

Macalester College

Spring 2020 End of Course Survey

Course: AMST101-01: Explorations of Race and Racism
Instructor: Duchess Harris *
Response Rate: 12/25 (48.00 %)

1 - What specific course activities or materials did you find most valuable for your learning in this course?

Response Rate 12/25 (48%)

- I really thought to group work we did in class was helpful in gaining a broader understanding of concepts that were paramount to the class. The group projects were fun to complete and allowed us to gain a more specified knowledge of time periods we focused on.
- The book selections were amazing!
- I think the activity that we did with the Levittown website was really cool and a productive way of applying the knowledge we learned from the book.
- I really enjoyed this class. The group activities were a helpful part of this class because it forced us to talk with more students. This was helpful because the topics in this class are hard to speak on if you do not know anyone.
- Very interesting paper and videos for us to watch. Always kept class interesting and exciting to attend
- While the reading was sometimes hard to keep up with, I appreciated that the many and varied books gave a broad, but also personal introduction to race and racism in America.
- Diverse perspectives offered in readings. Having a community where we could discuss difficult topics openly. Non-academic and scholarly perspectives encouraged and accepted.
- I thought all of the readings were quite insightful. I also enjoyed watching the documentaries that correlated to the course topics.
- I thought that the reading material was excellent. All materials were really interesting and well paired with class discussions and documentaries.
- In class discussions, documentaries, the play we attended and the group project were all very valuable.
- I loved the documentaries and films. Also, the books were extremely interesting and I really enjoyed going to the Penumbra and seeing the play.
- Watching documentaries in class that correlated to the readings was valuable in providing a visual representation.

2 - What positive strategies or approaches did this instructor use during the remote instruction phase of the Spring 2020 semester?

Response Rate 12/25 (48%)

- The condensing of the syllabus in order to fit the time allotted for the rest of the semester. Because of that, it was made simple to complete schoolwork from all of my classes in a timely manner along with the work I had for this class.
- Guest speakers and really interesting group conversations.
- It was super helpful to have one less class to worry about during this semester. After we finished our papers and were told we no longer have assignments, I felt a huge weight off my shoulder and I appreciate that so so much.
- Giving us time at the beginning of class to catch up and enjoy each other's company during the lock down.
- Made life very easy on us and reduced our stress levels about school. Helped us stay positive and still enjoy class
- I appreciated the discussions we were able to have in the first few weeks of remote instruction. I wish that we had continued to meet, even briefly, together or in small groups for the rest of the semester to discuss the remaining books/ whatever material we had access to. I also appreciated getting to hear from Dr. Gutierrez. I think guest speakers on zoom is a really great way to adapt to one of the few advantages provided by a world on lock down and communicating by video chat.
- Allowing us the option for community but recognizing when/if it was taxing. Being able to adapt to what students needed in real time.
- I thought it was very helpful that there were only two meetings during the remote instruction phase because having large group discussions on zoom for discussion-based courses like this course is very challenging. I also thought it was nice, yet also upsetting, that the course ended early because this pandemic has been difficult for many people, and adding more coursework would have been pretty stressful.
- Duchess did a really good job anticipating student needs and anxieties. She accommodated our anxieties by pushing our essay due date back and canceling our final project.
- Being sensitive about the situation and comprising with the students help reduce stress and help us work on the final assignment.
- She is very personable and really cares deeply about the students. She also really encourages deep classroom discussions.
- Zooming for discussions and lightening the work load to help lessen the stress of students.

3 - Please share any additional comments about the instructor and/or the class.

Response Rate 8/25 (32%)

- Prof. Harris made this class that much more enjoyable. Her personality (humor/charisma) kept everyone engaged full time in the class. She's a great professor.
- I really learned a lot from this class and definitely enjoyed it! Duchess is an amazing professor!
- Thank you, Professor Harris, for being so accommodating to us and allowing us to take some time for ourselves during this quarantine. I know the transition to online was a struggle for profs, but you did it and we all made it!
- I've been loaning out Learning to be White to various people. I'm not entirely sure where it is right now. I had rented it, but now my plan is to buy it so I can keep sharing it around; it has a wait list.
- Duchess is an amazing educator and person and I am so happy to have taken this course with her <3
- The material learned in the course inspired me more than any other class, and I wish that it didn't end so early because I looked forward to learning all of the topics that would have been discussed. I gravitated a lot to this course, and in the short time I was in it, I learned so much.
- Duchess is one of the most intelligent professors that I've ever had. What an incredible class!
- Thank you Duchess!

Macalester College

Spring 2020 End of Course Survey

Course: AMST200-01: Critical Methods for American Studies Research
Instructor: Duchess Harris *
Response Rate: 7/11 (63.64 %)

1 - What specific course activities or materials did you find most valuable for your learning in this course?

Response Rate 7/11 (63.64%)

- Duchess. She is funny, good at creating community, and made everything seem really relevant to today, which I liked. I liked the discussion on actually defining neoliberalism. And the cultural studies reading/discussion. And the reading by Foucault on sexuality.
- I really loved our group discussions. I especially really liked the Cultural Studies books because I think it helped me understand research methods and approaches. I also liked that it was a book because it meant we talked about it for more than one day. Because we read so many articles - 2-3 per day - it felt really hard to have a firm grasp on some of the readings. It might be hard to avoid doing it that way because there is so much content we needed to get through, but I think maybe spending more time on a piece would help understanding and retention of info.
- The group presentations on the readings really helped me break things down into understandable pieces. I like how the professor would pause and catch us up if we were confused on a topic.
- The variety of readings for the course and major have been transformative in my understanding of American history.
- I found participating in class discussion on course readings was helpful for my learning. We also discussed how COVID-19 affected certain American structures, using current circumstances to deepen our learning about American Studies.
- I enjoyed class discussions, LOVED the preceptor, and loved Duchess' ability to get students engaged in tough material. It was a highlight of my Tuesdays/Thursdays, for sure.
- All of the readings were very interesting and also related to the course in different ways. I appreciated learning so many different methods of research.

2 - What positive strategies or approaches did this instructor use during the remote instruction phase of the Spring 2020 semester?

Response Rate 7/11 (63.64%)

- Holding weekly meetings and adjusting our final project to be relevant to the pandemic.
- I appreciated Duchess' accommodation and understanding during this crazy time. I also just appreciated having a caring community in the Methods class, it felt good to check in with everyone each week
- The professor was super understanding about where we were coming from and we still ended up meeting but it was really laid back.
- Professor Harris was accommodating and supportive. We were able to continue our discussions about the readings but also check in as a group every week to create a space for one another.
- I found using Zoom and having live sessions very helpful. I was able to stay connected with my professor and interact with my classmates and the course lessons. Even though apart, I found it valuable that we were still able to come together as a class, participate in group discussion, and share knowledge through Zoom. Also, Professor Duchess was very understanding given the circumstances and constantly kept us in positive spirits while also being an educator. I appreciated her approaches during this time!
- We had weekly Zoom meetings to check in with each other and that felt like the most community I had of any class during the remote phase of the semester. Duchess was also extremely lenient and understanding when things got crazy and made me feel comfortable sharing how I was doing and asking for help when needed.
- Duchess asked for our input in how we wanted class to run and how much work we could handle. She scaled back the syllabus by a lot and was flexible with the coursework. However, we were still able to get through all of our readings.

3 - Please share any additional comments about the instructor and/or the class.

