

**Westfield State University**  
**Department of Ethnic and Gender Studies**

<b>INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION</b>	<b>COURSE INFORMATION</b>
Dr. Enrique Morales-Díaz Mod Hall 104H 413-572-8193 email via PLATO	EGST 209: Images of Black and Brown (Social Understanding and U.S. Diversity) ONLINE – Spring 2014

*“I am an invisible man... I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me. Like the bodiless heads you see sometimes in circus sideshows, it is though I have been surrounded by mirrors of hard, distorting glass. When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination – indeed, everything and anything except me.”*

Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

*“It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feel his twoness, - an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body; whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.”*

W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES**

America’s cultural representations of African and Latin American descended people have been stereotypical and negative. This course explores both past and contemporary images of African/Black-Americans and Hispanic/Latinos in U.S. films. We will attempt to deconstruct specific cultural images and explain how and why they originated, and how they have evolved over time. We will address questions such as:

- What purpose do these images serve in U.S. society?
- Why have some of these images undergone substantial changes while others have not?
- Who constructs these images and why?
- How do these images relate to the relations of power and domination in the United States?
- How have African-American and Latino groups responded to these images? How do they resist or internalize them?
- What consequences do these images have for African-Americans’ and Latinos’ social situations, opportunities and self-concepts?

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Readings, documentaries and some of the required films will be available on PLATO. Please be aware that you will be responsible for other films assigned for this course. You will know ahead of time so that you can make appropriate plans to watch them.