

Comparison as Method

[Jump to Today.](#)

 [Edit](#)



Diptych: St. James on Horseback Killing Moors / Hernán Cortés at the Head of the Spanish Armada Meeting the Aztec Emperor Montezuma II (Unknown artist, 17th century, oil on canvas, Museo de las Culturas de Oaxaca, Oaxaca, Mexico. Photo by Catherine S. Ramírez.)

LALS 205

Comparison as Method

(formerly Comparative Mobilities)

[Professor Catherine S. Ramírez](https://catherinesramirez.com/) [\(https://catherinesramirez.com/\)](https://catherinesramirez.com/)

[cathysue@ucsc.edu \(mailto:cathysue@ucsc.edu\)](mailto:cathysue@ucsc.edu)

Fall 2020

This seminar meets synchronously

1st meeting to be held Wednesday, October 7, 12:00-3:00pm (PT)

Day & time of subsequent meetings TBD by instructor & students

Office Hours: TBD

Course Description and Learning Objectives

This seminar is both an articulation and a study of comparison as theory and method in the humanities and qualitative social sciences. Focusing on how scholars compare race, migration, nation, and empire, we ask, What happens when peoples, places, periods, concepts, and categories are compared? How and why do scholars compare? What methods and sources are available to us? And what are the promises and challenges of a comparative, relational, or transnational approach?

This course is for graduate students in the humanities and social sciences, especially for those developing a comparative research project. All class participants should be working on a concrete assignment of their own choosing (e.g., a dissertation prospectus or chapter, a QE statement, an article, a conference paper, or a fellowship or grant application).

By the end of the term, you should understand what constitutes a comparative approach in the discipline or interdisciplinary space in which you work. You should be able to put sources in dialogue with one another using textual analysis. You should be better prepared to share your work with other scholars in a clear, accessible, and professional manner. What's more, you should have a full draft (at least) of whatever project you set out to complete, as well as a bibliography of comparative works in the humanities and social sciences. Meeting these goals will allow you to develop and refine your own comparative approach and to advance your own scholarship.

[Greetings from Prof. Ramírez!](https://media.ucsc.edu/V/Video?v=1835062&node=6766755&a=439561858&autoplay=1) [_\(https://media.ucsc.edu/V/Video?v=1835062&node=6766755&a=439561858&autoplay=1\)_](https://media.ucsc.edu/V/Video?v=1835062&node=6766755&a=439561858&autoplay=1)

Required Texts

Most of our readings are available as PDFs at Canvas. The following 3 books are required and are [on](#)

*[reserve](https://ucsc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?query=any,contains,LALS%20205&tab=CourseReserves&search_scope=CourseReserves&vid=01CDL_SCR) [_\(https://ucsc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?query=any,contains,LALS%20205&tab=CourseReserves&search_scope=CourseReserves&vid=01CDL_SCR](https://ucsc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?query=any,contains,LALS%20205&tab=CourseReserves&search_scope=CourseReserves&vid=01CDL_SCR)
*at the [University Library](https://library.ucsc.edu/) [_\(https://library.ucsc.edu/\)](https://library.ucsc.edu/). They can also be obtained via [Bookshop Santa Cruz](https://www.bookshopsantacruz.com/) [_\(https://www.bookshopsantacruz.com/\)](https://www.bookshopsantacruz.com/), [Thriftbooks](https://www.thriftbooks.com/) [_\(https://www.thriftbooks.com/\)](https://www.thriftbooks.com/), Amazon, *etc.***

- George M. Fredrickson: *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981) ([on reserve](#) https://ucsc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?query=any,contains,LALS%20205&tab=CourseReserves&search_scope=CourseReserves&vid=01CDL_S at the [University Library](#) [\(https://library.ucsc.edu/\)](https://library.ucsc.edu/))
- Richard Alba and Nancy Foner, *Strangers No More: Immigration and the Challenges of Integration in North America and Western Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015) ([on reserve](#) https://ucsc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?query=any,contains,LALS%20205&tab=CourseReserves&search_scope=CourseReserves&vid=01CDL_S at the [University Library](#) [\(https://library.ucsc.edu/\)](https://library.ucsc.edu/))
- Juliet Hooker, *Theorizing Race in the Americas: Douglass, Sarmiento, Du Bois, and Vasconcelos* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017) ([on reserve](#) https://ucsc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?query=any,contains,LALS%20205&tab=CourseReserves&search_scope=CourseReserves&vid=01CDL_S at the [University Library](#) [\(https://library.ucsc.edu/\)](https://library.ucsc.edu/))

Course Requirements

1. **[Class Participation & Facilitation](#)**: Students must attend all weekly sessions in their entirety and participate actively in discussions. Beginning in the second week, 1-2 students will open and facilitate the discussion on the readings. Facilitators should prepare an outline or a list of questions to help stimulate and guide our conversation. They may also design in-class exercises appropriate for the virtual classroom. (20 points)
2. **[Textual Analysis Paper](#)**: In this 7-10-page paper, students will put two [primary or secondary sources](#) [_https://library.albany.edu/infolit/resource/primary_](https://library.albany.edu/infolit/resource/primary) in dialogue with one another. In addition to explaining how each source is relevant to their research, they must offer [close readings](#) [_https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/how-do-close-reading_](https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/how-do-close-reading) of both, underscoring what they say to and about one another and about the larger project of which they are part. The 7-10-page textual analysis paper may comprise part of the final project. (20 points)
3. **[Collaborative Bibliography](#)**: Using [Google Drive](#) [_https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AnZuNly_zYzy2ivq1s1d5TT38P_mTsmxntP3p8ioNVk/edit_](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AnZuNly_zYzy2ivq1s1d5TT38P_mTsmxntP3p8ioNVk/edit), students will help build a bibliography of comparative scholarship in the humanities and social sciences by contributing at least 4 original titles (books, articles, websites, etc.). In class, they will briefly introduce up to 4 works they have added to our collaborative bibliography and explain why they have opted to include them. (20 points)

1. [Final Writing Project](#). Students will submit a final written project, assigned at the outset of the course, in which they compare events, histories, peoples, places, and/or concepts. The final project may be a conference paper, QE statement, dissertation prospectus, dissertation chapter, article, or essay for a grant or fellowship application. The 7-10-page textual analysis paper may comprise part of the final project. If the final project is still in draft form, it must be complete (not partial). Students will have the opportunity to discuss the final project with the instructor on an individual basis prior to the end of the quarter. (40 points)


Please use Canvas to submit your writing projects (assignments [2](#) and [4](#)) and please use our shared Google Document to complete [assignment 3, our Collaborative Bibliography](#). Please do NOT email those assignments to me.

Reading Schedule (*subject to change*)

WEEK 1: WED, OCT 7, 12-3PM (PT) (PLEASE COMPLETE ALL READINGS BY OUR FIRST MEETING)

[Ania Loomba, "Race and the Possibilities of Comparative Critique," *New Literary History* 40, no. 3 \(2009\): 501-522.](#) 


[Nancy L. Green, "The Comparative Method and Poststructural Structuralism—New Perspectives for Migration Studies," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 13, no. 4 \(1994\): 3-22.](#) 

[Patrick Wolfe, "Land, Labor, and Difference: Elementary Structures of Race," *The American Historical Review* 106, no. 3 \(2001\): 866-905.](#) 


At our first meeting, we'll also discuss our scholarly goals for the quarter, we'll determine when to meet for the remainder of the quarter, and students will sign up for their class facilitation dates. Please have your calendar handy.

WEEK 2: DATE & TIME TBD

[Micol Seigel: "Beyond Compare: Comparative Method after the Transnational Turn," *Radical History Review* 91 \(2005\): 62-90.](#) 

[Daniel Martinez HoSang and Natalia Molina, "Introduction: Toward a Relational Consciousness of Race," in *Relational Formations of Race: Theory, Method, and Practice*, ed. Natalia Molina, Daniel Martinez HoSang, and Ramón A. Gutiérrez \(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019\), 1-21.](#)
 (Relational Formations of Race is also available as an electronic book at the [University Library](#) (<https://library.ucsc.edu/>).

[Catherine S. Ramírez, "Indians and Negros in Spite of Themselves: Puerto Rican Students at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School," in *Relational Formations of Race: Theory, Method, and Practice*, ed. Natalia Molina, Daniel Martinez HoSang, and Ramón A. Gutiérrez \(Berkeley:](#)

[Race, Ethnicity, and National Identity, Daniel Martinez Hoebig, and Richard A. Santoro \(eds.\), University of California Press, 2019\), 166-184.](#)  (Relational Formations of Race is also available as an electronic book at the [University Library](https://library.ucsc.edu/) [\(https://library.ucsc.edu/\)](https://library.ucsc.edu/).)

WEEK 3: DATE & TIME TBD

[Aristide Zolberg and Long Litt Woon, "Why Islam Is Like Spanish: Cultural Incorporation in Europe and the United States," Politics & Society 27, no. 1 \(1999\): 5-38.](#) 

[Nicholas De Genova, "Latino and Asian Racial Formations at the Frontiers of U.S. Nationalism," in Racial Transformations: Latinos and Asians Remaking the United States, ed. Nicholas De Genova \(Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006\), 1-20.](#)  (Racial Transformations is also available as an electronic book at the [University Library](https://library.ucsc.edu/) [\(https://library.ucsc.edu/\)](https://library.ucsc.edu/).)

[UC Davis Comparative Borders Initiative](http://borderstudies.ucdavis.edu/) [\(http://borderstudies.ucdavis.edu/\)](http://borderstudies.ucdavis.edu/) (please visit website)

WEEK 4: DATE & TIME TBD

7-10-PAGE TEXTUAL ANALYSIS PAPER DUE

Please sign up for student-instructor check-in for weeks 6 & 8.

WEEK 5: DATE TBD

Fredrickson: *White Supremacy* (available as an electronic book at the [University Library](https://library.ucsc.edu/) [\(https://library.ucsc.edu/\)](https://library.ucsc.edu/).)

Optional viewing:

[George Fredrickson: "The Rise of Modern Racism\(s\): White Supremacy and Antisemitism," Stafford Little Lectures, Princeton University, April 26, 2000 \(1:45\)](https://mediacentral.princeton.edu/media/The+Rise+of+Modern+Racism%28s%29A+White+Supremacy+and+Stafford+Little+Lectures,+Princeton+University,+April+26,+2000+(1:45)) [\(https://mediacentral.princeton.edu/media/The+Rise+of+Modern+Racism%28s%29A+White+Supremacy+and](https://mediacentral.princeton.edu/media/The+Rise+of+Modern+Racism%28s%29A+White+Supremacy+and+Stafford+Little+Lectures,+Princeton+University,+April+26,+2000+(1:45))

WEEK 6: DATE & TIME TBD

Student-instructor check-in (Group A)

WEEK 7: DATE & TIME TBD

Alba and Foner: *Strangers No More* (available as an electronic book at the [University Library](https://library.ucsc.edu/) [\(https://library.ucsc.edu/\)](https://library.ucsc.edu/).)

Optional viewing:

[Nancy Foner and Richard Alba: "Strangers No More," Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College, November 9, 2015 \(1:06:37\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZm5x6GAny0) [\(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZm5x6GAny0\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZm5x6GAny0)





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZm5x6GAny0>

WEEK 8: DATE & TIME TBD

Student-instructor check-in (Group B)

WEEK 9: DATE & TIME TBD

Hooker: *Theorizing Race in the Americas* (available as an electronic book at the [University Library](https://library.ucsc.edu/). <https://library.ucsc.edu/>.)

Optional viewing:

[Juliet Hooker: "Theorizing Race in the Americas: Douglass, Sarmiento, Du Bois, and Vasconcelos," Race & Difference Colloquium Series, Emory University, November 4, 2019 \(45:40\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSW1swmfYok)
[. \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSW1swmfYok\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSW1swmfYok)




<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSW1swmfYok>

WEEK 10: DATE & TIME TBD

Final discussion and [collaborative bibliography entries due \(minimum 4 works\)](#)

FINAL WRITTEN PROJECT DUE 5:00PM, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2020.

Course Summary:

Date	Details
Wed Oct 7, 2020	 Comparison as Method https://canvas.ucsc.edu/calendar?event_id=97316&include_contexts=course_37167 12pm to 3pm

Date	Details	
	 LALS 205-1st meeting (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/calendar?event_id=75489&include_contexts=course_37167)	12pm to 3pm
Thu Dec 17, 2020	 LALS 205 Final Written Project due (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/37167/assignments/162712)	due by 11:59pm
	 Class Participation & Facilitation (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/37167/assignments/162641)	
	 Collaborative Bibliography of Comparative Scholarship in the Humanities & Social Sciences (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/37167/assignments/162649)	
	 Final Written Project (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/37167/assignments/162686)	
	 Textual Analysis Paper: Primary and Secondary Sources (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/37167/assignments/162643)	