas-courses-for-the-bu-hub/ for instructions.

HOW FREQUENTLY WILL THE COURSE BE OFFERED?

☐ Every semester   ☐ Once a year, fall   ☐ Once a year, spring   ☐ Every other year

X Other: **Explain: The course will be offered every year, but the semester (fall vs spring) may vary, as English and WGS coordinate their curricular needs.**

NEED FOR THE COURSE: Explain the need for the course *and* its intended impact. How will it strengthen your overall curriculum? Will it be required or fulfill a requirement for degrees/majors/minors offered by your department/program or for degrees in other departments/school/colleges? Which students are most likely to be served by this course? How will it contribute to program learning outcomes for those students? If you see the course as being of "possible" or "likely" interest to students in another departments/program, please consult directly with colleagues in that unit. (You must *attach appropriate cognate comments using cognate comment form* if this course is intended to serve students in specific other programs. See FURTHER INFORMATION below about cognate comment.)

This proposed 300-level course fills a need in our curriculum for courses in new media analysis, and builds significantly on the department's strengths in gender and sexuality studies, offering an excellent complement, for example to our other 300-level courses that deal with issues of sexuality and gender, such as EN 326 The Arts of Gender. The course further will showcase the critical race studies research of Prof Takeo Rivera, who has recently joined our faculty. The course will be of great interest to students in English who are interested in the media and concepts addressed in the course: we anticipate significant enrollment from Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

ENROLLMENT: How many undergraduate and/or graduate students do you expect to enroll in the initial offering of this course?
25

CROSS-LISTING: Is this course to be cross-listed or taught with another course? If so, specify. Chairs/directors of all cross-listing units must co-sign this proposal on the signature line below.

This course will be cross-listed with WGS.

OVERLAP: Relationship to other courses in your program or others: Is there any significant overlap between this course and others offered by your department/program or by others? (You must *attach appropriate cognate comments using cognate comment form* if this course might be perceived as overlapping with courses in another department/program. See FURTHER INFORMATION below.)

No overlap with existing courses.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT: What, if any, are the new or special facilities or equipment needs of the course (e.g., laboratory, library, instructional technology, consumables)? Are currently available facilities, equipment, and other resources adequate for the proposed course? (NOTE: Approval of proposed course does *not* imply commitment to new resources to support the course on the part of CAS.)

No new equipment or facilities needed.

STAFFING: How will the staffing of this course, in terms of faculty and, where relevant, teaching fellows, affect staffing support for other courses? For example, are there other courses that will not be taught as often as now? Is the staffing of this course the result of recent or expected expansion of faculty? (NOTE: Approval of proposed course does *not* imply commitment to new resources to support the course on the part of CAS.)

No changes to staffing would be needed.

BUDGET AND COST: What, if any, are the other new budgetary needs or implications related to the start-up or continued offering of this course? If start-up or continuation of the course will entail costs not already discussed, identify them and how you expect to cover them. (NOTE: Approval of proposed course does *not* imply commitment to new resources to support the course on the part of CAS.)

No budgetary needs.

EXTERNAL PROGRAMS: If this course is being offered at an external program/campus, please provide a brief description of that program and attach a CV for the proposed instructor.

Not being offered at an external program.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS THAT MUST BE SUBMITTED FOR THIS PROPOSAL TO BE CONSIDERED:
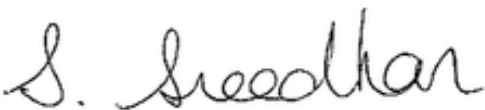
- A complete week-by-week SYLLABUS with student learning objectives, readings, and assignments that reflects the specifications of the course described in this proposal; that is, appropriate level, credits, etc. (See guidelines on "Writing a Syllabus" on the Center for Teaching & Learning website.) A typical, effective syllabus template is provided here under "Curriculum Review & Modification".

- Be sure that syllabus includes your expectations for academic honesty, with URL for pertinent undergraduate or GRS academic conduct code(s).

- Cognate comment from chairs or directors of relevant departments and/or programs. Use the form here under "Curriculum Review & Modification." You can consult with Dean Joseph Bizup (CAS) at casuap@bu.edu or Dean Emily Barman (GRS) at eabarman@bu.edu to determine which departments or programs inside and outside of CAS/GRS would be appropriate.

