The Greatest Free Show on Earth: Mardi Gras in New Orleans

TIDE 1005-01 Spring 2018

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Some observers have called New Orleans' Carnival celebrations "The Greatest Free Show on Earth." But why does the community stage such a lengthy (and expensive!) spectacle? This course attempts to answer the question of why by looking at Mardi Gras through a multidisciplinary perspective. Through readings, class discussion, short films, and a unique field trip, students will discover why Mardi Gras is so important to New Orleans.

Program Outcomes: This course addresses the following program outcomes:

- Students will be introduced to the cultural and intellectual life at Tulane.
- Students will be introduced to the cultural and social life of the city of New Orleans.

Learning Outcomes: After completing this course, students will be able to:

- demonstrate substantive knowledge about the city of New Orleans and the way it celebrates the Carnival season/Mardi Gras.
- understand the cultural event through several distinct disciplinary lenses, including sociology, religion, economics/business, history, and art.
- articulate the meaning of Carnival/Mardi Gras as it applies to them (as Tulane students) and to other members of the New Orleans community

These outcomes will be reached through field trips to relevant sites, writing exercises, and class discussion.

Required Texts:

• All readings are listed in the course outline and are available in the **Files** section of MyTulane/Canvas: <u>https://tulane.instructure.com/</u> and click on the course page.

Assignments:

- Reflection Papers Students will complete 2 three-page papers during the semester one at the beginning of the course to discuss the concept of Mardi Gras in general and a second at the end to integrate the interdisciplinary topics into our understanding of Mardi Gras.
- Class Attendance and Participation It is imperative that students make good attendance a priority. Given the nature of this class as a seminar, everyone's active participation is necessary for class to run smoothly. Thus, I will keep a record of attendance and participation and factor it into the final course grade.
- Meetings with Peer Mentor Students will meet <u>twice</u> with Sarah Gauthier, this course's Peer Mentor. Arrangements for these meetings will be made directly between students and Sarah.

Grading: The course grade will be determined as follows:

Assignment	Date	Points
Reflection Paper 1	February 26	35
Reflection Paper 2	April 23	35
Class Att. & Part.	_	20
Peer Mentor Meetings	_	10
TOTAL		100

Final course grades will be assigned according to Tulane's plus/minus grading system:

	+		—
Α		92.5 and above	90 to 92.49
В	87.5 to 89.99	82.5 to 87.49	80 to 82.49
С	77.5 to 79.99	72.5 to 77.49	70 to 72.49
D	67.5 to 69.99	62.5 to 67.49	60 to 62.49
F		59.99 and below	

Grades will be available by talking with me before or after class or by coming to see me during office hours. I will not provide grades over email or by phone.

Course Format: This course will operate as a seminar; as such, students should be ready to engage one another in discussion. Of course, in order to participate, one needs to attend class. Active, collaborative learning not only enhances your education, but is also more interesting to both student and instructor. The course outline includes the week's designated topic, but students are encouraged to bring up additional questions and ideas that might prove to be interesting and relevant. On the day we have a fields trip, please arrive promptly at the bus pickup location in front of the Reily Center. The field trip may run <u>beyond</u> the standard end of class (1:15 pm) so please do not make plans immediately after class on the field trip day.

Course Policies: Students are expected to attend each class, to be on time, and to have all course materials read **prior** to the class in which they are discussed. Please turn off all electronic devices during class. Laptop computers are not permitted in class; please turn them off and put them away before class starts. All assignments must be completed for a student to pass the course. Requests for regrading any assignment must be made no later than one week after it has been returned. No make-ups will be allowed except in very serious circumstances (I reserve the right to determine what is "very serious"). Course incompletes will only be allowed for circumstances in which the student is physically unable to complete the course; the student must otherwise be passing the course in order to be granted the incomplete.

Course Accommodations: If you have any kind of special circumstances, such as a disability, illness, or handicap, or if you are involved with a university activity that requires you to miss class, let me know as soon as possible. This information is confidential. All students attending Tulane University with <u>documented</u> disabilities are eligible and encouraged to apply for services with the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility. Please see me or go to <u>http://accessibility.tulane.edu/</u> for more information. Students needing accommodations must provide me a copy of the accommodation granted by the testing center at least seven days before an exam, assignment, or other course requirement.

