

Please note that this document provides only core course information.
A complete syllabus will be available on Canvas to enrolled students.

LEAP 1500
Issues of War and Peace

Spring 2019
Section 1, MW 8:35-9:25, BU C 206

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Requirements fulfilled by this course:

General Education: Humanities Exploration (HF)

University requirement: Diversity (DV)

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Course Description

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect, which do not necessarily require agreement. Diversity includes knowing how to relate to those qualities, conditions, and histories that are different from our own, yet are meaningful and important for other individuals, groups, and communities. The objective of this course is to explore diversity, culture, and community, especially how these concepts interact within our society as a whole and within certain groups. Sometimes conflict and controversy, even war, are the unfortunate results of these interactions. We will read contemporary memoirs that convey struggles—racial, socio-economic, gender, political, historical—to reconcile or overcome seemingly incompatible circumstances. The course culminates in a creative assignment, your own short memoir, that encourages individuality, self-reflection, and confident self-expression.

Required Books (Electronic versions are also acceptable)

Coates, Ta-Nehisi, *Between the World and Me*. New York: Spiegel and Grau, Penguin Random House LLC, 2015.

Shetterly, Margot Lee. *Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race*. New York: William Morrow, HarperCollins, 2016.

Tran, G.B. *Vietnamerica: A Family's Journey*. New York: Villard, Random House Inc., 2010.

Other Required Reading, Available on Canvas

Wulf, W. "The Importance of Diversity in Engineering." *Diversity in Engineering: Managing the Workforce of the Future*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2002.

As we read these works, we will consider questions such as:

1. How do we define community or communities? What is an American?
2. How can we understand and learn from experiences different from our own?
3. How do individual rights and responsibilities shape our duties in society?
4. How do minority groups struggle for power, public voice, and recognition? How have specific minority groups dealt with unique challenges in relating to American society as a whole, especially with respect to stereotypes, segregation, discrimination, controversies, violence, inequitable treatment, and exclusion? How can we promote a more tolerant society?
5. Who is included and excluded from decision-making processes in a mainstream society and why? Do race, ethnicity, gender, economic status, profession, political affiliation or religion influence this selection? How?
6. How can individuals practice respect and acceptance towards others, even if they do not agree with other individuals' views, beliefs, and/or lifestyles?
7. What can forms of self-expression—literature, art, music, film, speech—reveal about individual thoughts and experiences that may not be generalized to other people?

Grading and Assignments

100 points

Homework (10 short assignments)	30
Library Sessions (5)	10
Attendance	10
Critical Responses to Readings (2/3)	20
Celebrate Diversity Project	10
Original Memoir	20