Response Rate 7/11 (63.64%)

- I have heard mixed things about this class in the past but I really enjoyed it, and thought the professor did an excellent job teaching it.
- I really liked this class - the discussions and ideas we had, the dynamic of the class, and the community Duchess fostered
- Would recommend. I heard a lot from other professors that Methods was going to be hard and not the best if I was just trying out American Studies. It ended up being one of the classes I looked most forward to.
- Loved this class, the professor, and the people in it. Would recommend an American Studies major to other students.
- Overall Duchess was a great educator even during these times.
- Duchess! I am so grateful to have spent the semester with you. You really made me love Methods, and your ability to adapt when things got tough during the pandemic was encouraging and inspiring as a student looking to you for guidance. Your humor and kindness--not to mention your extensive and thoughtful commentary on our dense readings--helped me get through the semester.
- I appreciated Duchess's flexibility and willingness to change the syllabus during this time. She was also very compassionate and always wanted to know how we were doing with the course and how we were dealing with COVID.

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Spring 2020 End of Course Survey

Course: AMST294-01: Race and the Law

Instructor: Duchess Harris *

Response Rate: 13/18 (72.22 %)

1 - What specific course activities or materials did you find most valuable for your learning in this course?

Response Rate	12/18 (66.67%)
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- The in-class discussions and articles sent to us by Prof Harris as context pieces provided a lot of insight into the material.
- I think the guest speakers were important to contextualize some of the topics that we covered in class. I also enjoyed it whenever there was a lecture. I think I learn content better with a lecture-style class as opposed to reading and discussing said reading.
- I liked the discussion aspect and having less lecture based learning in the class
- The class debates where we sometimes had to defend the side of arguments we didn't personally agree with. Professor Duchess's Race and American Law series was a great resource because it used extremely accessible language and provided us with a broad, foundational understanding of how racial formations and oppression are inherent in American law.
- I really enjoyed the guest speakers because we could see the different paths each one chose. The books were also really helpful in helping me understand what was going on.
- I liked how each class had a different form of material being presented, made the class a lot more engaging and interesting
- I found being able to communicate with guest speakers through Zoom and still deepen my learning on how race and the law interacts most valuable. The speakers were able to speak to their expertise on law and their career experiences in the legal field.
- Videos, documentaries, discussions.
- I thought the guest speakers were all great and either provided unique insight into law school and careers, or into actual policy and legal concerns directly related to the material we were studying. It was also a great way to make connections, to get advice and possibly internships. In terms of content, obviously we didn't get to really get into case law for critical race theory, but even the days we spent learning its history and discussing its framework, and concepts like whiteness as property were some of my favorites. Even over zoom I felt as though I was learning a lot!!
- I really appreciated the guest speakers in the course. They gave me an idea of both what I may want to do, and what paths I may not want to pursue. Moreover, they enriched the material we learned in class by providing the knowledge of their lived experience to complement the course material. I also really enjoyed the brief foray into critical race theory and wish we had the opportunity to learn more, but totally understand that it was impossible given the circumstances.
- I found the in-class discussions and guest lectures to be the most valuable for my learning in this class.
- The book series we read in the first half of the semester served as a very helpful history refresher.

2 - What positive strategies or approaches did this instructor use during the remote instruction phase of the Spring 2020 semester?

