Course Information

Instructor: JR Donath
Office: MND 2030
Office Hours: M 10:00-11:00 and by appointment
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Course Description
This course is an upper-level, interdisciplinary exploration of the arts and the ways we define ourselves as human beings, both as individuals and within various groups. There is a strong connection between art and society, between aesthetic values and social action, between culture and context. Works of art are powerful channels of communication about ourselves and the issues of American identities: our concern with who we are and how we feel about ourselves and the nation. Our efforts at self-definition have often been shaped by the multicultural nature of American history and experience. The ways in which various art forms reveal Americans’ attempts at self-definition within this multicultural framework is the central concern of this class.

This class fulfills the General Education requirements for Race and Ethnicity in American Society and Area C3.

Textbook & Course Materials

Required Texts


Other readings and materials will be made available in SacCT (See Learning Modules).

Term Paper Text
See term paper assignment for suggested resources. Consult instructor if you choose to read a book not on the recommended list.

Course Requirements
Internet connection (DSL, LAN, or cable connection desirable)
Access to SacCT

Course Structure
This course is designed to provide a hybrid experience, including both face-to-face and online activities.
Contact time will be divided in the following way:

**Approximately 65% face-to-face (Monday and Wednesday classroom meetings)**

Face-to-face sessions will be held on the Sacramento State campus in *Mendocino 1005*

**Approximately 35% online (Friday SacCT assignments)**

Online resources will be on SacCT and other Web sites. Activities will consist of readings, videos, discussion threads, writing assignments and tests.

**SacCT Access**

This course will be delivered partially online through a course management system named SacCT.

To access this course on SacCT you will need access to the Internet and a supported Web browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari). To ensure that you are using a supported browser and have required plug-ins please run the [Check Browser](http://example.com) from your SacCT course. Refer to the SacCT Browser Tune-up page for instructions.

**Technical Assistance**

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with SacCT you can:

Visit the SacCT [Student Resources Page](http://example.com)
Review SacCT [Student Tutorials](http://example.com)
Visit the SacCT [Student FAQ’s Web page](http://example.com)
Submit a [SacCT Problem Form](http://example.com)

**Note:** This syllabus, along with course assignments and due dates, are subject to change. It is YOUR responsibility to check SacCT for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be noted by course announcements and through SacCT email.
Course Objectives

Upon completion of this class, successful students will have demonstrated their abilities to:

- Identify, explain and analyze American ideologies as presented in course materials
- Compare and contrast the basic values and behaviors of a number of American cultures
- Apply insights gained from reflection and discussion
- Recognize the influence and contributions of various individuals and groups (past and present) to the richness of the American experience
- Communicate effectively in both written and oral formats

Students will meet the objectives listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

- Attendance at classroom meetings
- Completion of examinations and assignments
- Participation in classroom and on-line activities

Evaluation

Graded Course Activities
Visit the Assignments link in SacCT for details about each assignment listed below. Click on Assessments to access tests.

Late Work: Be sure to pay close attention to deadlines—there will be no make-up assignments or quizzes, and late work will only be accepted for a serious and compelling reason (which I will determine.)

Viewing Grades in SacCT: Points for graded activities will be posted to the SacCT Grade Center. Click on the My Grades link on the left navigation to view your points.

I will update the online grades each time a grading session has been completed---for Friday assignments (and tests)---that should typically occur within 48 hours following the completion of an activity. You will see a visual indication of new grades posted on your SacCT home page under the link to this course. The evaluation of the term paper will take a bit more time and students should expect to see their grades within 2 weeks of completing the paper.

Evaluation
- Participation (in-class and through Friday SacCt assignments)=150 points
- Tests: each worth 100 points= 200 points
- Term Paper: worth 100 points

450-405 points ---A
404-355 points---B
354-305 points---C
304-255 points---D
Below 254 points ---F
Course Calendar

- **Week 01:** introductory meeting
  - September 1 / NO CLASS MEETING: LABOR DAY HOLIDAY
  - September 3 / MND 1005
    - Introduction to study in the humanities
  - September 5 / SacCT  Friday assignment #1

- **Week 02:** defining culture
  - September 8 / MND 1005
    - Read: Holmes: “The American Cultural Configuration”
  - September 10 / MND 1005
    - Read: Miner: “Body Ritual Among the Nacirema”
  - September 12 / SacCT Friday Assignment #2

