

College of San Mateo
Official Course Outline

1. COURSE ID: ETHN 585 **TITLE:** Ethnicity in Cinema

Units: 3.0 units **Hours/Semester:** 48.0-54.0 Lecture hours; and 96.0-108.0 Homework hours

Method of Grading: Letter Grade Only

Recommended Preparation:

Completion of or enrollment in READ 400.

2. COURSE DESIGNATION:

Degree Credit

Transfer credit: CSU; UC

AA/AS Degree Requirements:

CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E1b. Ethnic Studies

CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E5c. Humanities

CSU GE:

CSU GE Area C: ARTS AND HUMANITIES: C1 - Arts (Arts, Cinema, Dance, Music, Theater)

CSU GE Area F: ETHNIC STUDIES: Ethnic Studies

IGETC:

IGETC Area 3: ARTS AND HUMANITIES: A: Arts

3. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:

Catalog Description:

This course will explore how ethnicity/race continues to portray Persons of Color in cinema in the United States as the "other." The course will focus on case studies in film/media that show the complexities of ethnicity and how racial representations speak to, reflect, reproduce and/or contest contemporary issues of race and racism, and stereotypes of Persons of Color.

4. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:

1. Identify and describe the purpose and role of cinema in presenting images of ethnic communities.
2. Discuss the increasingly important role of cinema in our daily life.
3. Discuss the need for a high degree of accountability in films and filmmaking.
4. Interpret and analyze the images that are produced and projected on the screen.
5. Analyze and articulate concepts such as race and racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethno-centrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, imperialism, settler colonialism, and anti-racism as understood within Native American Studies, African American Studies, Asian American Studies, and Latina and Latino American Studies.
6. Apply theory and knowledge produced by Native American, African American, Asian American, and/or Latina and Latino American communities to describe the critical events, histories, cultures, intellectual traditions, contributions, lived-experiences and social struggles of those groups with a particular emphasis on agency and group-affirmation.
7. Critically analyze the intersection of race and racism as they relate to class, gender, sexuality, religion, spirituality, national origin, immigration status, ability, tribal citizenship, sovereignty, language, and/or age, particularly in Native American, African American, Asian American, and/or Latina and Latino American communities.
8. Critically review how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation, as experienced and enacted by Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans and/or Latina and Latino Americans, are relevant to current and structural issues such as communal, national, international, and transnational politics as, for example, in immigration, reparations, settler-colonialism, multiculturalism, and language policies.
9. Describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements in Native American, African American, Asian American and/or Latina and Latino communities and a just and equitable society.

5. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:

1. To understand the purpose and role of cinema in how it presents images of ethnic communities.
2. To understand the increasingly important role of cinema in our daily life.

3. To understand the need for a high degree of accountability in cinema.
4. To acquire analytical skills to assess the images that are produced and projected in cinema.
5. Analyze and articulate concepts such as race and racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethno-centrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, imperialism, settler colonialism, and anti-racism as understood within Native American Studies, African American Studies, Asian American Studies, and Latina and Latino American Studies.
6. Critically analyze the intersection of race and racism as they relate to class, gender, sexuality, religion, spirituality, national origin, immigration status, ability, tribal citizenship, sovereignty, language, and/or age, particularly in Native American, African American, Asian American, and/or Latina and Latino American communities.
7. Critically review how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation, as experienced and enacted by Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans and/or Latina and Latino Americans, are relevant to current and structural issues such as communal, national, international, and transnational politics as, for example, in immigration, reparations, settler-colonialism, multiculturalism, and language policies.

6. COURSE CONTENT:

Lecture Content:

WEEK 1: "Ethnicity in Cinema."

- Introduction

WEEK 2: Viewing Ethnicity in cinema

- Images - how do we "see" them?

WEEK 3: Ethnicity and film.

- How we can view ethnicity in films, in the media.
- How the audience should/should not view the film images.