Response Rate	13/18 (72.22%)
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- Professor Harris was amazing during the remote learning phase. She was very flexible with deadlines and abilities to get works done at home. She trimmed the course down to be more manageable from home due to technological issues and she was aware that not everyone was able to bring all the materials home so she gave us digital copies.
- I appreciated that the classes were recorded
- I think cutting down on the content of the class was helpful, as I think it would have been very difficult to coherently discuss Critical Race Theory over zoom. I also think that making the final paper optional to pass the class relieved some of the pressure that students face at the end of semesters.
- realizing what could and could not transmit digitally adjusted how conversation was facilitated because it is very easy to disengage learning online
- Professor Harris was understanding about our situations and worked to accommodate our needs. We were still able to learn about the topics of the course, and even got to meet a few more guest speakers virtually.
- By mixing lectures, videos, and student discussions, there was never a boring class. Every time I left I was always reflecting on the topic of the day even during the online period.
- checking in with students, presentation mode, offering chances and pauses for questions throughout the class
- I found using Zoom and having live sessions very helpful. I was able to stay connected with my professor and interact with my classmates and the course lessons. Even though apart, I found it valuable that we were still able to come together as a class, participate in group discussion, and share knowledge through Zoom. Also, Professor Duchess was very understanding given the circumstances and constantly kept us in positive spirits while also being an educator. She would keep in touch with us through emails too. I appreciated her approaches during this time!
- Having guest speakers was actually a great way to keep me engaged with the material in a more comprehensive, human way.
- I think the decision not to teach critical race theory to the extent you wanted to was probably a good one. I think that as much as we all wanted to learn it, there is a limit to what can be taught over zoom with that little notice and without the proper materials. I think making the paper optional and advising students to take the class pass/fail was the most equitable option possible, and the other work we were required to do felt fair. Additionally, I liked that we kept class time the same length because I think we had a good class dynamic, and I think it was really good for us to all be able to see each other, and talk through everything we were learning. While I know it's not easy for everyone to attend class, I generally prefer more class time and less work to the other way around, even over zoom. I don't think this was a strategy necessarily but you went out of your way to check on students and let us know you were there for us and missing us, which was incredibly kind and I really appreciated.
- Flexibility with scheduling and deadlines for assignments. Professor Harris was truly understanding this semester and cognizant of the fact that all students are in different situations and being effected differently, and shaped the class around that and created a positive environment in which we were able to learn and be present to the best of our ability. Her emphasis on this and the well-being of her students versus trying to get through all of the course material that was initially planned was incredible, and I truly appreciated it.
- The guest speakers were excellent and class was nice to keep some routine. I also thought the lectures from the remote phase were some of the most interesting lectures material-wise in the entire class.
- I thought it was helpful that Professor Harris ended classes early because I could definitely feel myself burning out in those last two weeks. That said, I think I processed the given information more effectively because the course was shortened.

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Spring 2020 End of Course Survey

Course: AMST294-01: Race and the Law
Instructor: Duchess Harris *
Response Rate: 13/18 (72.22 %)

3 - Please share any additional comments about the instructor and/or the class.

Response Rate	10/18 (55.56%)
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- I really enjoyed the class and how it was set up. I appreciate all the help from Prof Harris and for being understanding during these times. I wish we could have gone into more depth with the material during the remote learning phase but unfortunately the pandemic made that impossible.
- I loved this class and regret that I couldn't get the full in-person experience but I hope that there can be a study guide or something that we can use to study Critical Race Theory on our own over the summer if we'd like. As a senior, I kind of regret not taking more legal studies classes as its an interesting and important topic.
- :) I hope others will be able to retake a similar course with you and delve into the CRT !! Thanks for a fun semester
- Loved Professor Harris, I would recommend this course to other students for sure.
- Would take again.
- Genuinely appreciated the constant effort to make class engaging despite the craziness of everything happening, thankful for a professor that's understanding and cares if their students are doing ok in this time. fantastic and engaging speaker
- You're awesome, thank you!
- One thing that would have been helpful would be more feedback on work. Especially at the beginning of the year when we submitted the same assignment several weeks in a row without feedback in between. It's hard to say how the course would have felt if we had actually gotten the whole amount of time and content, but I maybe wish we had spent more time on critical race theory and generally the more current and applied concepts that we discussed that the end of the course. I think all of the background information we got was really good and very useful, and often in those last few weeks I found myself thinking back to that content and how well it set us up for this final part. However, it did feel kind of slow moving. One possible suggestion I had would be that instead of responding to discussion questions for homework, we were assigned larger chunks of the text and took and submitted notes on the specific supreme court cases/other important context. And then in class our focus was discussion (which it kind of already was). Overall I loved this course and hope you teach it again! And I hope that I get an opportunity to learn critical race theory or take other classes with you!
- I wish we could have learned about CRT! Other than that nothing at all, and I really appreciate all that I learned and the format of the class both before and after we switched to online learning.
- I loved the materials in this class, I just wish we had gotten more feedback on our own written work.