DEPARTMENT CONTACT NAME & POSITION: **Amy Appleford, Associate Chair**

DEPARTMENT CONTACT EMAIL & PHONE: APPLFOR@BU.EDU 617-631-7174 (CELL)

Signature(s) required:

DEPARTMENT APPROVAL: **2/18/18**
                Department Chair   Date

                                      Monday, February 26, 2018
        Other Department Chair(s) (required for cross-listed courses)   Date

revised 10/11/2017

Boston University College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences

725 Commonwealth Avenue, Room 106, Boston, MA 02215
T: 617-353-2401

Date: _____**2/26/2018**_____

Cognate Comment Request

TO: Name: _____Susanne Sreedhar_____

        Department: Woman's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies_____

FROM: Name: Amy Appleford_____

        Department: English Department_____

        Telephone: 617-358-2551_____   E-mail applefor@bu.edu_____

Course Number: _____EN 393/WS 393__

Course or Program Title: _____Technoculture and Horizons of Gender and Race_____

Our Department would like to request cognate comments on this course (or program). A complete proposal is attached for your review. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kindly return the signed original to me by _____March 1st_____ so that I may include your comments when submitting our proposal for review and approval. Please do not send any cognate letters directly to the dean's office. Thank you.

COMMENTS: _____The Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies Program is very excited to cross-list "Technoculture and Horizons of Gender & Race: Cyborgs, Goddesses, and Gamers." This course will be attractive to WGS students and fit into our curriculum well. We have no objections.

Please explain fully any objections.

Signature: _____S. Sreedhar_____   Date: 2/26/18_____

Title: _____Associate Professor, WGS Interim Director_____

English 329/WS 329
[room, date, time]

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Technoculture and Horizons of Gender & Race:
Cyborgs, Goddesses, and Gamers

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Professor Takeo Rivera
Email: tekr@bu.edu
Office: 236 Bay State Road, Rm. 443
Office Hours:

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In an age of tweets, memes, and avatars, how do we grapple with contemporary understandings and boundaries of the human, and of human variegation? This course explores new media theory, postmodernist thought, social media, and video games to confront contemporary conceptualizations of gender, race, and sexuality. In the 21st century, how does Donna Haraway's feminist cyborg manifest on the computer screen? What happens when we understand race *as* a technology? How does social media culture alter our relationship to reading and literature more generally? Can the videogame be considered an alternate mode of embodiment that queers our very understanding of what the body actually is? Through a combination of critical reading, expository writing, and hands-on social media and digital technology use, students will consider how race, sexuality, and gender live in virtual worlds in order to better understand how they function in the actual one.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
- To critically engage the key concepts of new media theory, internet culture, and videogame studies through rigorous reading, writing, and research.
- To develop experience working with multiple media for artistic and academic expression.
- To foster an intersectional grasp of gender, race, and sexuality in 21st century media.

REQUIRED TEXTS TO PURCHASE
- Rhee, Margaret *Love, Robot*
- Cowhig, Frances Ya-Chu *410 Gone*
- Lin, Tao *Taipei*
- Galloway, Alexander *Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture*

Note: if a reading is not listed above, it will instead be available as a PDF on Blackboard. It is STRONGLY preferred that you bring printed copies of all PDF readings.

REQUIRED GAMES TO PURCHASE
All games are available to purchase via store.steampowered.com. Please register for a Steam account online. All games should be both Mac and PC compatible; it is recommended to have a computer purchased in the last four years, as well as a mouse.
- *Undertale*
- *Plague, Inc.*
- *Telltale Games' The Walking Dead Season 1*
- *Portal*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

- **Participation, In-Class Exercises, Attendance (10%).** Participation is worth 10% of your grade. Please come to class prepared to discuss all of the readings assigned for the week according to the syllabus. Students will be graded each week based on your contributions to discussions in class. Non-graded assignments are also considered part of the participation grade.
- **Weekly Responses via Facebook (10%).** Every student will join a closed Facebook group for the course, moderated by the instructor. Every week, you must respond to the instructor's prompt through thoughtful and elaborate comment. You may also respond to your classmates as well via Likes, replies, gifs, memes, etc, as long as the discussion remains
- **Reading Presentation (15%).** Every student in the course will sign up for one presentation on a class day in the semester. These presentations are ten minutes long, and students have an option of either making a conventional academic presentation of the themes of the week's text, or a creative performance response to the week's readings followed by a short but rigorous discussion of the performance.
- **Take-Home Midterm (20%).** Assigned halfway into the semester, the take-home midterm consists of a series of short answer questions and short essays that test students' comprehension and engagement with the readings of the course.
- **Research/Project Proposal (5%).** This one-page document will pitch an area of interest for your final research essay or project.
- **Final Research Essay/Project (30%) (7-9 pages, double spaced).** By default, the final essay is a short argumentative research paper that considers a question about race, gender, sexuality in relationship to technology and new media. It must also utilize at least 3 outside sources. However, student has the option to utilize a final project of a different medium altogether, including website design, video, etc, although it must still incorporate outside research to some degree.
- **Presentation of Final Project (10%).** In addition to the actual final project, students will share their final projects with the rest of the class, whether that is a short presentation explaining a summary or excerpt of their papers, or a demonstration of creative/digital work.

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance

Attendance is crucial for student learning in this course, so students are expected to attend class every day. Students are allowed to have one unexcused absence each semester. If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent a student from attending class, she or he must contact the instructor at least 48 hours before class, unless there is an emergency.

Participation

Students are expected to be prepared to discuss the texts assigned for each day of class and to finish all written assignments by the day indicated on the syllabus. However, while students are graded based on their participation in class, the strength of a student's participation is not judged only by the amount one talks, but how thoughtful one's contributions are. That includes supporting other students with their ideas or projects. However, all students are expected to contribute to the discussion, and everyone's participation grade suffers if no one speaks up. Silence will be interpreted as a lack of preparation for the session and not having read the text. Cooperative learning is strongly encouraged insofar as it does not constitute academic dishonesty or cheating. Furthermore, students

are not allowed to use smartphones, open laptops, tablets, etc. in class without express permission from the instructor.

Formatting
All essays in this class will be written in standard MLA format (information found here: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/). Please write in Times New Roman in 12-inch font with 1-inch margins. Furthermore, please submit **both** hard copies in class *and* electronic submissions to the Assignments tab of the Blackboard site of all assignments except the final paper, which requires only email submission. When uploading assignments, please title your document file using the following format: **LastName_Firstname_AssignmentName.docx.**

Feedback & Communication
- Due to time constraints, I cannot promise to read over entire rough drafts of written assignments for review prior to their due dates, nor can I give "grade estimates." However, I can possibly look over introductory paragraphs, thesis statements, and possibly short excerpts.
- I am available via email for logistical issues only. I will attempt to respond within 48 hours, but I cannot guarantee immediate response if I receive the email late at night (e.g. I likely will not respond immediately to a question about an assignment emailed at 2am the morning before it is due). Questions about larger concepts and course content are best addressed in person, either in section itself or in office hours.

(Needs Conduct Code; they've been informed)

Syllabus Revision
The instructor reserves the right to revise the syllabus and assignments through the semester to best cater to the needs of the course and the students.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

UNIT 1
New Media Theory and the Stakes of Race, Gender, and Sexuality

Week 1 – Introductions

Wed Jan 23
- Introductions, icebreakers

Fri Jan 25
- Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"

Week 2 – Cyborgs and Goddesses: Gender, Tech Imaginaries, and Method

Mon Jan 28
- Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs"

Wed Jan 30
- Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs" (continued)
- N Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman* Ch. 1

Fri Feb 1
- N Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman* Ch. 1 (continued)

Week 3 – Medium, Message, and Techne

Mon Feb 4
- Marshall McLuhan, "The Medium is the Message"

Wed Feb 6
- Marshall McLuhan, "The Medium is the Message" (continued)
- Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology"

Fri Feb 8
- Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology" (continued)

Week 4 – Race and/as Technology

Mon Feb 11
- Wendy Chun, "Race and/as Technology"
- Thomas Foster, "The Souls of Cyberfolk: Performativity, Virtual Embodiment, and Racial Histories"

Wed Feb 13
- Roh, Huang, and Niu, Introduction, *Techno-Orientalism: Imagining Asia in Speculative Fiction, History, and Media*
- William Gibson, "Johnny Mnemonic"

Fri Feb 15
- Margaret Rhee, *Love, Robot*

Week 5 – Rhizomes and World Pictures

Tues Feb 19
- Rey Chow, "Age of the World Target"

Wed Feb 20
- Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, "Introduction: Rhizome" in *A Thousand Plateaus*

Fri Feb 22
- Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, "Treatise on Nomadology: The War Machine" in *A Thousand Plateaus*

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UNIT 2
Internet Culture, Social Media, and Constructions of Self

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Week 6 – Cyberbodies that Matter: Performance and Online Self-Construction

Mon Feb 25
- Erving Goffman, *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (excerpt)

Wed Feb 27
- Wendy Chun, "Why Cyberspace?" in *Control and Freedom*

Fri March 1
- Erika Pearson, "All the World Wide Web's a Stage"
  http://firstmonday.org/article/view/2162/2127
- Annette Markham, "Interaction in Digital Contexts: Persistent Characteristics"
  http://www.markham.internetinquiry.org/2012/08/dramaturgy1/
- **TAKE HOME MIDTERM ASSIGNED**

Week 7 – Social Media and Social Theory
Mon March 4
- DiMaggio, P. Hargittai, E., Neuman, R., & Robinson, J. (2001). Social Implications of the Internet *Annual Review of Sociology, 27*: 307-336
- Lisa Nakamura, "Avatars and the Visual Culture of Reproduction" in *Digitizing Race*

Wed March 6

- Sara Florini, "Tweets, Tweeps, and Signifyin': Communication and Cultural Performance on 'Black Twitter'"
- Social Media Workshop 1: Meme Page

Fri March 8
- Social Media Workshop 2: Meme Page
- **TAKE-HOME MIDTERM DUE**

Week 8 – Spring Break

Week 9 – Smartphones & Drugs: The Phenomenology of Being Wired

Mon March 18
- Tao Lin, *Taipei*

Wed March 20
- Tao Lin, *Taipei* (continued)

Fri March 22
- Tao Lin, *Taipei* (to end)
- **DUE: Proposals for Final Papers/Performances**

UNIT 3
Homo Ludens, Virtual Worlds, Queer Pixels

Week 10 – Let's Play

Mon March 25
- Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens* (excerpt)
- Start playing: *Undertale*

Wed March 27
- Janet Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck* (excerpt)
- Sherry Turkle *Second Self* (excerpt)
- Keep playing: *Undertale*

Fri March 29
- Alexander Galloway, *Gaming* Chapter 1
- Keep playing: *Undertale*

Week 11 – First Person, Queer Subjects

Mon April 1
- Alexander Galloway, *Gaming* Chapter 2
- Start Playing: *Portal*

Wed April 3
- Takeo Rivera, "Do Asians Dream of Electric Shrieks?"
- Amanda Philips, "Welcome to My Fantasy Zone: Bayonetta and Queer Femme Disturbance"
- Keep playing: *Portal*

Fri April 5
- J. Halberstam, *The Queer Art of Failure* (excerpt)
- Jesper Juul, *The Art of Failure* (excerpt)
- Keep playing: *Portal*

Week 12 – Global Play,

Mon April 8
- Alexander Galloway, *Gaming* Chapter 4
- Start playing: *Plague, Inc.*

Wed April 10
- Henry Jenkins, "Game Design as Narrative Architecture" in *First Person: New Media as Story, Performance, and Game*
- Keep playing: *Plague, Inc.*

Fri April 12
- Nick Dyer-Witheford and Greig de Peuter, Introduction to *Games of Empire*
  Keep playing: *Plague, Inc.*
- Start playing: *The Walking Dead*

Week 13 – Social Death, Living Death

Wed April 17
- Judith Butler, "Beside Oneself: On the Limits of Sexual Autonomy" in *Undoing Gender*
- Keep playing: *The Walking Dead*

Fri April 19
- Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig, *410 Gone*
- Keep playing: *The Walking Dead*

Week 14 – Wrapping Up

Mon April 22
- Review

Wed April 24
- Final Presentations

Fri April 26

- Final Presentations

Week 15 – Game Over

Mon April 29
- Final Presentations

Wed May 1
- Conclusion

Week 16 – Individual Meetings With Instructor
Will schedule individual meetings with all students in lieu of class time this week to provide additional support for the final paper.

Campus Resources

Because learning is a holistic process, I encourage anyone to pursue additional student support services. This is an incomplete list of some of these services:

The CAS Center for Writing
http://www.bu.edu/writingprogram/the-writing-center/
100 Bay State Road, 3rd Floor
617-358-1500

BU Disability Services
http://www.bu.edu/disability/
19 Deerfield Street, 2nd Floor
617-353-3658

BU Peer Tutoring
http://www.bu.edu/erc/peer-tutoring/
100 Bay State Road, 6th Floor
617-353-7077

Behavioral Medicine Clinic (Counseling)
http://www.bu.edu/shs/behavioral-medicine/
881 Commonwealth Ave
617-353-3569

Psychological Services Center
http://www.bu.edu/psc/
648 Beacon Street, 5th Floor
617-353-9610

BU Sexual Assault & Prevention Center
http://www.bu.edu/shs/sarp/
930 Commonwealth Ave, 1st Floor
617-353-7277