WEEK 3-15: Case studies:

- Introduction:
- Film/Clips examples: Slanted Screen (2006); The Bronze Screen: 100 Years of the Latino Image in Hollywood (2002); Multi-Facial (1994/YouTube); Reel Bad Arabs (2006); The Jazz Singer (1927)
- Cartoons - Cartoons have taught us from an early age what people of color "look" like, how "they" talk and sound like, and how different "they" are.
- Cartoons/Clips examples: Aunt Jemima; Felix the Cat; Betty Boop; Superman; Bugs Bunny; Speedy Gonzalez; Pocahontas; Lady and the Tramp; Justice League; and more.
- Love and Romance - films today show interracial relationship are common but are they really?
- It is a subject that is still a "taboo" to many even in films.
- It is something we do not want to talk about or even acknowledge, especially if it is a family member.
- Film/clips examples: Jungle Fever (1992); Sayonara (1957); Dark Girls (2012)
- Food:
- Who do we "see" at the table?
- It is a selective view and it depends on your viewing point, for example, who is serving you? Are you being waited on, who's cooking, and what type of food is being served? If a scene shows someone eating sushi, where are they? Why did the filmmaker include this food in that scene, etc.?
- Film/Clips examples: Imitation of Life (1934); Facing the Storm: The Story of the American Bison (2011); Talking about Strawberries (?)
- Indians and Cowboys:
- Our image of an "Indian" is usually based on the western movies, usually we want to "see" a part of the Wild West.
- Films usually do not portray a Native Person/People in a fair or correct manner.
- Films/Clips examples: Reel Injun (2009); Harlem Rides the Range (1939); Lone Ranger (TV

- series); Cisco Kid (TV series)
- Road Trip!:
- Road trip films are very popular in American culture, Americans love the thought of the "open" road, of the adventure.
- Road trip films usually do not show or have a fair representation of People of Color
- Films/Clips examples: Smoke Signal (1998); Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle (2004)
- Law and [DIS]order:
- People of Color: mostly men are portrayed as gangsters.
- Like all Americans, there are good people and bad people but Law and Order-ish films usually show a negative role...why?
- Films/Clips examples: Better Luck Tomorrow (2003); Who Killed Vincent Chin? (1988); West Side Story (1961)
- Community: Place/Space:
- Will show films on the history of ethnic communities in our local area.
- Films/Clips examples: Soundtrack for a Revolution (2009); One Voice (2013)
- American Dream:
- Films/Clips examples: Sai-I-gun (April 29th) (1993); Salt of the Earth (1956); White Dog (1982)

7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Discussion
- C. Other (Specify): Weekly Writing assignments will be completed on our course Web Access site. Writing assignment is based on the Weekly Reading assignment which is also on our Web Access site. The Final is a term paper which covers any subject that was introduced in class via readings or films or lectures. The Final paper must be at least 6 to 10 pages. The reference section is required and is not counted as part of the 10 pages. Films - students will screen films in class as well as films on the Reserve Library list. Critical thinking - lectures and class discussions. A visit to the Library for orientation on ways to use digital technology to increase their knowledge of research resources.

8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

Writing Assignments:

Weekly Writing assignments - students will analyze their Weekly Reading assignments via Web Access. Their Final is a Final Term Paper which covers any subject that was introduced in class via readings or films or lectures. Or the student has the option to pick an ethnic/racial group that was not covered during the semester.

Reading Assignments:

Weekly Reading Assignments - students are required to read a series of articles from our course Web Access site. After which they are required to write about what they have read and how it "fits" into our course.

Other Outside Assignments:

Library Orientation - a CSM Librarian gives an orientation on the library's resources and more specific on ethnicity in cinema. Besides book references, the Librarian shows how to use digital information that our library has access to.

9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Class Participation
- B. Class Performance
- C. Exams/Tests
- D. Final Class Performance
- E. Homework
- F. Quizzes
- G. Participation - students are encouraged to ask/talk to the instructor and to interact with the other students. Analyze and interpret films and to raise questions on images that the film/filmmaker is projecting or not

projecting. To develop a critical perspective on the cultural and social values of the ethnic minority and their community. Recognize how cinema reflects and contributes to the values and culture of a society and affect viewer's perspective toward other cultures. Multi-choices quizzes (3) given throughout the semester. A Final Term Paper is needed to complete the course requirements.

10. REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):

Possible textbooks include:

- A. Sterritt, David. *Spike Lee's America*, ed. Polity Press, 2013
- B. Cheu, Johnson. *Diversity in Disney Films: Critical Essays on Role, Ethnicity, Gender, Sexuality, and Disability*, ed. McFarland, 2013

Origination Date: December 2020

Curriculum Committee Approval Date: December 2020

Effective Term: Fall 2021

Course Originator: Malathi Iyengar