

Native American Studies

Curriculum Assessment June 2013

ETHN 140 – Native American Experience – Spring 2013

This assessment is related to *Concepts and Theories/Old and New in Ethnic Studies*. Within this category, one of the learning goals addresses *understanding and ability to apply new models and paradigms to the study of ethnic group experience*.

A component of Exam II required students to complete a 350-400 word *take-home* essay due on the day of the exam. One week prior to the exam, students were provided with a prompt, which included a copy of an article titled *Pow Wow Wow Yippee Yo Yippy Yay* published in a student newspaper at California State University, Long Beach, on March 14, 2011. Written by a student reporter, the intent of the article was to provide “a review” of the pow wow as a public event held campus and jointly sponsored by the American Indian Studies Program and the American Indian Student Council at CSULB. However, the nature of the article was problematic because it included words, phrases and images directly connected to stereotypes and racism.

At the beginning of the semester, students were presented with the problem of stereotypes and images associated with American Indians, and they are provided with a powerpoint lecture on *The Americana Indian* and how words, phrases, images, among other things, are connected to *symbolic violence*. Based on this, and after carefully reading the article, students were required to write a response to the following prompt:

So far this semester, you have been exposed to information and knowledge concerning the historical experiences of Native Americans in the U.S. In addition, images and concepts relating to “the Americana Indian” were presented at the beginning of the semester. Identify and discuss “Americana Indian artificats” and how this article is an expression of “symbolic violence.”

Of the 52 students enrolled in the course, there were 5 students listed on the official course roster as Ethnic Studies majors with the following concentrations: General Ethnic Studies = 2; Chicana/o Studies = 2; and Pan African Studies = 1. Despite the fact that there were not any student majors with a Native American Studies concentration enrolled in this section of ETHN 140, it is important to emphasize that ETHN 140 is a required course for all Ethnic Studies majors regardless of their specific concentration. In additions, NAS faculty have had student majors with a Native American Studies concentration in sections ETHN 140 offered previous semesters.

Assessment of Student Responses

	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Influence</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>Total Score</i>
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Appendix C (Native American Studies Program: Ethnic Studies)

<i>S-1</i>	3	4	3	3	3	16
<i>S-2</i>	4	4	4	4	4	20
<i>S-3</i>	4	4	4	4	4	20
<i>S-4</i>	4	4	4	3	3	18
<i>S-5</i>	4	3	4	3	3	17

Overall, these scores represent the goal and intent of the assignment: to critically analyze the content of the article provided. The assignment required students to apply the concept of *Americana Indian artifacts* by identifying and discussing examples drawn from the article. Further, they were required to view the article through the lens of symbolic violence as a theoretical perspective. In terms of this exercise in the application of theory and concepts, Ethnic Studies students were successful in completing this assignment.

It is important to note here that there were responses by students who were not Ethnic Studies majors who completely missed the purpose of the assignment. In six cases, students from the larger class with majors in other disciplines wrote responses that the pow wow, as it was represented and reported on by the author, was an example of an event that was disrespectful to Native Americans – and in doing so, they viewed the Native American Studies Program and the American Indian Student Council as the perpetrators of symbolic violence rather than the author of the article.

The purpose of this assignment prompted students to critically review the article, therefore, the extent to which students took other or alternative viewpoints into consideration was not an intended part of the assignment. The *rubric* being used for this assessment included some attention to the ability of students to understand and/or take into consideration other points of view. For example, when assessing students on the *position* being articulated and expressed, the rubric takes into account the extent to which the student considered other/alternative viewpoints. In this case, students who made suggestions about what the author might have done to better understand the event he reported on or offered a reason to explain the author's limited understanding received a score of 4.