

Leisure in a Diverse Society: RLST 2000
Thursdays 11:00am -1:45pm, Ramsey 224

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Course Description

The purpose of this course is to enhance students' understanding of leisure in contemporary society by examining the beliefs, values, and social structures of their own leisure and comparing and contrasting them with individual and social considerations such as race/ethnicity, sex/gender, sexuality, age, economic status, ability, religion and other cultural influences.

This course is designed to provide the student with an introduction to the concept of leisure from historical, socio-cultural, and individual perspectives. Consistent with the goals of liberal/general education, this course encourages students to think critically, understand contexts, reflect, and take action.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- A. Compare and contrast the meanings, purposes, and values of leisure, recreation, play and work for women and men across culture, history, and in different languages
- B. Discuss how scholars from a variety of disciplines have attempted to explain leisure theoretically and the difficulties of using those theories to generalize across racial and gendered identities
- C. Detail how representations of leisure in the humanities (literature, art, music) and popular culture (television, film, internet, etc.) reflect and reproduce cultural values, social role expectations, and stereotypes.
- D. Describe how the spaces and places of leisure reflect and reproduce cultural values, social role expectations, and stereotypes.
- E. Compare and contrast taboo recreation across sub-cultures to explain how leisure reflects and reproduces cultural values, social role expectations, and stereotypes.
- F. Discuss how dominant cultural values influence leisure, including decisions about which populations are served in public, private, and commercial recreation.
- G. Explain the relationship between leisure, inequality, and equality in relation to race/ethnicity, sex/gender, economic status, ability, sexuality, and religion.
- H. Create and support suggestions for individual and societal action related to leisure, the individual, and the "common good."

Required Texts/Readings

Russell, R. V. (2004). *Pastimes: The context of contemporary leisure*. (3rd. ed.) New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

This class will enforce guidelines outlined in UGA Culture of Honesty as described online at http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm. Students are expected to be familiar with and follow all guidelines associated with academic honesty.

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Classroom Setting and Conduct

It is expected that students who enroll in this class are mature and self-motivated. This is not a pure lecture-based class; instead, we will also spend time in discussion and in small activities. Students should prepare for class by doing the assigned readings and jotting down notes or questions they would like to raise in class discussion. It is expected that students will participate in constructive discussion grounded in the readings and lectures of each class period.

- ✓ A variety of instructional techniques will be utilized to stimulate student interest and accommodate a full range of learning styles. These techniques include lecture, small and large group discussion, student exercises, readings, exams, and papers. *If you have a special learning need, please let the instructor know. Every effort will be made to accommodate your need.*
- ✓ Every effort will be made to create a learning environment that is free of bias and favoritism. The instructors *and all students in class* must respect each student's viewpoint as individual and unique, and treat each student as a valuable, contributing member of the classroom culture. Students are encouraged to express their individual perspectives, ask questions, and contribute insights in the spirit of free, open, and nonjudgmental discussion.
- ✓ Students are expected to actively engage with course material, participate in class discussion, respect individuals who are speaking during class, contextualize opinions, avoid side conversations, and complete all written and reading assignments by the designated due dates. **TURN OFF ALL CELLPHONES AND COMPUTERS**

Attendance

Regular attendance is important and expected. If you know that you will be absent or late to class, please inform the instructor *the class period before your absence*. If you do miss a class, be sure to ask a classmate for any handouts, notes, assignments, etc. The student is held accountable for all of the work covered in each class meeting. **Students are responsible for anything that happens in class during their absence**, and most in-class activities will be difficult or impossible to make up if a student is absent. *Notify the instructor at least one class in advance* if you have a scheduling conflict that will cause you to miss class. Students are permitted 1 unexcused absence and 2 unexcused tardies (includes being late after a class break). As many as 5 points may be deducted from your participation grade for each additional unexcused absence or tardy.

- ✓ *Missing more than 4 classes will result in possible administrative withdrawal*
- ✓ Job interviews, religious holidays, family situations, and officially sanctioned college activities (athletics and competing academic duties) are considered permissible absences if the student shows official documentation to the instructor *a class period in advance of the absence*.

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- ✓ Illness is considered an unexcused absence unless accompanied by a statement signed by medical personnel that specifically evidences a medical emergency or medical condition that prevented class attendance on a designated date. A stamped receipt from Gilbert Health Center does not provide sufficient documentation for an excused absence. Also, such documentation must be given to the instructor *by the next class period* in order for it to be accepted as a permissible excuse.

Assignments

- Assignments are due at the *beginning* of each class period.
- **No late assignments will be accepted for this class unless arranged with the instructor on a case by case basis.** If an assignment is accepted late it must be turned in by the next class period **and** there will be a 10% reduction in points per day (the deduction begins immediately)—weekend days too.
- Students should use APA format 5th edition. **Type all written assignments** with 12 font, one inch margins, and double spacing. Papers should be well written, unpadding, and adequately referenced.
- **No assignments will be accepted by e-mail.** All assignments must be turned in as hard copies on the due date. Note that due dates do not always fall on class dates.
- **It is required that a student keep all graded material** until a final grade appears on her/his transcript. Graded materials may be necessary to settle discrepancies regarding the final grade of the course. Failure to provide graded material upon request will result in the loss of points on the particular assignment.
- **No exam make-ups unless previously arranged or caused by emergencies.** Missed exams due to emergencies will result in penalty, if not in full point loss.
- **All work turned in should be the unique work of that individual.** Papers that are discussed with group members still need to be independently written and must be the original work of that person.

Evaluation of Student Performance

As an instructor I do not give grades; as students, you earn them. To earn an “A” on your exams/assignments you must do excellent work. Excellent means that your work makes a creative contribution as a well-written, insightful, coherent, and original piece of work. A “B” means that your work is good and that you do have a grasp of the content, but it is conventional work. You will earn a “C” or grade of adequate if you simply do the assignment, follow directions, and are competent within a limited scope. A “D” means that the work is poor or flawed. A “F” means that work was not turned in, did not follow directions, or was simply unacceptable. Those who show evidence of effort, thought, and synthesis of the class material with their projects will likely receive higher grades.

All written work is graded according to the standard course rubric provided above.

Academic Integrity

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty” (http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty.htm). Students are responsible for

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informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. Any evidence of academic misconduct will be referred to the College judicial system.

- ✓ *Cheating:* Students will avoid all forms of cheating. Cheating includes but is not limited to giving or receiving answers on assignments and tests or using any materials or aids pertinent to assignments and tests without permission of instructor. Plagiarism would be a serious form of cheating.
- ✓ *Plagiarism:* Plagiarism means offering the work of someone else as your own. This may range from isolated sentences or paragraphs to entire articles copied from books, periodicals, the web, or the writings of other students. Honesty requires that any material taken from another source for either written or oral use must be acknowledged. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas or materials obtained from another source is guilty of plagiarism. For more information, see UGA's "A Culture of Honesty" or check online sites such as <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>

Writing is one of the most powerful tools for learning in any college course and is important for clearly and effectively communicating your ideas and/or thoughts to a specific audience. When writing is required outside of the classroom, assignments are to follow the standards of written work posted to the WebCT course site. Creative titles for your papers are always appreciated! Those who have consistent difficulty with writing will be referred to the University's Writers Resource Lab. Please feel free to utilize this valuable resource on your own by calling 706-542-2119, emailing wrctr@english.uga.edu or checking the website <http://www.english.uga.edu/writingcenter/home.html> for locations and hours tutors are available.

Have fun, learn, and be excited to participate! Enthusiasm is contagious and it only takes one student to make or break the atmosphere of a class. Be positive and open to new experiences and always encourage one another.

Course Requirements

1. Class Participation

10 Points Total

Part of your grade is determined through class participation and contribution in both discussion and in-class activities. Active participation is essential to your learning and contributes to the learning of others. Participation will be evaluated in the following way:

- Excellent = Proactive participation through leading, originating, informing, as well as asking questions that are thought provoking and indicate that you have read the material and reflected upon the readings and discussions. Participation does not mean dominating the discussion, making comments merely to make comments, or taking up class time with personal issues or tangential items. [5 points per half]
- Satisfactory = Reactive participation with supportive, follow-up contributions that are relevant and of value, but rely on the leadership and study of others. Active participation in group activities. [3-4 points per half]

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- Minimally acceptable = Passive participation including being present, awake, alert, attentive, but not actively involved. I call it the “seat warmer.” While you may be learning, you are not contributing to other’s learning nor are you assisting in producing discussions that engage others in learning. [1-2 per half]
- Unsatisfactory = Uninvolved including being absent, late, leaving early, present but not attentive, sleeping, asking questions that clearly indicate you have not kept up with the readings or class discussions, and making irrelevant contributions that inhibit the progress of the discussion. [0-.5 points per half]

2. Learning Activities

10 Points Total

Participation and content comprehension in this class will also be assessed by announced and un-announced quizzes, cooperative learning assignments, discussions, and short activities completed in and out of class. Each assignment will be worth points towards your final grade. You may not make up any of these quizzes/assignments for any reason—they take place when they are announced and must be turned in at the specified time.

3. Cultural Considerations

20 Points Total

*****Pick ONE of the 20 point assignments below to complete. You must make your selection before the second class period.**

A. Flea Market Observation

The J&J Flea Market bills itself as the largest flea market in Georgia with over 1000 vendors and 10,000 visitors on a good day. It is located 4 miles north of town on Hwy 441 (Commerce Road). Most activity at the J&J occurs on Saturday though some vendors are there on Sunday as well. The market is open from 8:00-5:00 but many of the smaller vendors pack up and leave by noon so the best time to visit is during the morning. Your assignment is to visit the J&J Flea Market as a “leisure anthropologist.” An anthropologist visits a new culture to observe and describe what goes on there. You should attempt to understand the J&J from the perspective of different people—sellers, buyers, families, browsers, etc. As a part of this assignment, stop and talk with at least **three people** who seem to represent something different about the J&J; ask them if they come here often, what they do here, and their general thoughts about the market.

Guidelines for your visit

1. Take a notebook so you can record things you see, conversations you overhear, thoughts that occur to you, and comments from people you interview (ask their permission).
2. Note the date and time of your visit.
3. Make general observations at first about the “big picture”—who is here, what are they doing, etc. Then focus on specific details about what people are wearing, how they move about, what they’re talking about, race, class, gender, and general notes on the flea market culture, etc. That detail will provide richness when you write up your story. Try your best to capture the diversity of people, activities, and experiences that are at the J&J.

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4. Interview at least three people in different locations at the J&J (vendors or visitors). Ask them if they come there often and what they do at the J&J. Engage in other discussion if you can. Immediately after talking with them, write down what they said. Try to remember some exact quotes.

Things to think about:

- Who is here? Think in terms of age, race, ethnicity, gender. Think also in terms of social groups—are people alone or with friends or families?
- What are they doing here? Keep a broad mind on this since buying and selling is only a small part of what happens at the J&J.
- Is this a leisure setting? For whom? In what ways does it characterize leisure for them?
- What role does the J&J flea market play in the Athens community? Who benefits by its existence? How do they benefit? In your opinion, is the flea market an asset to the broader Athens-Clarke County Community? Why or why not? **(ALSO SEE ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS/EXPECTATIONS BELOW SO THAT YOU CAN FINE TUNE YOUR OBSERVATIONS)**

Guidelines for your paper

You can write your paper like a typical writing assignment or you can pretend that you are writing an article for the Athens newspaper or a local magazine. It's OK to write in a story-like fashion using first person ("I" statements) as long as your paper addresses the points below. The paper must be 4-6 pages in length.

Brief Overview of the J&J: Start off by noting the day and time of your visit. Then provide an overview of what was happening at the J&J as if you were quickly looking around and seeing it for the first time.

Brief Detail about what's Happening: Expand your description by giving more detail about the diversity of people, events, and experiences you witnessed while you were visiting the J&J. In this section, you should include specific things you observed, quotes from the people you talked to, and personal stories or reflections about things that you saw or experienced on your visit. Be careful not to stereotype or base conclusions on dominant ideology/discourse/expectations only.

In-depth discussion of J&J as a Leisure Context: End your paper with reflections on the J&J as a leisure setting and as a window into culture. **What makes this setting leisure or not leisure or both for individuals/groups? What is the cultural climate? Discuss race, gender, class, sexuality, and ability considering both the presence and absence of such constructs in the culture. What are the expected behaviors, values, and interactions in this culture and how does that reflect or challenge common Athens culture? How does taking part in this leisure context provide insight into its culture and the culture surrounding it?** This is the most important part of your paper so don't be brief—offer some solid reflections on the flea market as a leisure context and as a window into culture in Athens Clarke County.

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B. Fiction

Books, even fiction stories, can reveal a lot about a culture. Reading books outside of the traditional white cannon is a potentially great way to learn about different beliefs, traditions, and experiences of various races, classes, sexualities, and sub-cultures within the U.S. For this assignment, get and read a copy of one of the books suggested by the instructor. Read that book taking notes on insights it might provide to the reader about race, culture, sub-culture, class, religion, gender, ability, and sexuality. Then write a 4-6 page paper about how reading outside of the typical white cannon can expose individuals to other cultures and sub-cultures. What are the positive and negatives about such fictional explorations? What might be learned about others and what might still be left out? What is learned about cultural expectations concerning behavior, values, interaction, and their “typicality,” etc. **Think critically about this exercise because just like with TV/movies, books can both challenge and reinforce stereotypes.** I expect your paper to discuss what a reader would learn about the culture/sub-culture from reading your book, followed by a critical discussion of the potential of your book in particular and fiction books in general to expose readers to culture, race, ability, gender, class, sexuality and serve as windows into culture.

C. Cinderella Story

Most of us can remember growing up watching Disney movies, wearing Disney clothing, having Disney stuffed animals, and singing Disney songs. If we didn’t, we all know of others that did. It is hard to grow up in America today without knowing about Disney world/land, Mickey Mouse, and Donald Duck (and their girlfriends Minnie and Daffy). While we may not realize it as children or even as adults, there are many messages about culture, gender, sexuality, class, ability, and race within the stories Disney provides to us. In order to critically examine some of those messages, pick from the following Disney movies and write a 4-6 page paper exploring the messages about culture found within. **Think critically about this exercise because just like with TV/books/advertisements, children’s movies can both challenge and reinforce stereotypes.** For example, what messages are presented about how men should act, how women should act, what it means to be the “bad” character, what it means to be “good”, what colors represent good/bad? How do all these messages relate to the traditional messages in our own society about women, men, different races, good/bad, strong/weak, happy/sad, attractive/unattractive etc. Most importantly, I expect your paper to discuss what a movie watcher would learn about our culture from watching your movie, followed by a critical discussion of the potential of your movie in particular and Disney in general to expose watchers to culture, race, gender, class, ability, sexuality and serve as a window into culture.

Beauty and the Beast, Jungle Book, Aladdin, Lion King, Little Mermaid, Snow White

3. Midterm**20 Points Total**

*!! SUBJECT TO CHANGE!! Develop a leisure activity or experience (art book, collage, story, poster, play script, game, video, etc.) that will help to indoctrinate individuals into your culture or subculture. Then write a 2-3 page explanation of what would be learned about race, gender, class, ability, sexuality, and cultural expectations from participation in that leisure activity/experience.

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4. Group Teaching**20 Points Total**

In groups of 3 you will be in charge of teaching forty-five (45) minutes of a class period. The purpose of this group teaching is to provide you with an opportunity to lead class discussion, gain in-depth knowledge on a topic area, and develop teaching/facilitation techniques that help the class think critically about your topic area. A sign-up list will be distributed during the 3rd or 4th week of classes for groups, topic areas, and due dates. It is expected your facilitation will last for **at least 45 minutes** including discussion/activity. **It will be expected that each group member contribute equally to class discussion both in asking questions, making comments, and directing discussion.** All members of the group will receive the same points unless clear lack of effort is evidenced. This is an assignment to not only immerse you in a topic, but also to allow you to practice bringing a critical perspective to your thinking. There will be two parts to this group teaching as noted below:

Each group of 3 students will:

1. **Hand-in:** (2-3 pages)
 1. A description of the topic and reason for exploring it
 2. A bulleted **summary** of *main points* (**7-10 main points**)
 3. A bulleted **list** of **8-10 questions** that will be utilized to facilitate critical discussion for the day
 4. List of references (**3-4 outside references**)
 5. Copy of your PowerPoint if used
2. **Facilitate:** (45 mins)
 1. Using **visual aids**, present your topic, findings, argument, theories, and examples in an articulate, accessible, orderly, and engaging fashion. Be sure not to just brush the surface or use filler videos/activities, but instead present critical, thoughtful, aware, points making connections between leisure, diversity, and society.

Potential Topics: National/State parks, amusement parks, drug/alcohol culture, cross-cultural taboo, disability awareness, fine art, leisure as consumption, adventure (skydiving, skateboarding, hot air balloon, etc.), travel/tourism....

5. Final Paper: Leisure as Activism**20 Points**

The 6-8 page final paper for this course will allow you to use the critical perspective you have developed throughout the course and apply it to a topic of your choice (with my approval). Details on this final paper will be distributed as we reach that point in the syllabus.

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Grading System

Using the following system, you will earn a final grade based on your fulfillment of the requirements listed below. Grades will be assigned on the basis of total score, which will be determined on the following basis:

Class Participation	10	Due: Every Class Period
Learning Activities	10	Due: Random
Cultural Considerations	20	Due: 9/20
MIDTERM	20	Due: 10/11
Group Teaching	20	Due: Student responsible for knowing date
Final Paper	20	Due: Final Exam Period
TOTAL POINTS	100	

All scores will be rounded to two significant figures for the purposes of assigning a letter grade. The letter grade scale is as follows: A = 93-100 A- = 90-92 B+ = 88-89 B = 83-87 B- = 80-82 C+ = 78-79 C = 73-77 C- = 70-72 D = 60-69 F = 59 or below

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Course Schedule Fall 2007 *(Subject to Change)*

Date	Topics	Readings Due	Assignments Due
	AUGUST: How do we look critically?		
8/16	Intro to Class, Instructor/ What is leisure (theories)/what is culture?	Chapter One + Chapter Three	
8/23	Critical Thinking and Terms / Our culture, Our leisure (privilege, oppression, ethnocentrism, binaries, etc.)	Chapter Five + (Chapter Thirteen)	
8/30	Lenses: Marxism, Critical Race, Feminist, Post-structural theory and leisure/ How do we define our lives?		
	SEPTEMBER: How is leisure a window into culture? What are the relationships between leisure, gender, class, race, sexuality, and cultural expectations?		
9/6	Personal Leisure/Applying Theory	Chapter Two	
9/13	Time/Personal Time/Running out of time	Chapter Twelve	
9/20	Pop culture	Chapter Seven	Cultural Considerations Due
9/27	NRPA: Disney Monopoly		
	OCTOBER		
10/4	Discussion and Debate		Notes from Movie
10/8	NOT A CLASS DATE BUT DUE DATE		Midterm due to my office by 4:00pm
10/11	Explorations of Lyrics/Buffy <i>Dr. Corey Johnson, Guest Lecture</i>		Bring in lyrics for various songs
10/18	Consumption as Leisure/Taboo Leisure	Chapter Eleven + Chapter Nine	
10/25	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
	NOVEMBER: What might be the relationships between leisure and activism?		
11/1	American Beach/Tourism/History <i>Dr. Diane Samdahl, Guest Lecture</i>	Chapter Six	Historical Sites Data
11/8	Marginalization/Therapeutic Recreation/critical awareness	Chapter Thirteen + Chapter Ten	
11/15	<i>Group Facilitations</i>		Group Facilitations
11/22	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
11/29	<i>Group Facilitations</i>		Group Facilitations
	DECEMBER		
12/6	<i>Group Facilitations</i>		Group Facilitations
12/11	FINAL EXAM PERIOD 12-3pm		Final Paper/Participation

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