This course provides an introduction to the concepts of race and ethnicity through literary and scholarly readings as well as our own experiences. We will explore how race and ethnicity have been constructed and tied to particular biological types, as well as how understanding the diversity within groups and between groups helps us to better understand ourselves. This exploration will involve analysis of cultural products, including commercials and news media, as well as our own engagements with new cultural experiences. At the level of systems (larger than individuals), we will learn about how race influences public perceptions, education, and incarceration as well as how policies and legislation contribute to the construction of race and ethnicity in America.

In this course we will explore ethnicity and race in the United States by examining our own experiences as well as literary and scholarly explorations of the concepts. Our goal will be to develop a critical framework that will help us better understand our multicultural society. Questions we will consider include: What is race? What is ethnicity? How does ethnicity relate to race? What is Ethnic Studies? How are ethnicity and race perceived in America? What constitutes membership in an ethnic group? How have concepts of, policies toward, and treatment of ethnic groups changed over time? How do authors explore, express, extend and resist notions of ethnicity and race in literary, scholarly, and documentary works? How can considering these works help us understand better America’s past, present, and future?
ETHNIC STUDIES FALL 2014

ETHN 2001
Instructor: Gera Miles
Global Classroom
milesg@ecu.edu

ETHN 3501
Instructor: Dr. Su-ching Huang
T TH 9:30am-10:45am
Bate 1025
huangsu@ecu.edu

Introduction to Ethnic Studies: Global Classroom

The main objective of this course is to introduce students to Ethnic Studies and the interdisciplinary questions it poses about the way that race, ethnicity and racism structure our world across a range of time and places. Our course spans and reflects a range of themes and topics, including the historical formation of racial categories, issues of power and privilege, the connection between race, class, gender and sexuality, racial colorblindness, immigration and imperialism, race and education and popular culture and representation. This is a Global Classroom course and we will be connecting by video with students around the world, in real time, to examine and discuss these ideas on a weekly basis.

Special Topic in Ethnic Studies: Ethnic Representations on Film

This course explores the assimilation or unassimilability of various ethnic groups in the US through both independent and Hollywood cinema. We will compare Hollywood representation of various ethnic groups (such as African American, Native American, Asian American, Latino/as, Arab Americans, etc.) with works by filmmakers from these ethnic backgrounds and consider how the “ethnic” filmmakers challenge or revise those ethnic images with their own. By reexamining the definitions of “ethnic” and “American,” we will explore the tensions between the two and consider how such categories have changed over time.

Textbooks
Hazel Markus and Paula Moya

Textbook
(On Reserve at Joyner Library)
America on Film: Representing Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality at the Movies. 2nd ed.

Articles downloadable from Blackboard.

Selected Films