



Course Offerings

FALL 2014

ETHN 1. Introduction to Ethnic Studies: Land and Labor

Sara Kaplan

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

STAFF

This class will explore the major historical events, social movements and cultural productions of Asian American communities since their arrival in the US to the contemporary moment. We will investigate how the group labeled Asian American has negotiated a space within American society and culture and what it means to be Asian American today.

ETHN 87. A00—Freshman Seminar: Listening to the World

Roshanak Kheshti

This seminar explores the history of listening to the music of the world. We will engage in active listening by critically examining how musical composition, arrangement, recording and production direct us to listen for familiar and different sounds in music. No musical training required.

ETHN 87. B00—Freshman Seminar: Slavery on Screen

Sara Kaplan

Slavery has reemerged recently as a popular topic in American movies. Situating these new films in the broader context of 20th century screen depictions of slavery, this class explores what they might reveal about contemporary racial and gender politics in the United States.

ETHN 100A. Ethnic Studies: Theoretical Approaches

Yen Le Espiritu

An advanced survey of key issues, themes, and debates in the field of critical ethnic studies focusing on the connection between race and social structures. Students will use diverse theoretical frameworks to identify and interpret contemporary and historical social problems.

ETHN 103. Environmental Racism

STAFF

This course introduces students to the study of inequalities in environmental conditions affecting communities of varying racial/ethnic identities and class backgrounds. Our readings and discussions will challenge notions of environmentalism and sustainability that fail to address the role that social identities and structural privileges and disadvantages play in determining what environments particular groups of people live in. We will examine the theories and concepts of the environmental justice movement as well as the critiques of it. We will also study various examples of environmental injustice in the United States and abroad, and the policy and legal debates surrounding these. Last but not least, we will assess the strategies that activists have pursued for challenging environmental injustice locally, nationally, and transnationally. We will use the topic of environmental justice as a window for further understanding how systems of racial/colonial/gender/sexual/class power and inequality are constructed, reinforced, and challenged.

ETHN 108. Race, Culture and Social Change

STAFF

Music is not something that is just there, waiting to be consumed for our listening pleasure. Whether recorded, written, or performed, music is an important cultural register for representing and negotiating social tensions, problems, and systematic forms of oppression and empowerment between human beings, including racism, heteropatriarchy, and class exploitation. Departing from an understanding that music, performance, and culture in general are inherently political in that they are channels for exchanging powerful ideas and sentiments that shape our collective thoughts and behaviors, this course explores the possibilities and limitations for social change through music. This requires that we read this form of cultural production not as good or bad, resistive or oppressive, but rather in a way that examines what it does qualitatively within particular political, economic, geographic, and historical contexts. Our class discussions will also weigh the many ways music can make our world a more equitable and sustainable place against the fundamental political and economic obstacles that keep it from fulfilling its radical humanist potential. (Cross-listed with MUS 151.)

ETHN 113. Decolonizing Education

STAFF

This course will explore decolonial theories in relation to the American educational system. The material will demonstrate how systematic exclusion within the educational system has maintained euro-centric biases that exclude the experiences of women, gays, and people of color rendering their presence and contributions to the nation as invisible. In reality the educational system has served as a site where white supremacy has flourished with an emphasis on European values and history. Dominant narratives of the nation are embedded in power relations that have normalized white power and the unearned privileges bestowed upon white Americans. We will therefore focus on the politics of “knowledge”, students of color’s experiences in the school system, and the colonial legacies that shape these experiences in the present. Using the critical lens of ethnic studies and a variety of theories concerning education we will be able to analyze how dominant society manufactures school failure for youth by looking at several locations across the U.S. such as Oakland, Arizona, and New Orleans.

ETHN 114A. Representing Native America

Ross Frank

This course provides an introduction to the history and theory of museum representation of American Indians in order to explore its relation to colonialism and decolonization. In addition to a wide-ranging look at the complex foundations of systems of representing Indians and Indianness, a study of Plains Indian drawings from 1860-1890 will allow the class to create new approaches to designing a museum exhibition.

ETHN 123. Asian-American Politics

STAFF

This course will examine the development of Asian-American politics by studying the historical and contemporary factors, such as political and economic exclusion, that have contributed to the importance and complexity of ethnicity as a mobilizing force in politics.

ETHN 130. Social and Economic History of the Southwest I

Ross Frank

This course examines the history of the Spanish and Mexican Borderlands (what became the U.S. Southwest) from roughly 1400 to the end of the U.S. - Mexican War in 1846 - 1848, focusing specifically on the area's social, cultural, and political development. (Cross-listed with HIUS 158.)

ETHN 134. Immigration and Ethnicity in Modern American Society

STAFF

Comparative study of immigration and ethnic-group formation in the United States from 1880 to the present. Topics include immigrant adaptation, competing theories about the experiences of different ethnic groups, and the persistence of ethnic attachments in modern American society. (Cross-listed with HIUS 180.)

ETHN 147. Black Feminisms, Past and Present

STAFF

An advanced introduction to historical and contemporary Black feminisms in the US and transnationally. Students will explore the theory and practice of Black feminists/womanists, and analyze the significance of Black feminism to contemporary understandings of race, class, gender, and sexuality. (Cross-listed with CGS 147.)

ETHN 150. Visuality, Sexuality and Race

Daphne Taylor-Garcia

Visuality is a specific term to refer to the way in which power relations construct our visual field. In other words, how we make sense of what we “see” is mediated by existing power relations. Visuality classifies through the power to name, categorize and define, thus producing what is legible. This system of classification is a means of social organization that began with the casta system and plantation slavery, but is now transhistoric in its reproduction and expansion of colonial effects such as racial profiling and the coloniality of gender. Visuality also speaks to the naturalization of this system of classification that has serious immediate and long-term material consequences: it functions to both renew power relations and preempt colonial subjects from organizing for their collective interests. For this reason presenting a counternarrative to visuality has been central to queer of color critique. (Cross-listed with CGS150.)

ETHN 178. Blues: An Oral Tradition

STAFF

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 187. Latina/o Sexualities

STAFF

The construction and articulation of Latina/o sexualities will be explored in this course through interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives. We will discuss how immigration, class, and norms of ethnicity, race, and gender determine the construction, expression, and reframing of Latina/o sexualities. (Cross-listed with CGS 115.)

ETHN 189. Special Topics in Ethnic Studies : Decolonial Theory

Daphne Taylor-Garcia

A reading and discussion course that explores special topics in ethnic studies. Themes will vary from quarter to quarter; therefore, course may be repeated three times as long as topics vary.

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

Daisy Rodríguez at d1rodriguez@ucsd.edu

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