

American Cultural Studies 301/Fairhaven 366E: Comparative Cultural Studies

Syllabus - Winter 2006

Dr. Larry Estrada

Course Description

Sociological and socio-historical aspects of ethnic/minority relations within the larger society; emphasis will be placed on non-white subcultures in the United States. The course will examine ethnic/minority and majority group dynamics focusing on institutional constructs such as education, the judicial and legal systems, and immigration patterns. The concepts of pluralism, racism, prejudice and discrimination will be examined in light of societal and economic stratification.

Anticipated Course Outcomes

At the end of the course students should be able to:

1. Understand the differences between race, class, caste, tribe, nationality, nation, minority, and ethnicity processes;
2. Have an adequate knowledge of the ethno-geographical mapping to U.S. ethnic groups, their distribution and placement in American society;
3. Have an adequate knowledge of the principal trends in the life experiences of the major ethnic minority communities in the United States;
4. Have a heightened awareness of major issues in ethnic processes, including such issues as racism; assimilation; bilingualism; social and territorial conflict; problems of land, religion and citizenship; and the role of the Civil Rights movement in contemporary life.
5. Complete a comprehensive set of readings that record the diversity of ethnic experiences in the U.S.;
6. Have a more sensitive appreciation of cultural diversity and its contribution to the unity of American life.
7. Understanding of major policy issues impacting the American racially stratified society (i.e. Props. 187, 209 Affirmative Action, Initiative 200 EEO Federal Policy)

Required Readings

Race, Ethnicity and Gender, Healey and O'Brien, (Pine Forge Press, 2004)
Taking Sides: Race & Ethnicity, 5th Ed. D'Angelo and Douglas (McGraw Hill/Dushkin, 2005)
White Privilege, Rothenberg, (Worth Publishers, 2005)

Course Format

The course will meet two times a week (Monday and Wednesday). Attendance is mandatory unless cleared by the instructor ahead of time or in the case of illness. The course will consist of lectures, discussions, videos and guest lecturers.

Course Work

Participation in classroom discussions, one perspective paper, one final, one ethnographic interview and a group project paper and oral presentation.

Perspective Paper—2 1/2 - 3 page paper outlining personal perspectives in line/contrast with major concepts, ideas, issues presented after viewing the video "Blue Eyed". Perspective paper is due January 19.

The Ethnographic Interview --will follow a specialized format which involves interviews with students, staff, faculty, and or community members who represent individuals of the following ethnic

groups (i.e. Asian American, Native American, African American, and Hispanic). The interviews will be double-spaced typewritten pages, ranging in length from 5-6 pages, and submitted to the instructors at the beginning of the class session indicated below. The Ethnographic Interview is due February 7.

Final Exam--is composed of primarily essay, matching and short answer questions that cover the readings, classroom lectures, and discussions. Final Exam is March 2.

Group Term Projects

Choose a subtopic under one of the following major topics. If you prefer, you may combine two or more of these subtopics or any aspects of them (ex. A2 & A3, or C3 & C4). If you wish to research a topic not listed here, please consult with the instructors. Some groups may opt for community-service options but these have to be approved by Dr. Estrada on an individual basis by the third week of class.

A. Education related issues

1. Bilingual education: its ramifications for Hispanic and Asian American Communities
2. Asian-American access to higher education/fighting quotas
3. Social adjustment of ethnic minority students on all white campuses
4. State and religion: Prayer and Christmas in the schools

B. Labor related issues

1. Racial harassment and discrimination in the workplace
2. Migrant labor: a social benefit or injustice
3. Ethnic political party loyalties

C. Ethno-political-historical issues

1. The legacy and impact of the civil rights movement
2. Native-American Land rights and tribal sovereignty
3. Immigrant testimonials of the 20th century
4. Restrictions on immigration by demography and the plight of unregistered aliens
5. Environmental Justice and ethnic minority Communities
6. Critical Race Theory and the Legal/Judicial System

D. Family and social welfare issues

1. Health issues of the Hispanic and African American communities
2. The impact of family traditions and culture on acculturation
3. Violence and poverty in the urban sector: de facto discrimination
4. Drug abuse and dysfunctional families within ethnic communities

E. Ethnic literary expression

1. Ethnic storytelling: what do folk tales tell us about the real life experience of the ethnic group?
2. Reality in fiction: ethnic portrayals in novels, short stories and poetry

F. Looking Out from the Inside

1. Intersections of gender and sexuality within ethnic minority communities.
2. Women's roles and expectations within their ethnic communities
3. The internal, ethnic *angst* of acculturation and assimilation

Specifics

One inch margins

No less than a 15-25 page "cohesive", typewritten double spaced group project paper.

Utilization of MLA or APA or Chicago citation methods.

Preparation and Delivery of 20-25 minute oral presentation inclusive of the entire group.

Course Grading

Classroom Participation/Discussion: 5%

Ethnographic Interview/Perspective Papers: 25%

Final Exam: 30%
Group Term Project and Oral Presentation: 40%

Class and Lecture Schedule

Week 1

Introduction, overview of course, Handout of course syllabus. Ethnicity as a subject of Investigation. Video: 20/20 Racism

Week 2

Video: "Blue Eyed"--Small Group Discussion

Readings: Rothenberg pp. 1-40, D'Angelo and Douglas Issue 4

The Basis for Ethnic Relations: Majority and Minority Group Dynamics and the Concept of "Whiteness"

Lecture and Discussion

Readings: Healey and O'Brien pp. 1-48, Rothenberg pp. 67-91

Week 3

Martin Luther King Jr. Day/Holiday (No Class)

Class is strongly encouraged to attend all day conference held at Sehome High School

By the Whatcom County Human Rights Committee/Schedule TBA

Assimilation, Social Evolutionism, the melting pot and pluralism: definitions of what constitute ethnic minorities; class and ethnicity. Video: History of violence and oppression in America/ *Initial Formation of Group Term Projects*.

Lecture and Small Group Discussion/***Submittal of Perspective Paper**

Readings: Healey and O'Brien pp. 49-84, 280-312

Week 4

Techniques of Dominance and Social Subordination: prejudice and discrimination, stereotyping, individual and institutional discrimination/ Exercise and Discussion

Readings:, Rothenberg pp. 95-149

Ethnic Identity and Naturalization: Hispanics and Chicanas-os: The socio-psycho historical development of the Chicano People---Hispanics as a pluralistic ethnic group.

* Hand in names of Group members and Group Project Title

Lecture and Discussion

Readings: Healey and O'Brien pp. 227-252

Week 5

Hispanics (contd.): Urbanization, Immigration and Education/Social Conflict in the United States.

Small Group Discussion

Video: Hispanics in the U.S.

Readings: D'Angelo and Douglas Issues 2 and 10

African Americans: Slavery, lynchings, Jim Crow and economic subjugation.

Guest Lecture and Discussion: Dr. Teri Mc Murtry Chubb

Video: Ethnic Notions

Readings: Healey and O'Brien pp. 87-142

Week 6

African Americans (contd.) Civil Rights and Racial and Ethnic Tension in the urban setting.

Guest Lecture and Group Discussion--discussion led by Mr. Dennis Lane, Diversity media producer

Video: Road to Brown

Readings: Healey and O'Brien pp. 143-188, D'Angelo and Douglas Issues 12,17,18

***Submission of Ethnographic Interview Assignments**

Native Americans from Majority to Ethnic Minority: Colonial inundation, tribal roots and external stresses--Tribal Sovereignty

Guest Lecturer and Presentation by Professor Raquel Montoya-Lewis, faculty member, WWU

Readings: Healey and O'Brien 191-226

***Submission Group Term Project Outlines and Methodology**

Week 7

Native Americans (contd.) Old issues/new concerns; Reservation Life and "Indian Schooling".
Lecture and Group Discussion-Guest Lecturer Ms. Sharon Kinley, The Lummi Nation
Video: Winds of Change
Readings: D'Angelo and Douglas pp. Issues 8 and 13

Asian Americans: Immigration and Settlement
Guest Lecturer and Presentation Dr. Jungsik Kim, Fairhaven College
Readings: Healey and O'Brien pp. 253-278

Week 8

Asian Americans (contd.): Adaptation and Assimilation Patterns, Academic Access and Institutional Barriers. "The Model Minority"
Video: Becoming Americans
Readings: D'Angelo and Douglas, Issues 9 and 14

The legacy of American racial stratification/Affirmative Action and Pluralism into the 21st Century—
General Class Discussion and Conference
Readings: D'Angelo and Douglas, Issues 15 and 16

Week 9

Globalization, Terrorism, Restrictive Immigration and the Rise of American Neo-Nativism
General Class Discussion and review of course materials
Readings: Class Handouts

Final Exam

Week 10

Group Term Project Oral Presentations

Week 11

Regularly scheduled Exam time is reserved for Group Term Project Oral Presentations

All Group Term Project Papers are due no later than 8:00 AM, March 15th. All class members are required to attend each of the Group Oral Presentations.