

# **Ethnic Studies Course Syllabus**

## **Course Description**

Ethnic Studies courses operate from the consideration that race and racism, have been, and continue to be, profoundly powerful social and cultural forces in American society. These courses focus on the experiences of African Americans, Native Americans, Latino/a Americans, Asian Americans, and other racialized peoples in the US. Courses are grounded in the concrete situations of people of color, and use a methodological framing that emphasizes both the structural dimensions of race, racism, identity and the associated cultural dimensions (Adapted from UC Berkeley, Department of Ethnic Studies).

The major purpose of this course is to educate students to be politically, socially, and economically conscious about their personal connections to local and national history. Ethnic Studies focuses on themes of social justice, social responsibility, and social change. Students will engage in project and community based service learning to critically establish views of identity, change and social justice. The course spans from past to present, from politics to social reform, allowing students to identify similar social patterns and universal qualities present in other societies, including their own. This course will focus on the experiences of African American, Asian Americans, Latino/a Americans, Native Americans and the LGBTQ community. This course will also include an Identity section where students will consider concepts related to their own personal, group, and/or national identity.

## **Course Syllabus:**

### **Identity Unit**

In this unit, students will explore the meaning of words such as race and ethnicity as they pertain to individuals and communities. How do we define our various identities: national, state, local, and community? How do we perceive ourselves and how do others perceive us? Who is socially understood and who is on the fringe of society? What is the process of our identity formation? What has been the immigration pathway of their family and how has that process-formulated self-identity? How has the development of images, often stereotypes, reduced or magnified an individual? What does it mean to be American? How has the perception hyphenated Americans changed over time, both within and between ethnic groups? This Identity Unit contains a LGBTQ “mini-unit” in which students will go beyond the notion of individual, community, state and national identity and develop an understanding and respect for the LGBTQ community. Additionally, students will be able to understand gender stereotypes and will be able to clarify their own values and feelings by participating in class discussions and writing exercises. The overall objective of the Identity Unit is for students to explore themselves, how they fit into society, to unearth questions about race/identity and the current state of American society. This unit is steeped in the social science framework skill building of social

geographic trends, identity, and experience and gaining of point of view perspectives from multiple sources.

### **African American Unit**

In this unit, students will study and explore the experience of African Americans both historically and in terms of contemporary issues, with an emphasis on the post – WWII Civil Rights Movement. What role did African Americans play in the growth and development of the United States? What role did self – determination play in the trajectory of the African American community? How did political power develop with in the work of one man? Deconstruct the myth of non-racist geographical locations (eg North and Midwest), the migration post Great Depression, de facto segregation and urban sprawl. What role did youth play in the Civil Rights Movement? How did the Freedom Riders influence the Civil Rights Movement? What challenges continue to face African Americans? What opportunities do students have to enact positive change for African Americans? African American community and how has this power evolved to work effectively with changing power structures in the United States? This unit identifies leaders in social, political, and economic realms with respect to the African American experience in Civil Rights era and beyond. Direct connections are made to the issues and struggles with identity today and discussion of progress of the past 50 years. Students will begin to engage with community engagement strategies and the effectiveness of social and political movements throughout the unit.

### **Native Americans Unit**

In this unit, students will study and explore the experience of Native Americans both historically and in terms of contemporary issues with specific focus on the 20th/21st century. How has cultural conflict affected Native Americans? How have the experiences of different tribes within the United States varied and what impact have these differences had on the economic/political status of the tribes? What role has assimilation played in the experience of American Indians specifically in the realm of schooling and early childhood (case study Sherman Indian High School, Riverside, CA)? How did political power develop within the Native American community and how has this power evolved to work effectively with changing power structures in the United States? What role have gaming licenses for reservations played in the economic reality for both tribes with and without these licenses, special consideration to those tribes specific to Southern California? What challenges continue to face youth populations amongst Native Americans? What opportunities do students have to enact positive change for Native Americans? This unit identifies leaders in social, political, and economic realms with respect to the Native American experience in the post WWII era and beyond. Discussion of the social accepted use of Native American images and icons in society for mascots, professional teams and 19th century focused depiction in movies? What impact do social residuals of reservation life (unemployment, alcoholism, poverty, suicide) have on Native American youth today and the establishment of identity. Direct connections are made to the issues and struggles with identity today and discussion of progress of the past 50 years. Students will begin to engage with

community engagement strategies and the effectiveness of social and political movements throughout the unit.

### **Latino/a American Unit**

In this unit, students will study and explore the experience of Latino/a Americans both historically and in terms of contemporary issues. Students will explore statistics and the diverse ethnic groups living in the United States within the Latino/a minority. What are the cultural and political similarities/differences between South Americans, Central Americans, and Mexican Americans (including the immigrant experience)? What role did Latinos play in the growth and development of the United States in the 20th/21st century? How did political power develop within the Latino American community and how has this power evolved to work effectively with changing power structures in the United States? Discuss the emergence of the Chicano movement of the 1960s (including the Brown Berets) and the Latinx movement today. To what extent has immigration impacted the political, social, and economic realities of Latino Americans? How has the experience of Latino Americans in California differed from that of Latino/a Americans in other parts of the United States? What challenges continue to face Latino/a Americans? What opportunities do students have to enact positive change for Latino/a Americans? Discuss the emergence of the movements for identity. Direct connections are made to the issues and struggles with identity today and discussion of progress of the past 50 years. Students will begin to engage with community engagement strategies and the effectiveness of social and political movements throughout the unit.

### **Asian American Unit**

In this unit, students will study and explore the experience of Asian Americans both historically and in terms of contemporary issues. Students will explore statistics and the diverse ethnic groups living in the United States within the Asian minority in the post WWII era. What are the cultural and political similarities/differences between Middle East, East Asians, Southeast Asians, Pacific Islanders and Southern Asians? What elements of social geography impact of the groups, immigrant experience and ongoing struggles for identity in America? What role did Asian Americans play in the growth and development of the United States? How did political power develop within the Asian American community and how has this power evolved to work effectively with changing power structures in the United States? How has immigration impacted the political, social, and economic realities of Asian Americans? What accounts for the cultural perception that some Asian Americans are the “model minority” and some are not? What challenges continue to face Asian Americans? What opportunities do students have to enact positive change for Asian Americans? Direct connections are made to the issues and struggles with identity today and discussion of progress of the past 50 years. Students will begin to engage with community engagement strategies and the effectiveness of social and political movements throughout the unit.

## **Representative Performance Outcomes and Skills by Unit**

### **Identity Unit**

- Examine the process of identity formation as individuals, communities, states, and as a nation.
- Explore the meaning of race as it pertains to individuals and communities.
- Examine the idea of American citizenship and how hyphenated Americans get defined and/or redefined.
- Consider how a nation confronts, emerges from, and atones for its past.
- Evaluate how images, often stereotypes, can be used to marginalize an individual and/or groups.
- Analyze human nature and consider what motivates individuals to take action.
- Explore the defining, histories, struggles, and triumphs of the LGBTQ+ community in the United States.
- Examine and evaluate gender stereotypes in today's society

### **African American Unit**

- Examine and analyze the effects of dehumanization through the capture, trade, and enslavement of Africans, within a regional and global context.
- Understand the impact and legacy of colonialism on African Americans.
- Analyze the concept of white supremacy (including institutional racism, racial hierarchy, and oppression).
- Analyze and describe the effectiveness of the various approaches employed by different leaders of the Civil Rights, Black Power movement and Black Lives Matter.
- Understand the role of ongoing resistance and self-determination in the trajectory of the African American community.
- Analyze the effectiveness of the Civil Rights movement for African Americans.
- Examine connections between current and historical events (e.g., How does #BlackLivesMatter relate to Selma?, relationships with community policing and punishment).

### **Native American Unit**

- Examine the role of geography on the development of various Native American cultures.
- Analyze the worldviews, values, spiritual traditions, cultures, and contributions of various Native American peoples.
- Evaluate scholarly sources to consider the impact of U.S. policy on the Native American population and whether or not these policies had the intent of genocide on Native American peoples, as defined by the 1948 United Nations Convention on Genocide.
- Analyze U.S. policy on Native American Boarding Schools and their impact on Native American peoples (physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual); Sherman Indian High School
- Evaluate the impact of the reservation system on Native Americans, broken treaties and consistent restrictive governmental policies.

- Evaluate the contributions of Native Americans during WWII including but not limited to the Navajo Code Talkers.
- Analyze U.S. policy on relocation and its impact on Native American peoples (1940 – 1970), with an emphasis on the move to urban centers and evolution of reservations including gaming rights.
- Analyze and describe the effectiveness of the various approaches employed by different leaders of the Civil Rights movement (Dennis Banks, Clyde Bellecourt, Russell Means, Susan LaFlesche, LaDonna Harris, etc.).
- Analyze and evaluate the Native American Movement (e.g. goals, methods, leaders, struggles, accomplishments) in the post 1960s era
- Examine efforts to re-humanize through the restoration and revitalization of the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health of Native American communities (e.g. loss of language and culture, confronting drugs and alcohol, addressing rates of suicide, balanced ways of healing).
- Examine the preservation and revitalization of tribal cultures, language, and traditions and the role of tribal values in community health and well – being focused on youth and generational passing of knowledge today. (example UCR saving dying Native American languages project)

### **Latino/a American Unit**

- Analyze the implications of the concept of Manifest Destiny (e.g. Mexican American War, Westward Expansion).
- Evaluate the impact of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on peoples living in the ceded territories (e.g. social bandits, land grants, squatting, political rights, racism).
- Describe the role of violence, oppression, and persecution in the West (e.g. lynching, Texas Rangers, Bear Flag Revolt).
- Examine the role of Mendez v. Westminster School District played in the desegregation of American schools.
- Examine the tensions during WWII by analyzing the causes of the Zoot Suit Riots and the role of the media in shaping public opinion towards Latino/a Americans.
- Analyze Latino/a immigration patterns between 1910 and 1950; evaluate U.S. immigration policies in the same era, including the impact of the Bracero program, make connections to immigration patterns of the late 20th century.
- Analyze and describe the effectiveness of the Civil Rights movement for Latino/as.
- Analyze the development of political power within the Latino/a American community and its relationship to changing power structures in the United States, including the emergence and understanding of the Latinx movement.
- Evaluate the impact of immigration policies on Latino/a Americans post WWII

### **Asian American Unit**

- Examine the experiences of various Asian groups in America by defining how diverse the continent is and the groups that have immigrated to the United States.

- Examine push – pull factors that led to Asian immigration to the United States in the 20th century/21st century
- Analyze the impact of legislation designed to limit Asian immigration to the United States 20th century
- Analyze the varied impacts of WWII on Asian Americans in the United States (e.g. Japanese Internment, Korematsu v. United States, Magnuson Act, Patriot Act).
- Analyze the varied impacts of the Cold War on Asian Americans in the United States (e.g. McCarran –Walker Act, Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965).
- Examine the impact of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, also the impact of the Patriot Act on Civil Liberties in the post 9/11 world.
- Impact of post Cold War on Asian Americans in the United States (9/11, terrorism, global health)
- Examine efforts by Asian Americans to preserve cultures socially and geographically, specific attention paid to Southern California communities
- Analyze the development of political power within the Asian American community and its relationship to changing power structures in the United States.

**In accordance with their individual capacity, students will grow in the ability to:**

- Locate, interpret, and assess information found in primary and secondary sources.
- Describe how major historical events are related to each other in time by distinguishing between cause and effect, sequence, and correlation.
- Apply the principles of historical research to the History/Social Science discipline by asking historical questions, evaluating data, and analyzing different points of view.
- Ask historical questions and relate different points of view.
- Use writing to combine ideas, concepts, and information to craft a claim and draw connections among them.
- Arrange historical events in sequential order and determine their correlation to each other.
- Identify an author's position on a historical event.
- Identify and evaluate an author's purpose in producing a document.
- Hypothesize what the author will say before reading a document.
- Evaluate the trustworthiness of a source by considering genre, audience and purpose.
- Understand how context and background information influence the content of a document.
- Recognize that documents are products of particular points in time.
- Establish what is probable by comparing documents to each other.
- Recognize disparities between accounts.
- Identify an author's claims about an event.
- Evaluate the evidence and reasoning the author uses to support claims.
- Evaluate author's word choice; understand that language is used deliberately.