- **Week 03:** the creation of social identity (ies): social location
  - September 15 / MND 1005
    - Read: Kirk and Rey: “Identities and Social Location. . .”
  - September 17 / MND 1005
    - Read: Motz: “‘Seen Through Rose-Tinted Glasses:’ The Barbie Doll in American Society”
    - Read: Tham: “Barbie’s Shoes”
  - September 19 / SacCT Friday Assignment #3

- **Week 04:** the historical origins of the hegemony and the foundations of a macro identity
  - September 22 / MND 1005
    - Read: Winthrop: “Model of Christian Charity”
  - September 24 / MND 1005
    - Read: The Declaration of Independence
      The Bill of Rights
    - Read: The Bradley Project on America’s National Identity, Chapter 1: “Being an American”
  - September 26 / SacCT Friday Assignment #4

- **Week 05:** the hegemony and meso identity
  - September 29/ MND 1005
    - Read: Gatto: “The Seven Lesson Schoolteacher”
    - Read: Mann: “Report of the Massachusetts Board of Education”
  - October 1 / MND 1005
    - Read: Emerson: “Self-Reliance”
  - October 3 / SacCT Friday Assignment #5
• **Week 06: race and color**
  - October 6 / MND 1005
    - **Read:** Douglass: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
  - October 8 / MND 1005
    - **Read:** Dubois: excerpt from *The Souls of Black Folks*
    - **Read:** Hurston: “How It Feels to Be Colored Me”
  - October 10 / SacCT Friday Assignment # 6
    - **Read:** James Baldwin: excerpt from *Nobody Knows My Name*

• **Week 07: what about tribal cultures? assimilation and resistance**
  - October 13 / MND 1005
    - **Read:** Trask: “Notes from a Native Daughter”
    - **Read:** Gunn: “Where I Come from is like this…”
  - October 15 / MND 1005
    - **In class video:** *The Primal Mind*
  - October 17 / SacCT Friday Assignment #7

• **Week 08: review and test week**
  - October 20 / MND 1005
    - **In class:** Test 1 review**
  - October 22 / NO CLASS MEETING: Donath at UH Hilo
  - October 24 / SacCT Friday Assignment: MIDTERM EXAM

• **Week 09: migration and immigration**
  - October 27 / MND 1005
    - **Read:** Turner: “The Frontier Thesis”
    - Go to [www.nationalhumanitiescenter.org](http://www.nationalhumanitiescenter.org) and type Frederick Jackson Turner into the search engine.
  - October 29 / MND 1005
    - **Read:** Takaki: “A Different Mirror”
  - October 31 / SacCT Friday Assignment #7

• **Week 10: ethnicity**
  - November 3 / MND 1005
    - **Read:** Rich: “Split at the Root”
    - **Read:** Chang: “The Model Minority”
  - November 5 / MND 1005
    - **Read:** Schoolhouse Rock: “The Great Melting Pot”
  - November 7 / SacCT Friday Assignment #8

• **Week 11: personal narratives of ethnic experiences**
  - November 10 / MND 1005
    - **Read:** Okubo: *Citizen 13660*
  - November 12 / MND 1005
    - **Read:** Okubo: *Citizen 13660*
• **Week 12: The arts**
  - **November 17 /MND 1005**
    - Read: essay on Norman Rockwell in Vanity Fair November 2009 on internet
  - **November 19/MND 1005**
    - Term paper due by 5pm on Wednesday, November 20
  - **November 21 /SacCT Friday Assignment # 10**

• **Week 13: Donath’s “House of Culture”**
  - **November 24 /MND 1005**
  - **November 25/ No class meeting—Donath personal holiday**
  - **November 28/No Friday  SacCT assignment**

• **Week 14: mass-mediated cultures**
  - **December 1 /MND 1005**
  - **December 3 /MND 1005**
    - Read: Gergen: “The Self in the Age of Information”
  - **December 5 /SacCT Friday Assignment # 11**

• **Week 15: final week of class meetings---**
  - **December 8 /MND 1005**
    - Read: Hughes : “Let America Be America Again”
    - Read: Hsu: “The End of White America?”
  - **December 10 /MND 1005**
    - **In class Test 2 review**
  - **December 12 /SacCT Friday Assignment/Test 2**

**NO CLASS MEETINGS DURING FINALS WEEK:** Test 2 will be available from 9am on Friday, December 13 until midnight on WEDNESDAY, December 17.
HRS161: Multicultural America
Overview of Course Activities

Meetings
- Monday and Wednesday class sessions will be held on the Sacramento State campus from 9-9:50am in Mendocino Hall 1005
- On Fridays, class activities will be electronic and are organized as “Friday SacCT assignments.”

