Fall 2017 American Studies and Ethnicity Course Offerings

*Courses with an asterisk require pre-approval to count towards your major requirements. Always refer to the course catalogue to find out how these courses count towards your major. Please see Eric Greer, your academic advisor, before registering for one of these courses. He can be reached at ericgree@usc.edu, at his office at GFS 315, or by phone at (213)740-2534.

AMST 101gmw Race and Class in Los Angeles
Los Angeles has always had an underbelly that belies this hope of inclusive opportunity and shared prosperity: the chance of reinvention has always been accompanied by sharp residential segregation, significant economic deprivation, and an uneasy relationship with the natural setting that attracted so many in the first place. Contradictions seem to abound: celebrated for its cultural openness and it multiethnic fusion of identities, it is also known as a place that both perfected a modernized form of residential segregation and experienced two major waves of civil unrest (the Watts riots of 1965 and Los Angeles uprising of 1992). Considered the capital of working poverty in the United States, it is also host to a revitalized labor movement. And while L.A. has been the epicenter of immigration to the United States – in the 1980s, it was receiving one quarter of the nation’s immigrants – it has also been a focal point for anti-immigrant sentiment and action. (MWF 11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m. Prof Juan De Lara)

AMST 111g Sex in America
This class will ask you to read a set of novels, essays and social science studies in order to think deeply about the place of sex in American life since the nineteenth century. From slave narratives to lynching photographs, from coming out stories to films where sexuality appears only as a coded set of interactions, and from memoirs to high theoretical meditations on the history of sexuality, our archive will show us just how much we talk, think and write about sex – about wanting it, not wanting it, having it, avoiding, punishing those who do have it, pathologizing those who don’t and policing bodies that seem predatory or dangerous. We will think about the history of sex panics, the medical production of sex as a field of pathologies, and ask about how and why sex and religion have become so intertwined in this country. By the end of this intense spring session, you should be able to explain why we care about whether NFL players are gay; why we expect female softball players to be lesbians; and why male politicians should not get caught soliciting sex from men in airports while running on an anti-gay platform. Questions about gay marriage, transgenderism and the history of heterosexuality will be answered as we go! (MW 2-3:20pm, Prof. Nayan Shah)

AMST 135mgw Peoples and Cultures of the Americas
This course offers an introduction to the people and cultures of the Americas; the social, historical, economic, and cultural formations that together make up the Latino/a American imaginary. This course starts with the U.S. Latino experience then works its way back to understand the origins of contemporary Latin America. Recent statistics show Latinos have become the largest minority group in the nation. We take a closer look into the societies of countries in the Americas and how their economic and historical past has shaped the course of the people of the Americas. (TTh 9:30-10:50am, Prof. Alicia Chavez)

AMST 200m Introduction to American Studies and Ethnicity
This course offers an interdisciplinary introduction to American and Ethnic Studies. A principal goal is to help students understand how people in the United States live in and think about their country as well as how the world views them. The central themes and topics addressed will include identity formation, immigration, imprisonment, militarism, cultural production, religion, sexuality, and political change. This course will encourage students to formulate connections between these issues by placing them in their broad historical and cultural contexts. We will consider a variety of types of evidence such as novels, photographs, films, the built environment, and material culture to show that we can and need to analyze everything in the world around us. (TTH 12:30-1:50pm Prof. Alicia Chavez)

AMST 274gmw Exploring Ethnicity Through Film
What is ethnicity? How is ethnicity shaped, or how does one “become” ethnic? What is at stake in claims and visual representations about ethnicity? What politics surround ethnic representations and performances? How is ethnicity actualized and/or performed? Can there be an “authentic” ethnicity? How are such complexities reflected and/or constructed in film? How did the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite and other movements call attention to the lack of diversity and recognition in the film industry? (TTh 11:00-12:20pm Prof. Chris Finley)
AMST 285gm  African American Popular Culture
Examines history of popular cultural forms such as literature, music, dance, theater, and visual arts produced by and about African Americans. (TTh 12:30-1:50PM Prof. Riley Snorton)

AMST 345  Law and American Indian Studies
Legal battles concerning American Indian communities involve complex and interdisciplinary issues of justice, social justice, economics, culture, ethnography, history, geography, governance, policy ... and most importantly – sovereignty. (MWF 10-10:50am, Prof. Deanna Rivera)

