This course is a comparative study of the way a group of Black and Asian writers engaged with white western racism, imperialism and arrogance. We will be particularly interested in uncovering their conceptions of self, including how race, gender, nation and ethnicity figured into their self concepts.

This is a discussion course. The basic course requirement is that you come to class prepared to participate actively in intensive discussion and analysis of the texts we will study. Each of you will make a ten minute thematic oral presentation on one of the texts for the course. Class participation, including your oral presentation, will constitute 50% of your grade. The other 50% will represent your final project. Each of you must research and write a ten to fifteen page final essay comparing the work of a Black and an Asian writer in terms of the questions and issues we address in the course. Your final essay will be due on May 2, the last day of class for this course. We will discuss the nature of the final project in detail during our first class meeting. I have required only one written project so that you will have ample time to focus on it and can go into depth in your work. Therefore, I will not accept late work except in the case of a documented medical emergency. As this is a discussion course attendance is mandatory. If you miss three class sessions you may earn a failing grade for the course.

Required Texts


Frantz Fanon, Black Skin White Masks ISBN-13: 978-0802143006


Reading and Discussion Schedule

1/24: Orientation
1/31: Fanon, Black Skin White Masks
2/7: Tanizaki, Naomi
2/14: Baldwin, Giovanni’s Room
2/28: Mishima, Confessions of a Mask
    Film: Mishima Documentary
3/14: Baldwin, Notes of a Native Son
    Film: Baldwin Documentary
3/21: Baldwin, Another Country
4/4: Mishima, Spring Snow
4/11: Nathan, Mishima
4/18: Kingston, China Men
    Film: Eat a Bowl of Tea
5/2: Wu, Yellow