Policy regarding Academic Freedom: In any classroom situation that includes discussion and critical thinking, particularly about social and cultural ideas, there are bound to be many differing viewpoints. Students may disagree with each other at times, or with me. These differences can help enhance class discussion and create an atmosphere where students (and I) will be encouraged to think and learn. In any event, grades will not be adversely affected by any beliefs expressed in class or in assignments.

Policy regarding Academic Integrity: As described in the Tulane University Honor Code, students are expected to uphold the honor and integrity of the academic process. Violations of the Honor Code include, but are not limited to, cheating on an exam (either providing answers to or receiving answers from another student), plagiarism (the use of another author's words or arguments without attribution), and unauthorized collaboration (working with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of any course requirement). If a student commits any violation of the Honor Code, I will pursue disciplinary action as outlined in the Honor Code.

Course Outline:

Week	Date	Торіс	Reading	Activity
1	Jan 22	Introduction to the Class	None	Syllabus distribution
2	Jan 29	Mardi Gras: History and Art	None	Field Trip – Mardi Gras World
3	Feb 5	Mardi Gras: History and Art	Gotham Hales Tallant 1 See also: http://digitallibrary.tulane.edu/islandora/object/tulane:p15140coll40	Class discussion
			No class Feb 12 No class Feb 19	
4	Feb 26	The Sociology of Mardi Gras – Gender	None	Film – "By Invitation Only" <i>PAPER 1 DUE</i>
5	Mar 5	The Sociology of Mardi Gras – Gender	Mayer Roberts	Class discussion
6	Mar 12	The Sociology of Mardi Gras – Race	None	Film – "Tootie's Last Suit"
7	Mar 19	The Sociology of Mardi Gras – Race	Gill Leavitt Tallant 2	Class discussion
			No class Mar 26 No class Apr 2	
8	Apr 9	Mardi Gras: Economics and Environment	None	Film – "Mardi Gras, Made in China"
9	Apr 16	Mardi Gras: Economics and Environment	Readings on Mardi Gras & the Environment Weiss 2015	Class discussion
10	Apr 23	Mardi Gras and the Culture of New Orleans	Readings on the Logistics of Mardi Gras Mitchell Witt	Class discussion PAPER 2 DUE

<u>TIDES STUDENT ETIQUETTE POLICY</u> During Class, Lectures, and Field Trips

- Students are expected to arrive on time to class. Late arrival disrupts the speaker and the class as a whole.
- Students should be respectful of a guest speaker while he or she is lecturing. Remember, these are people giving of their own time to come and speak. Please refrain from engaging in your own conversations.
- Be sure to wait to be acknowledged when asking a question and definitely do not talk over people who have yet to finish their answer or thought.
- Please do not bring food into class with you unless approved of by your instructor. Not only is it disruptive, it is disrespectful.
- If you bring a drink to class, make sure to open it prior to the speaker or professor beginning their lecture. Drinks with tops are preferred as to cut down on the amount of spills. It goes without saying that these drinks should be non-alcoholic in nature.
- Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, and beepers. Nothing breaks the rhythm of a speaker like the sound of your favorite TV theme song. Also, if you receive a call, do not answer your phone and begin a conversation. This is a classroom, not your dorm room or your home.
- Remember to **always** check your email and Canvas for changes to field trips or class speakers. The changes will be posted as far ahead as possible, but last minute changes happen and your email is how we will contact you.
- No alcohol is permitted in class or on field trips.
- When a bus is scheduled to depart at a certain time, please know that this is the time the bus will depart, not the time when you should decide you need to leave to meet the bus. We are often on a tight time schedule and cannot wait for students to arrive. If you are unsure of a time or meeting place, please ask!
- If there are materials such as resumes or case studies on a particular speaker, please be sure to read them and come to class prepared for the lecture. Prepare a few questions if necessary. Guest speakers are there for you to provide extra information. Please take advantage.

Even though TIDES might be different in structure from your other courses, please remember this is still a class. Students are expected to be on time to class. When in the classroom, please turn off all pagers, beepers, and cell phones. Please do not eat in class unless it is food that is being provided to you by the class. Above all, please remember your professors and guest speakers are there for your benefit. Please show them the attention and respect they deserve.