English 1365 (J Term): Literature of Minorities

The course interrogates questions of individual and collective identities from historical, contemporary and literary perspectives. We look closely at the many categories that have constituted identity in the US, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and the ways in which these categories have come to constitute our cultural conversation about identity. Among terms explored are: “Whiteness,” “Blackness,” “White Supremacy,” “Identity Politics,” “Queerness,” “Pluralism,” etc. We examine the ways these categories have been deployed to assert and marginalize both group self-selected and imposed, as both fixed and flexible, as located and displaced, as both secure and situational.

Books:
Ayad Akhtar, *Disgraced*
Yuri Herrera, *Signs Preceding the End of the World*
Nella Larson, *Passing*
Bruce Norris, *Clybourne Park*
Phillip Roth, *Goodbye, Columbus*
George Schuyler, *Black No More*
Adrian Tomine, *Shortcomings*
Israel Zangwell, *The Melting Pot* *(Selected Short Stories—(Distributed and/or Canvas)*

Grading:
Tests: 30%
Paper 30%
Journals 20%
Participation: 20%

Schedule (I reserve the right to make announced changes to the schedule):

**Monday, January 6: (Day I): Introduction to course**

*Discussion of Syllabus*
*Reading: The Melting Pot*
*The Jazz singer*
Tuesday, January 7 (Day II):
Reading: Shortcomings
*Our Spiritual Strivings* (handout)
Film: Ethnic Notions

Wednesday, January 8 (Day III):
*Black No More*
*Film: Get Out!*

Thursday, January 9 (Day IV):
*Film: BlackKKKlansman*
*Reading: Passing*

Friday, January 10 (Day V):
*Goodbye, Columbus*
*Film: Annie Hall*

Tuesday, January 14th (Day VI):
Reading: *Disgraced*
*Film: The Namesake*
*(Take Home Midterm Due in class)*

Wednesday, January 15th (Day VII):
*Reading: Signs Preceding the End of the World*
*Film: Lone Star*

Thursday, January 16th (Day VIII)
*Raisin in the Sun* (film)
*Clybourne Park*

*Take Home Final Due Thursday Night by 11:59 pm*
Procedures: Read over carefully.

**All Electronic Devices must be turned off during class.** Failure to do so will result in a lower final grade and could lead to your being dropped from the course. If you leave the room for any reason, I reserve the right to ask you to hand over your cell phone until you return.

**Attendance:** Given the highly compressed nature of J Term, you are not allowed to miss an entire day of class without penalty.

**Written Work:** All written work will be submitted when expected. You will be marked down if your papers are late. Papers must be properly formatted and stapled. When you present sloppy or shoddy work you send a powerful negative message to your instructor, which is never a good idea. If you don’t own a small stapler, I suggest you buy one and carry it with you in your backpack.

**Academic Honesty:** Students are expected to be fully conversant with the University Honor Code and University policies about plagiarism and other forms of academic fraud. Violations of the University Honor Code compromise the integrity of the class for all participants, and will not be tolerated. Any student suspected of violating the University Honor Code will be duly charged and brought before the Honor Council. When I encounter a violation of the University Honor code, whether intentional or unintentional, it is my professional responsibility to the class and to the University to report it. Do not be put me in the position of having to do so. If you are unsure of whether or not you may be in violation of some aspect of the Honor Code, come see me. NB: Any act of academic dishonesty will result in automatic failure for the course no matter what percentage of the final grade that assignment is worth.

**Disability Accommodations:** Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first be registered with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. Students may call 214-768-1470 or visit http://www.smu.edu/alec/dass to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements.
• **Religious Observance:** Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify me in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with me in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence.

• **Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities:** Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity will be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with me prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work.