

## **Humanities and Religious Studies 161: Multicultural America**

(GE categories: Area C3/race and ethnicity)

Summer 2009/Session 2

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This course is an upper-level, interdisciplinary exploration of the arts and the ways we define ourselves, both as individuals and within various socio-cultural groups, as human beings. 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 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 multi-cultural nature of American history and experience. The ways in which various art forms reveal American self-consciousness, introspection, and attempts at self-definition within this multicultural framework are the central concerns of this class.

**LEARNING GOALS**/upon completion of this class, successful students will be able to:

- identify, explain and analyze American ideologies as presented in course materials
- compare and contrast the basic values and behaviors of a number of cultures in the U S
- demonstrate visual literacy
- apply the techniques of formal analysis to works of literary and visual art
- demonstrate a deepened appreciation of the diversity of American culture
- recognize and value the contributions of various individuals and groups, past and present, to the richness of the American experience
- communicate effectively in both oral and written formats

### **TEXTS:**

Baldwin. *The American Revelation*. (AR)

Donath. *Reading Packet* (R) Available from University Copy & Print: 446 Howe Ave (Behind Tokyo Fro's on Fair Oaks Blvd) 929.6147

Douglass. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Okubo. *Citizen 13660*

An American novel or autobiography of your choice for the paper assignment

\*\*\*Please purchase TWO 886-E scantrons for the tests\*\*\*\*\*

### **EVALUATION:**

PAPER: 100 points

400-360: A

2 TESTS: 100 points each

359--300: B

PARTICIPATION: 100 points

299-250: C

249-210: D

- Participation points are calculated on a daily basis and depend on positive contributions to class meetings and preparation of written assignments.
- No "extra credit" is offered in this course

**CLASS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:**

- **ATTENDANCE:** Particularly given the abbreviated nature of this course, I believe attendance is crucial to your success. However, I do not take role and class attendance does not figure directly into your grade.
- **LATE WORK:** Papers (and any "homework" assignments) are due during the first five minutes of class. After that, a paper is considered late and there is a 5 point penalty per day, including weekends (---even if the paper comes in later on the day it was due.)  
Tests are scheduled as indicated on the class calendar. Make-ups are not permitted unless a verifiable emergency interferes. Make-ups are given at the convenience of the testgiver and are always essay examinations.
- **PROFESSORIAL QUIRK: No one will be admitted to the class after the door is "closed" (five minutes into the class hour).**

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**CALENDAR**

**WEEK 1**

- **TUESDAY /July 14: Introductory meeting and some definitions**
- **WEDNESDAY/July 15: Making the invisible visible: culture & hegemony/tools, terms & texts**  
Read: Gatto: "The Seven Lesson Schoolteacher" (R)  
Mann: "Report of the Massachusetts Board of Education" (R)  
Moore: "Idiot Nation" (R)
- **THURSDAY/JULY 16: Cultural Literacy**

**WEEK 2**

- **TUESDAY/July 21: The hegemony's historical roots**  
Read: "City on a Hill" (AR)  
Winthrop: "Model of Christian Charity" (R)
- **WEDNESDAY/JULY 22: Creating a national culture**  
Read: "Common Sense" (AR)  
Paine: "Common Sense" and "The American Crisis" (R)
- **THURSDAY/JULY 23: hegemonic mottos**  
Read: "E Pluribus Unum" (AR)  
"Self-Reliance" (AR)  
Emerson: "Self Reliance" (R)

**WEEK 3**

- **TUESDAY/July 28: NOT the hegemony: worldviews/cultures and the arts**  
Read: Trask: "Notes from A Native Daughter" (R)  
Gunn: "Where I Come From is Like This" (R)
- **WEDNESDAY/July29: the mythologies of "mainstream" American culture and the influence of the media**  
Read: Mantsios: "Media Magic: Making Class Invisible" (R)  
"Progress and Poverty" (AR)
- **THURSDAY/July 30: TEST 1**  
**\*\*Bring 886-E scantron to class\*\***

#### WEEK 4

- **TUESDAY/AUGUST 4: Migration**

Read: "Manifest Destiny" (AR)  
Worster: "Freedom and Want: The Western Paradox" (R)

- **WEDNESDAY/AUGUST 5: Immigration**

Read: Takaki: "A Different Mirror" (R)  
Begin: *Citizen 13660*  
"Melting Pot" (AR)  
recommended: "The Sphere of Action" (AR)

- **THURSDAY/ AUGUST 6: Ethnicity and Identity**

Read: Finish: *Citizen 13660*  
Chang: "Streets of Gold: The Model Minority" (R)

#### WEEK 5

- **TUESDAY/August 11 : Sexuality and Gender**

Read: Rich: "Split at the Root" (R)  
Katz: "Advertising and the Construction of Violent White Masculinity" (R)

- **WEDNESDAY/August 12: A personal narrative**

Read: Begin: *NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLAS*  
Chapters I-IX (1-34)

- **THURSDAY/August 13: Race and American Culture**

Read: Finish: *NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS*  
"The Negro in Our History" (AR)  
DeMott: "Put on a Happy Face" (R)

**\*\*Paper due in class\***

#### WEEK 6

- **TUESDAY/August 18: Popular culture**

Read: Mander: "Four Arguments for the elimination of television"  
Gitlin: "Under the Sign of Mickey Mouse & Co."

- **WEDNESDAY/August 19: Catch-up day/instructor's choice**

Read: Hughes: "Let America Be America Again"

- **THURSDAY/August 20: TEST 2**

**\*\*Bring 886-E scantron to class\*\***