Learning Modules
- Learning Modules are used to organize content, activities, assignments, and course resources into specific units for each week of the course. Access Learning Modules by going to the week’s folder in the Content Section of SacCT.
- Each week you should begin by visiting the corresponding folder for an overview and links to the week’s activities, assignments, and deliverables.

Course Assignments and Projects
Assignments and projects can be accessed from the Assignment Tool on the course menu (or from the corresponding Learning Module for the week in which they are assigned).

Assignment Submission Instructions
- All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through SacCT unless otherwise instructed. Refer to each assignment for specific instructions regarding expectations, deadlines, and submission.
- Prior to the deadline, you may have the opportunity to “take back” an assignment, make revisions or updates and resubmit. Once the deadline passes, you may not take back an assignment.

Online Tests
Test can be accessed from the Assessments Tool on the course menu (or from the corresponding Learning Module for the week in which they are assigned).

You can only take a test within the specified time frame. Tests will become available 48 hours before the Friday on which they are assigned and they will close at midnight on following Sunday. Be sure to pay close attention to deadlines—there will be no make-up quizzes or tests. When a quiz or exam becomes available, the link will become active and you can then begin. Make sure to save your answers as you take the test. Once you are finished you will be able to review your submission via the View Submissions option. Be sure to alert me immediately if you encounter any technology problems while taking a test.

Maintain Professional Conduct Both in the Classroom and Online
The classroom is a professional environment where academic debate and learning take place. I will make every effort to make this environment safe for you to share your opinions, ideas, and beliefs. In return, you are expected to respect the opinions, ideas, and beliefs of other students—both in the face-to-face classroom and online communication.
Students have the right and privilege to learn in the class, free from harassment and disruption. The course follows the standards set in the Code of Students Rights and Responsibilities (STU-0119) and students are subject to disciplinary action for violation of that code.

In addition to traditional face-to-face meetings, this course relies on online tools for course communication.

**Communication with the Instructor**
It is important to remember that while the Internet is available 24 hours a day, other students and I are not. You can expect that I will respond to e-mail message to you within **48 hours** during the week, but I will generally not be available to respond on weekends. **Please call my office (916.278.5895) or visit during my office hours if an urgent issue surfaces.**

**Some Things to Remember**
It is important to remember some basic things about online communication. Consider some traditional communication that you may have experienced:

- If you send a personal letter to someone it is private communication between you and the recipient — unless the recipient shares the letter with others
- If you put a notice on a bulletin board in the student union, it becomes publicly visible by anyone who visits the bulletin board
- When you chat with a group of friends at the coffee shop, students sitting nearby can hear your conversation

The same concepts translate into the online environment:

- E-mail is private communication between the sender and receiver(s) – but can easily be made public by the receiver(s) if they share the message with others
- Discussion forums and blogs are public spaces
- Chat is public and may involve multiple “talkers” and “listeners” as well as “eavesdroppers”

**Verbal & Non-Verbal Communication**
It is important to remember that you will not have the non-verbal cues that you get in the traditional face-to-face classroom and neither will I.

I cannot see the confused, frustrated, or unhappy expressions on your face if you encounter problems. **You MUST communicate with me if you are encountering difficulties or have questions so that I can help.**

**Emoticons**
Emoticons are graphical expressions created by combining specific letters or symbols such as :-) to create a smiley face. Use of emoticons is considered a friendly and informal style of communicating feelings in plain text messages. Be careful not to rely too much on emoticons or symbols in your communication as they may not easily understood by others or may distract from your intended message.

To make the experience go smoothly, remember that you’re responsible for:

- Initiating contact
• Being direct, persistent, and vocal when you don’t understand something
• Communicating often and early
• Attending and participating in face-to-face class meetings and completing on-line assignments. Doing so is essential for a successful experience.

I am responsible for:
• Responding as quickly and effectively as possible when alerted to a technical problem
• Ensuring, to the best of my ability, that you have a chance for clarification and explanation when you encounter material or concepts that give you trouble
• Following, in so far as I am able, the syllabus calendar and outline of the class calendar of assignments and meetings
• Evaluating your work in a fair and transparent manner

Commitment to Integrity
As a student in this course (and at this university) you are expected to maintain high degrees of professionalism, commitment to active learning and participation in this class and also integrity in your behavior in and out of the classroom.

Sac State's Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures
“The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of scholars and teachers. California State University, Sacramento expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles, and in so doing, will protect the integrity of academic work and student grades.”

Read more about Sac State's Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures