



Course Offerings

FALL 2013

ETHN 1: Introduction to Ethnic Studies: Land and Labor (previously ETHN 1A)

Daphne Taylor–Garcia

This course examines key historical events and debates in the field that center around land and labor, including disputes about territory and natural resources, slavery and other forms of unfree labor, labor migration and recruitment, and U.S. and transnational borders.

ETHN 20: Introduction to Asian American Studies

Kit Myers

This course takes a critical transnational approach to the study of Asian American lives. We will examine how Asian American experiences have been and are directly linked to U.S.-Asia relations and the global context. Through a variety of texts, both academic and creative, we will delve into the social consequences that are a part of these U.S.-Asia relations and to grasp how even the seemingly most personal relationships are rooted in and shaped by historical and social circumstances. The course pays special attention to the inequalities and differences that arise from older histories of colonialism and racism as well as from new forms of globalization.

ETHN 100: Theories and Methods in Ethnic Studies

Yen Le Espiritu

An introduction to research in ethnic studies with special emphasis on theories, concepts, and methods. Students will explore how racial and ethnic categories are shaped by gender, class, and regional experiences and will study ethnicity and race in comparative perspective.

ETHN 101: Ethnic Images in Film

Roshanak Kheshti

As objects that circulate in transnational social and commodity networks, films project ideas about the other and the self. Offering escape, titillation, information and exotification, films are meaningful when they (re)present the worlds audiences want to see. In this course we read films as social texts examining their systems of gendered, ethnic, racial, sexual and national meaning. Through film theory we will additionally examine film spectatorship and the cultural codes attached to looking and perception. Though we will cover a vast array of genres we will highlight so-called “third cinema” and “Iranian cinema” as case studies.

ETHN 104: Race, Space, and Segregation

José Fusté

This course takes a thematic approach to the intersections of race, space and segregation in settler colonial, white privileging societies such as Canada, the United States, Australia, and South Africa. We will begin by exploring the social and institutional forces that historically created racial and spatial segregation within these various contexts. We will then learn about how racial and colonial "Others" have been historically "produced" concomitant with how spaces are socially constructed as they are segregated through laws, policies, and institutional practices. Course readings will be structured around themes such as: "Race, Space, Segregation and Settler Colonialism," "The Creation and Adaptation of Racial Apartheids," "The Enduring Power of the Ghetto," "(B)ordering as a Force of Segregation," "Criminal Justice as a Force of Segregation," "Educational Apartheid in the U.S.," "The War on Terror: Segregating Spaces of Exception," and "Segregation and the Making of (Un)natural Disasters."

ETHN 105: Ethnic Diversity and the City

Gabriel Mendes

This course will examine the city as a crucible of ethnic identity exploring both the racial and ethnic dimensions of urban life in the U.S. from the Civil War to the present. (Cross-listed with USP 104.)

ETHN 117: Organic Social Movements

Ruben Murillo

Examination of local responses to global change and social disruption through the examinations of organic movements in indigenous societies. In-depth analysis of the Kuna Indians of San Blas, Panama; Maya-Zapatistas of Chiapas, Mexico; and Micronesians of the western Pacific.

ETHN 127: Sexuality and Nation

Roshanak Kheshti

This course examines the historical, discursive, political and cultural emergence of the notion of sexuality alongside other modern inventions like race and nation. We will trace sexuality's co-construction with race through colonialism and modernity, examining transformations the concept has undergone in its transnational circulation. Some questions we will take up: How has colonialism contributed to contemporary notions of sexuality, race, bodies, desire, pleasure, and identity? What is the relationship between power, the nation, and sexuality in various sites? How are sexual identities constructed outside of the so-called "West?" We will interrogate the commonly held idea that normative sexualities have been historically and globally stable and instead historicize the emergence of normativity (sexual, gendered, racial, etc.) examining how it has been put to service in the maintenance of a particular set of power dynamics. We will conclude the class by interrogating what has happened to the nation, gender and sexuality under global capitalism. (Cross-listed with CGS 112.)

ETHN 132: Chicano Dramatic Literature

Jade Power

Focusing on the contemporary evolution of Chicano dramatic literature, the course will analyze playwrights and theatre groups that express the Chicano experience in the U.S., examining relevant acts, plays, and documentaries for their contributions to the developing Chicano theatre movement. (Cross-listed with TDHT 110.)

