



Course Offerings

SPRING 2014

ETHN 3: Introduction to Ethnic Studies: Making Culture

Wayne Yang

Through examining the historical and contemporary politics of representation in both popular and community-focused media, film, art, music, and literature, this course tracks racial formation through studying the sphere of cultural production, consumption, and contestation.

ETHN 87- A00: Globalization Through Film

Kirstie Dorr

This course juxtaposes four films that represent distinct dimensions of globalization: economic restructuring, migration patterns, war and empire, and the commodification of bodies and body parts. Using an intersectional analysis, we will examine how globalization has shaped political, economic, and social relations locally and transnationally.

ETHN 87- B00: 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 100C: Social Justice Praxis

Ross Frank

An intensive capstone experience for ethnic studies majors, this course combines an advanced exploration of praxis-based approaches to social justice with practicum-based independent campus, community, creative, or research projects.

ETHN 118: Contemporary Immigration Issues

Kirstie Dorr

This course examines historical and contemporary connections between the political, economic and geographic dimensions of globalization, and migration: the movement of bodies, culture, and things. Course readings and class discussions will foreground an analysis of how socially constructed categories of difference—particularly race, gender, and sexuality—are mobilized to explain, maintain, and/or contest contemporary globalization and migration processes. Though course readings will provide a fundamental historical and theoretical context for our query, we will additionally turn our attention to popular films, news media, and cultural texts to consider how “places” of global mediation—from our homes or our classrooms, to the local supermarket or coffee house—link our everyday lives to the global processes that we will discuss throughout the quarter.

ETHN 124: Asian American Literature—Asian American (Non)Identity

Alex Chang

Selected topics in the literature by men and women of Asian descent who live and write in the United States. May be repeated for credit when topics vary. (Cross-listed with LTEN 181.)

ETHN 142: Medicine, Race and the Global Politics of Inequality

Gabriel Mendes

This course will frame out studies for thinking about human difference at the level of body and health. In so doing, we will explore how modern institutions and discourses have constructed particular populations as victims and/or carriers of disease and others as “sanitary citizens.” And we will examine the material bases for systemic, structural inequalities that shape the production of medical knowledge and the distribution of medical services and public health measures on global, national, and local scales. As we cover how race, as well as the intersecting categories of gender, class, sexuality and nation, affects both the unequal distribution of diseases and unequal access to medical treatment, we will also consider the human rights and social justice consequences of these phenomena.

ETHN 147: Black Feminisms, Past and Present

Sara Kaplan

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 152: Law and Civil Rights

José Fusté

This course examines the ways in which the law has historically structured hierarchies of political, economic, and social power in the United States. Beginning with an in-depth discussion of the nature and definition of civil rights, we will analyze the roles and limits of the U.S. state in guaranteeing and unevenly distributing rights to its citizens in key legal documents such as the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights. Through the close analysis of specific legal cases covering a wide-range of issues including slavery, settler colonialism, U.S. expansionism and imperialism, Jim Crow segregation and post-1954 judicial desegregation, affirmative action, immigration restriction, racial profiling and racially disparate criminal sentencing, and the curtailment of civil rights after September 11, we will discuss the ways in which the law has institutionalized differently racialized and gendered legal subjects. In so doing, we will reflect upon whether and to what extent the U.S. state has fallen short of protecting the rights to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” for all, both in the historical context and in the contemporary context of “color-blind constitutionalism.”

ETHN 153: Citizenship and Civil Rights in the Twentieth Century

David Gutierrez

This course traces the history of the institution of U.S. citizenship in the last century, tracing changing notions of racial, cultural, and gender differences, the evolution of the civil rights struggle, and changes in laws governing citizenship and access to rights. (Cross-listed with HIUS 136.)

ETHN 172: Afro-American Prose

Dennis Childs

Students will analyze and discuss the novel, the personal narrative, and other prose genres, with particular emphasis on the developing characters of Afro-American narrative and the cultural and social circumstances that influence their development. (Cross-listed with LTEN 183).

ETHN 174 A00: Themes in Afro-American Literature

Dennis Childs

This course focuses on the influence of slavery upon African American writers. Our concern is not upon what slavery was but upon what it is within the works and what these texts reveal about themselves, their authors, and their audiences. (Cross-listed with LTEN 185).

ETHN 179B: Jazz Since 1946: Freedom and Form

David Borgo

This course will examine the evolution of Jazz from 1943 to the present. The course will survey the contrasting and competing styles in Jazz from BEBOP to COOL to the avant garde and fusion. (Cross-listed with MUS 127B).

ETHN 187: Latina/o Sexualities

Jillian Hernandez

The construction and articulation of Latina/o sexualities will be explored in this course through interdisciplinary and comparative regional, national, and transnational perspectives. Through engaging from ethnographies, cultural studies, queer theorizing, poetry, memoirs, visual art, and popular culture, we will examine 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 A00: Foodways, Power, and the Production of Meaning

Marilisa Navarro

This course is intended to facilitate an analysis of the relationship between food and foodways, power relations, and the process of meaning-making. Examining a variety of scales, our analysis will range from the intimate site of the body to the home to the community to the nation to the global. This course is designed as an investigation to the ways in which the state and everyday people produce meanings and subjectivity in relation to food including but not limited to everyday food practices, food justice movements, hunger strikes, and force feedings. In addition, we will analyze how race is mutually constituted and relational through different food practices. By the end of this course, students will have developed analytical tools necessary to examine how foodways are a site through which knowledge is produced and subjectivity is formed.

ETHN 189 B00: Asian American Cinema: Past, Present, and Future

Brian Hu

This course presents Asian American cinema through a mix of critical studies and curating. The course will alternate between sessions that present "canonical" Asian American films and videos, and brand-new works submitted to the San Diego Asian Film Festival in Spring 2014. This approach reveals issues of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and citizenship as shifting, historically-contingent formations in dialogue with the students' own understandings of Asian American communities today. The curatorial portion of the course engages the students as active critics with a stake in what is seen locally and nationally, and introduces the ethical concerns of what it means to be cultural gatekeepers in an Asian American arts scene based on inclusion and diversity. Students will also learn about the business and practical dimensions of film festival programming.

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

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