AMST 350  Junior Seminar in American Studies and Ethnicity: Theories and Methods
Advanced study in interdisciplinary theories and methods for analyzing race and ethnicity in the United States, including a comparative study of topics such as inequality, gender, and class. (T 2-4:50PM, Prof. Alicia Chavez)

AMST 392  Undergraduate Research Methods
Examines processes of scholarly research; quantitative and qualitative research methods; faculty mentorship; experiential learning; research proposal writing; careers in research. Sophomore or junior standing in the major. Departmental approval. Graded CR/NC. (TTh 11:10-12:20pm, Prof. TBD)

AMST 449m  Asian American Literature
Survey of Asian American literature from the earliest time to the present; development of prose, poetry, and novel. (W 4:30-6:50pm Prof. Viet TBD)

AMST 490x  Directed Research
Individual research and readings. Not available for graduate credit.

AMST 492  Research Methods in American Studies and Ethnicity
Develop the research proposal and methods for completing a senior honors thesis; for students in one of the four American Studies and Ethnicity honors programs. (M 2-4:50pm, Prof. Juan De Lara)

AMST 498  Senior Seminar in American Studies and Ethnicity
Capstone course for majors, highlighting interdisciplinary study of race and ethnicity in a comparative context. (T 2-4:50PM Prof. David Roman)

Other Courses of Interest

AHIS 250  Modernity and Difference: Critical Approaches to Modern Art
Consideration of various categories of “The Modern” as they have been constructed in Western art of the late 19th and 20th centuries. (MW 10:00-11:50AM Prof. Samantha Burton)

AHIS 465  Studies in American Art
In-depth exploration of a specified topic in the history of American art. (W 2-4:50pm, Prof. John Blakinger)

*ANTH 205g  Introduction to Global Studies and Overseas Research
Cultural differences and social processes examined in global and regional networks. Issues are studied ethnographically, using materials from several disciplines. (TTh 11:12-12:20pm, Prof. Tok Thompson)

ANTH 263g  Exploring Culture through Film
Concepts of social anthropology using filmic representations of societies throughout the world in contrast to written ethnography. (TTh 8-9:20 AM)

*ANTH 316mhp  North American Indians in American Public Life
This course focuses on a historical overview of the relations between Native and non-Native peoples and governments in North America. (TTh 3:30-4:50pm, Prof. Tok Thompson)

*ANTH 372  Interpretation of Myth and Narrative
This course focuses on non-Western mythology. (TTh 2-3:20pm, Prof. Tok Thompson)

*ART 141Lg  Creating and Understanding Visuals
Today, the ability to communicate visually and to understand the importance and impact of visual images in multiple contexts is a core competency. Visual culture is nested within increasingly complex social, technological and economic systems, and emanates from people who vary in their cultural behaviors and experiences. These trends point to a growing need for visual solutions that work in a global environment. This class is designed to give students from all disciplines the benefit of acquiring or enhancing the skills and techniques necessary to master visual language, and to deepen their understanding of the power of images. For inspiration we will look at the history of visual art, advertising, video games and commercials as well as sci-fi, fantasy and horror films for inspiration! (MW 11-12:50pm, Prof. Edgar Arceneaux)
COMM 206  Communication and Culture
Examines cultural institutions, ideologies, artifacts, and productions; role of culture in everyday life; cultural studies as methodology; culture and power. (TTh 12:30-1:50PM Prof. Alison Trope)

COMM 310  Media and Society
Interplay between media and society, including family and children’s socialization, inter-group relations and community, pornography and violence, gender and race, media ethics, conduct of politics. (T 6:30-9:20PM Prof. Robert Scheer)

COMM 312  The Business and Culture of Celebrity
Employs the concept of “celebrity” as an optic through which to view and assess some of the key aspects of the communication revolution. (TTh 12:30-1:50PM Prof Christopher Smith)

COMM 384  Interpreting Popular Culture
Popular culture as an indicator of cultural values, a producer and reflection of cultural meaning, and a means of communication; theory and case studies. (MW 9:30AM-10:50AM Prof. Evan Brody)

COMM 458m  Race and Ethnicity in Entertainment and the Arts
Examines how race and ethnicity as social categories are shaped by communication media; focuses on how race and ethnicity sustain entertainment and media industries. Prerequisite: COMM 206. (MW 10:00-11:50AM, Prof. Taj Frazier)

CTCS 412  Gender, Sexuality and Media
Examines how gender and sexuality are figured in cinema and television with an emphasis on the development of feminist media theory. (T 2:5-5:50PM Prof. Kara Keeling)