ETHN 137: Special Topics: Latina Issues and Cultural Production

Jillian Hernandez

With particular emphasis on narratives of girlhood, sexuality, and racialization, this course will explore the poetics and politics of Latinidad as expressed by a diverse group of visual artists, performers, writers, musicians, and moving image makers. Course materials will range from memoirs and manifestos to YouTube videos and experimental multimedia projects. Our aim is to engage in comparative historical, transnational, and interdisciplinary analyses of the ways Latina cultural workers have shaped and contested dominant constructions of their race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, and citizenship. We will center on various flash points in which Latina art has spurred controversy and utilize theoretical texts to formulate questions regarding the complicated processes that attend the creation and interpretation of cultural works, and the unwieldy meanings of Latinidad.

ETHN 149: African American History in the 20th Century

Daniel Widener

This course examines the transformation of African America across the expanse of the long 20th Century. In addition to the effects of imperialism, migration, urbanization, desegregation and deindustrialization, special emphasis will be placed on issues of culture, international relations, and urban politics. (Cross-listed with HIUS 139.)

ETHN 157: Madness and Urbanization

Gabriel Mendes

In this course we will examine the relationship between the city and mental disorders/mental illness. Through an interdisciplinary study of clinical psychiatry, psychoanalytic theory, history, and literature bearing upon the subject of mental health/illness in the urban context, this course will provide a historical and theoretical orientation for contemporary studies of the experience of mental illness and mental healthcare policy in the American city. In this course we will pay specific attention to the social and cultural aspects of mental health/illness, especially the role of racism and segregation as key factor in the etiology and epidemiology mental disorders. (Cross-listed with USP 149).

ETHN 165: Sex and Gender in African American Communities

Christina Carney

This course will investigate the changing constructions of sex, gender, and sexuality in African American communities defined by historical period, region, and class. Topics will include the sexual division of labor, myths of black sexuality, the rise of black feminism, black masculinity, and queer politics. The texts/readings draw on women of color's discussion of sexual and gendered norms of respectability and value which differentiates individuals within racial collectives. In order to imagine new forms of coalitional politics, we will approach race as an analytic without reinforcing nationalist and identity-based politics.

EHTN 178: Blues: An Oral Tradition

Joshua Weinstein

This course will examine the development of the Blues from its roots in work-songs and the minstrel show to its flowering in the Mississippi Delta to the development of Urban blues and the close relationship of the Blues with Jazz, Rhythm and Blues, and Rock and Roll. (Cross-listed with MUS 126).

ETHN 183: Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Class

Kirstie Dorr

This course offers a survey of various theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of race, gender, sexuality and class. Moving beyond the notion that these social categories merely represent "layers of oppression," we will ask: how are race, gender, sexuality and class co-constitutive in the making of social relations and identities in the US and beyond? In other words, how do these social categories depend on each other for their very meaning and coherence, so that it is impossible to neatly separate them? To engage these questions, we will turn to the terms themselves, attending to particular historical and geographic contexts of their construction: How have ideas about gender, race, sexuality and class been defined by the western law and science, through historical archives, and in the realm of popular culture? We will examine a set of case studies that will allow us to connect the construction and codification of social difference to the enactment of violent social projects: colonialism and war; nationalism and eugenics campaigns; globalization, immigration and structural adjustment. By the end of this course, students will have collectively honed a critical vocabulary and analytical framework for understanding the interplay of race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and class in a variety of socio-political contexts.

ETHN 185: Discourse, Power, and Inequality

Kalindi Vora

What is discourse? How does discourse serve to distribute relative privilege, power, advantage and disadvantage in U.S. society and internationally? This course explores the role of institutional discourses (e.g. medical clinics, schools, churches, the state, the family), and other social discourses (of race, gender, nationality, sexuality) in shaping common sense ideas about nations, social movements, social groups, and identities. We will examine discourses through critical analysis of social contexts ranging from global and national media to political rhetoric and everyday language. The goal of this course is for students to develop the analytical skills to critically “read” discourses and analyze how they operate and how they are resisted, applying this knowledge to their own political and intellectual projects. Class projects include a project analyzing how discourse has shaped personal beliefs, attitudes, values of knowledge, and a final project (individual or collaborative) choice of visual media or written project analyzing a dominant discourse and/or production of a counter-narrative to a given discourse.

ETHN 198: Student / Worker Power and Labor at University of California

Wayne Yang

Offered in partnership with the Student Worker Collective, this student facilitated practicum will focus on UC policy and its effects on service workers. We will be discuss on-going labor disputes at UCSD and UC system-wide, and how students can play an active role in working alongside workers. Particular attention will be paid to the role of student organizations in UC labor policy.

For additional information, please email the Ethnic Studies Undergraduate Coordinator,

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You can also visit our website at ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu