FALL 2020 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 Dominique Hall-Carr, your academic advisor, before registering for one of these courses. She can be reached at hallcarr@usc.edu, at her office at KAP 357, or by phone at (213) 740-3663. To make an appointment, go to http://bit.ly/USChallcar

AMST 101gmw Race and Class in Los Angeles
The purpose of this course is to examine L.A.’s diverse population, not as isolated, discrete groups but in relation to one another. The city and its environs serves as our laboratory for understanding class, race, gender, political economy, and most importantly, power. We will examine, among other things, how the hierarchies of race and class are produced and reproduced, how gender, ethnicity, nationality, and citizenship shape people’s experience, and how aggrieved communities fight back.

AMST 150gw The American War in Viet Nam
The Viet Nam War remains as the most controversial and divisive war for Americans in the 20th century. The war is still invoked in debates over American wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This course provides an introduction to the war’s history in order for today’s Americans to understand some of the key factors leading the US into its current geopolitical situation. The course is a multidisciplinary, multicultural and international overview of the war’s history and its afterlife in American and Southeast Asian memory. Student reading will draw primarily from films, literature, art, journalism, historical writing, and political discourse, while lectures will provide necessary historical and political background. The course corrects some fundamental flaws in the American pedagogy and scholarship on the war, beginning with how the name indicates that the war was fought only in Viet Nam. The war was also fought in Cambodia and Laos, and the course examines the war’s impact on those countries and their peoples. Americans have also seen the war purely from the perspective of American self-interest and ethnocentrism. In contrast, this course stresses the diversity of American experiences, the importance of Southeast Asian points of view, and the existence of international actors in the war who were neither American nor Vietnamese.

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.

AMST 201g LGBTQ America
Examines how U.S. sexual identity and experience are represented in the 20th and 21st century and introduces the interdisciplinary field of LGBTQ Studies.

AMST 205g Introduction to American Popular Culture
This course is a survey of popular culture, designed to introduce students to the broad range of popular cultural productions such as film, television shows, literature, music, social media, emerging technologies, and food. We will explore the roles of popular culture in our life, and think about what popular culture tells us about our contemporary moment, as well as its connections to the past and the future. Who determines what is popular, and why? What are the intersections of popular culture with race and ethnicity, as well as gender and sexuality? In what ways does popular culture engage with social issues? How does global media and digital technologies impact the ways that popular is produced, accessed, consumed, and circulated? These are some of the questions that we will discuss and think about together in relation to an array of popular culture examples from a global and transnational perspective.

AMST 220gmw The Making of Asian America
Historical, social, and cultural analysis of (East, South, and Southeast) Asians in the United States. Themes examined:
immigration, race and gender relations, ethnic culture, community and identity.

**AMST 252gmw Black Social Movements in U.S**
This course examines black social movements for freedom, justice, equality, and self-determination. Beginning with Reconstruction, movements include labor, civil rights, radical feminism, socialism, reparations, Black Nationalism, prisoners’ rights, and Hip Hop.

**AMST 274mgw Explore the complexities of race and ethnicity in America 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?

**AMST 301gp America, the Frontier, and the New West**
This combination of a Humanistic Inquiry GE course and an ASE elective draws upon a wide range of primary materials in history, politics, literature—and some music and movies—to study the rich mix of voices, cultures, and traditions from the region that is our home or where we live and study: the West, California, Los Angeles, USC. A key concern of the course will be to view America, the frontier, and the new West as scenes of collisions of people or as crossroads and intersections where people from different countries, religions, ethnicities have both crashed and merged together. We will emphasize both the frictions resulting from such collisions (e.g., war, ethnic cleansing, riots) and the fusions (e.g., jazz music, the Civil Rights movement, the teriyaki burrito).

**AMST 320 Black Music and the Political Imagination**
This course looks at American political history through the lens of race relations. The course begins by looking at the importance of law/public policy and its relationship to social constructions of race (and “whiteness”) and citizenship. It then turns to look at the historical experiences of different racial/ethnic groups in order to understand the evolution of what it has meant to be an American “citizen” throughout US history, and how that process is related to changing understandings of the “meanings” of different “races.” The goal of this course is to have you spend some time thinking about what it means to be an “American,” what legal, political and social rights should accompany that definition, and what it will mean politically in the United States in the future.

**AMST 332m Post-Civil Rights Black America**
Analyzes the political, economic, and cultural experiences of the post-1965 period through an interrogation of contemporary conditions, movements, and responses to power in Black America.

**AMST 337m Islam in Black America: From Slavery to Hip Hop**
Exploration of the rise of Islam in Black America, and the relationship of Black American Muslims to more recent Muslim immigrants using historical and sociopolitical frameworks.

**AMST 340 Latino/a LA**
We will learn about the history of Latinx Los Angeles in order to learn about the larger politics of urban formation and transformation and how race and immigration has been central to this story. We will study trends, policies, and movements including Americanization programs, deportation policies, the rise of institutions, such as public health, and how they effect Latinx communities, as well as social movements and resistance. Secondly, we learn how to construct historical narratives through the use of primary sources, such as newspapers, but also cultural productions in the forms of art and music and archival footage.

(MW 3:30-4:50 Prof. Alicia Chavez)

**AMST 342m Law and Identities**
Examines the complex and contested interaction between the law and racial, gender, religious, ethnic, and sexual identities using historical and contemporary cases.

**AMST 345 Law and American Indian Studies**
Examines indigenous sovereignties and the historical and contemporary legal histories and cases which inform them.

**AMST 350 Junior Seminar in American Studies and Ethnicity: Theories and Methods**
AMST 350 (no prerequisites are required!) will explore narratives of freedom and abolition within the context of settler colonialism, white supremacy, the prison industrial complex, education, and heteropatriarchy. This course uses film, history, immigration law, LA museums, art, music, memoirs, political movements, women of color feminisms, and queer theory to address historical inequalities and how oppressed communities have struggled for freedom, humanity, representation, and justice. We will attempt to answer these questions: How and where can we imagine freedom in this historical moment? What work do we need to do together to make this a reality for all peoples? (T 2:00-4:50pm Prof. Dana
**Johnson**

**AMST 353m Race and Racism in the Americas**  
Examination of selected topics in the historical development of racism with the goal of understanding the complex ways in which race has functioned in the modern world.

**AMST 357m Latino Social Movements**  
This course examines the long histories of Latinx social movements that have advocated and fought for equality, justice and inclusion. We will analyze how everyday people in the past and present have expanded the notions of dignity, the definition of citizenship, and the concept of belonging. We will place particular emphasis in the near-present and contemporary activism engaged in fighting for immigrant rights, transnational workers rights, queer activism, and current liberation movements.

**AMST 378 Introduction to Asian American History**  
Comparative examination of the social, economic, and political experiences of Asian immigrants and their descendants in the U.S., 1840s–present.

**AMST 389m Carceral Geographies**  
Why are there so many people incarcerated in the United States and why are young people across the US calling for an end to police violence, some even for the abolition of policing? Is mass incarceration an inevitable product of slavery and Jim Crow? Why has prison expansion and law and order been a rallying cry make America safe (again) precisely at moments when violent crime rates were going down? This course is designed to explore and explain the role of surveillance, criminalization, policing to historical and contemporary US and across the globe.

**AMST 392 Undergraduate Research Methods**  
Examination of 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.

**AMST 490x Directed Research**

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**Other Courses of Interest**

**AHIS 255 Culture Wars: Art and Social Conflict in the Modern World**  
Examination of social conflicts and political controversies in American culture through the lens of visual art and photography.

**AHIS 270 L.A. Now: Contemporary Art in Los Angeles**  
Explores the production, display and critical reception of contemporary art, taking Los Angeles as its laboratory.

**ANTH 445 African American Anthropology**  
An examination of anthropological research on race and African American culture, from the 18th century to the present.

**COLT 365 Literature and Popular Culture**  
Study of mass-reproduced verbal and visual art forms, such as graphic novels, comics, animation, popular music, video, graffiti, advertising.

**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.

**COMM 366 Designing Media and Communication Projects for Social Change**  
Students explore the theoretical and practical issues involved in designing effective media and communication projects for social change in international contexts.

**COMM 371 Censorship and the Law: From the Press to Cyberspace**  
The study of current and historical battles over the limits of free expression from press and public parks to television, movies, music and cyberspace.

**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.

**COMM 458 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.

**COMM 465m Gender in Media Industries and Products**  
Examination of the effect of gender stratification in media.
industries upon the cultural products they create, especially gender and gender/race role portrayals.

CTCS 393 Postwar Hollywood, 1946-1962
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.

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.

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.

CTCS 478 Culture, Technology and Communications
Cultural study of communications technology and its relationship to society. Evaluation of the social and cultural impact of technologies from the telegraph to the Internet.

DANC 212g Dance in Popular Culture
Examination of the role of dance in popular culture in a classroom setting. Studies of dance styles and their evolution in recreational and professional contexts through research, observation, and practice.

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.

ENGL 263g American Literature
Intensive reading of representative writers.
TTh 9:30 am – 10:50 am

ENGL 371 Literary Genres and Film
Literary studies in the relationship between fiction and drama and their adaptation as films.
TTh 11:00 am – 12:20 pm

ENGL 392 Visual and Popular Culture
Course in the theory and practices of 'popular culture,' highlighting modern and contemporary culture, film, video and popular music, as well as narrative forms.
TTh 11:00 am – 12:20 pm

ENGL 442 American Literature, 1920 to the 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 11:00 am – 12:20 pm

GESM 120g Seminar in Humanistic Inquiry
Interpretation and analysis of works of the imagination, exploring language, thought, and cultural traditions in relation to one another.

GESM 130g Seminar in Social Analysis
Individual and collective human action as it shapes and is shaped by economic organizations, political institutions, and broad social and cultural settings.

HIST 100 The American Experience
Patterns of American development from Colonial times to the present.
TTh 9:30 am – 10:50 am

HIST 457 The American West
The nation's westward movement from Colonial times to the present, with emphasis on the frontier's effect on American life and institutions.
T 3:30 pm – 6:20 pm

MUSC 320gmw Hip-hop Music and Culture
A history of hip-hop music from its inception to the present: its musical processes and styles, as well as attendant social, political and cultural issues.
TTh 2:00 pm - 3:50 pm

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 4:00 pm – 5:50 pm
MUSC 460 Film Music: History and Function from 1930 to the Present
A survey of the art and craft of film music as practiced by outstanding composers in motion pictures.