DANC 212g  Dance in Popular Culture
Examination of the role of dance in popular culture in a studio setting. Practical studies in styles and their evolution in recreational and professional settings. (TTh 4-5:40 Prof. Jodie Gates)

DANC 302g  Hip Hop Don’t Stop: Exploring Black Vernacular Dance
Introduction to the history and practice of Urban Folk Dance including hip hop, freestyle, street dance and the relevant social dances of the 20th century. (TTh 2-3:40PM Prof. E Moncell Durden)

ENGL 263  American Literature
Intensive reading of representative writers. (Prof. David Roman, TTH 9:30-10:50am OR Prof. Kerry Ingram, MWF 11-11:50am OR Prof. Rick Berg, MWF 12:00-12:50pm)

ENGL 375  Science Fiction
Investigation of the scope and possibilities of British and American science fiction as a genre, with some attention to its historical development. (MW 11-11:50 AM)

ENGL 442  American Literature, 1920 to Present
American poetry, fiction, and drama since World War I with special attention to Eliot, Frost, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, O’Neill, Stevens, Faulkner, and Nabokov. (TTh 11-12:20pm, Prof. Alice Gambrell)

*CTCS 393  Postwar Hollywood, 1946–1975
Cinematic and extra-cinematic determinants of Post-Classical and Modernist Hollywood studio and independent genres, styles, and the star-phenomenon and their relationship to American history and culture. (T 6-10p.m Prof Drew Casper) COUNTS TOWARDS THE APC MINOR.

CTCS 403  Studies in National and Regional Media
Detailed investigation of traditions, achievements, and trends of film and/or electronic media in a particular country or region. (F 10-1:50PM Prof. Priya Jaikumar)

CTCS 411  Film, Television and Cultural Studies
Detailed examination of film/television from the perspectives and insights of Cultural Studies; focus on the production and reception of cultural texts, practices, and communities. (TTh 9-12:50pm, Prof. William Whittington)

*GESM 111g  Seminar in the Arts: Asian & Asian American Culture in Stage & Film
Focusing on 1-2 Asian or Asian American ethnicities each term, the course explores representations of culture in plays for the stage and in films/new media. (TTh 12:30-1:50pm, Prof Velina Houston)

JOUR 466  People of Color and the News Media
Reporting and portrayal of people of color in the United States; impact of racial diversity on media, employment and access, and development of media for individuals and communities of color. Open to non-majors. (M 9-12:20pm Prof. Laura Castaneda)
MUSC 422  The Beatles: Their Music and Their Times
Music, lyrics, recordings, production techniques, career strategy, social ramifications, and especially the technological impact of the musical group known as The Beatles. (MW 4-5:50PM Prof. Bill Biersach) COUNTS TOWARDS THE APC MINOR.

PSYC 462m  Culture and Mental Health
The influence of culture, ethnicity, race and gender on human behavior. Mental health issues relevant to ethnic minorities in the U.S. Recommended preparation: sophomore standing or higher; PSYC 100. (TTH 10-11:50A.M Prof. Steven Lopez)

*POSC 130g  Law, Politics and Public Policy
Interaction between law and politics; overview of the American legal system; value conflicts and public policy questions which arise within it. (TTh 9:30-10:50am, Prof. Alison Renteln)

*POSC 444  Civil and Political Rights and Liberties
An examination of debates and controversies surrounding the nature and scope of civil rights and civil liberties. (T2-4:50pm, Prof. Alison Renteln)

SOCI 342m  Race Relations
The basic objective of the course is to understand: 1) the social, political and historical conditions under which segregation, racial/ethnic hierarchies and racial/ethnic conflict emerge, and 2) the institutions through which racial/ethnic boundaries and hierarchies are produced and reproduced in the United States. (TTh 3:90-10:50AM Prof. Elaine Bell Kapalan)

SPAN 413m  Social and Geographic Varieties of Spanish
Historical, social, and cultural elements represented in the dialectal diversity of the Spanish language; fieldwork in bilingual communities in the United States. Majors prepare assignments in Spanish, non-majors in English. Conducted in Spanish and English. (TTH 2-3:20pm, Prof. Marianna Chodorowska-Pilch)

THTR 295  Theater in Los Angeles
Current state of American theatre, through a study of acting, playwriting, criticism, stage design, lighting, and dramatic styles. (M 2-3:50PM, Prof. Frank Catalano)