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ANTH/AMST 180 - American Life and Culture

Spring 2010

5 Credits

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By appointment only

Description of American Life and Culture course

This course provides an introduction to a cultural understanding of contemporary American society. We discuss major theoretical and conceptual principles and perspectives of present-day cultural anthropology and cultural studies, and the way they could be applied to study the life-ways of various American communities. We explore how the perspectives and methods offered by anthropology, so useful for understanding others, can assist us to understand the United States.

Learning Outcomes:

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Identify the various components of the culture concept and how this concept applies to Americans.
- Analyze contemporary anthropological views on ethnicity and nationalism, economic power and politics, and social characteristics (e.g., family, gender, etc.), as these views pertain to American culture and history.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the complex history of multicultural America, with an emphasis on immigration and inequality.
- Appreciate insights about American culture from a foreign perspective of the USA.
- Situate American culture and society in the context of a globalized world and with respect to major global issues.

How weekly learning modules are organized:

Each week you will see a Learning Module and a pushpin symbol. The Learning Module contains the weekly lecture notes and discussion points. The pushpin symbol gives you a link to the discussion area where you will post your discussion points. Some weeks there will also be web links in the Learning Module, which will take you to some sites where you can learn more about the weekly topics.

Text books required:

Boulanger, Claire L., editor, 2008. *Reflecting on America. Anthropological Views of U.S. Culture.* Pearson Publishing

DeVita, Philip R., editor, 2002. *Distant Mirrors. America as a Foreign Culture.* Wadsworth Thomson Learning.

Parillo, Vincent, 2008. *Understanding Race and Ethnic Relations.* Pearson Publishers.

Order the text books before the course begins.

Course binder: This is useful to organize all the course material: syllabus, calendar and weekly assignments.

Software: Please make sure your software is compatible with VISTA by performing the browser check on the opening page.

Discussions

Students will be given four discussion points each week, similar to short essay answers or definitions for key terms. These are 3 points from the readings and sometimes 1 point which each student will find themselves from an online

newspaper article (this will be explained more completely in Week 1). By Thursday of each week students will need to post their 4 points in the Discussion area. Then by the end of the week, Sunday, they will need to post 5 (in total) responses to other student's discussions. Discussion is very important in an online course and it is an excellent tool for students to help each other and show what they have understood from the readings. Students will be expected to be courteous to each other at all times. Discussion is not graded for content but for participation so please contribute since it raises your overall grade.

Quizzes

There will be two quizzes, in Week 3 and Week 9, based on the weekly readings and discussions. The quiz will consist of 15 key term definitions from the Understanding Race and Ethnic Relations text (Parrillo, 2008) and two short essay questions taken from weekly discussions.

Midterm and Final Exam

The Midterm will consist of multiple choice questions and short essay questions from the discussions from Weeks 1 through 5. The Presentation will be due by the end of Week 11, which will be an examination taken from American popular culture. The Final Exam will be a combination of multiple choice and discussion points from the last 5 weeks (Weeks 6 through 11).

GRADES

Discussions	25 points 9 out of 10 ten = 225 Points total
Quizzes	2 at 80 Points 160 Points each
Midterm	265 Points
Presentation	75 Points
Final Exam	275 Points

Total Points = 1000

Discussion

A	4.0	92 - 100 %	920 to 1000 points
A-	3.7	91- 90 %	919to 900 points
B +	3.3	88-89%	880 to 899points
B	3.0	82 - 87 %	820 - 819 points
B-	2.7	80 - 81 %	800- 819 points
C+	2.3	78 - 79 %	780 - 799 points
C	2.0	72 - 77 %	720 -779 points
C-	1.7	70 - 71 %	700 - 719 points
D+	1.3	68 - 69%	680 -699 points
D	1.0	50 - 67%	500 - 679 points
F	0	<50%	0-499 points
W		Withdrawal	H
HW		Hardship Withdrawal	HW

Course Calendar

Week Reading Due

1 April 5 to 11	Readings: Boulanger Introduction and Chapter 1 DeVita Chapter 1 Parillo Chapter 1	Student bio Questionnaire Course Information Week 1 discussion answers
2 April 12 to 18	Boulanger Chapters 2 & 3	Week 2 discussion answers

	DeVita Chapter 2 Parrillo Chapter 2	
3 April 19 to 25	Boulanger Chapter 3 DeVita Chapters 13 & 17 Parrillo Chapter 3	Week 3 discussion answers due by April 25 at 11:59 PM
4 April 26 to May 2	Boulanger Chapter 12 DeVita Chapter 5 Parrillo Chapter 4	Week 4 discussion answers due by May 2 11:59 PM Quiz 1 opens April and closes May 3rd.
5 May 3 to 9	Boulanger Chapter 14 DeVita Chapter 6, 7 & 15	Week 6 discussion answers due by May 9 at 11:59 PM
6 May 10 to 16	Boulanger Chapters 7 & 8 DeVita Chapter 8 Parrillo Chapters 6 & 7	Week 6 discussion points due May 16 at 11:59 PM MIDTERM opens May 13 and closes May 17 at 11:59 PM
7 May 17 to 23	Boulanger Chapters 5 & 10 DeVita Chapters 11 & 18 Parrillo Chapter 7	Week 7 discussion answers due by May 23 at 11:59 PM Withdrawal deadline
8 May 24	Boulanger Chapters 15 & 16	Week 8 discussion answers due May 30 at 11:59 PM

to 30	DeVita Chapters 8 & 15	
9 May 31 to June 6	Boulanger Chapters 15 & 16 DeVita Chapters 7 & 12	Week 9 discussion answers due by June 6 at 11:59 PM Quiz 2 Opens June 5 and closes June 7 at 11:59 PM
10 June 7 to 13	Boulanger Chapter 18 DeVita Chapter 19	Week 10 discussion answers due by June 13 at 11:59 PM
11 June 14 to 18	Presentation of fieldwork Final Exam	Due by June 14 Final closes June 18 at 11:59 PM

This is an outline of the course calendar, please go to the course calendar in course information for more details.

American Life and Culture General Education requirements

A901 - Z999

GenEd Area	Rating	Comment
Critical Thinking, Creativity, and Problem Solving	2	Students are introduced to a wide range of information (lectures as well as books and articles) on American culture and required to engage in critical discussion of diverse views with the goal of interpreting, evaluating, and responding to the argumentation. They are asked to look for thesis and support. On essay exams, students are asked to answer questions that require them to demonstrate their ability to offer unbiased, logical, and empirically based answers.

Quantitative and Logical	0	
Research/Information Literacy	1	Students are expected to read scholarly material that summarizes research findings and demonstrates proper documentation and citation of sources. In posted discussions and in exams, students are evaluated for their ability to apply what they have learned through clear summaries, paraphrasing and quotations including citation.
Reading	2	The course stresses, and refines reading skills. Through the reading of a range of social scientific writing and novels, students are encouraged to develop their skills at close critical reading and the identification of central themes, arguments and support, and rhetorical styles. Evaluation of contributions to written discussions and exam questions is partly for demonstration of these abilities.
Writing	1	In this online course, all I have from students is their writing. Students are expected to contribute numerous postings to discussion forums and the exams are all of the essay type. Student writing is evaluated on the basis of its demonstration of understanding of what they have learned. This means clear, concise, grammatical, and well organized and supported writing.
Listening and Speaking	0	
Visual	0	
Computer Literacy	1	As this is an online course, students must learn to use WebCT, a word processor,

and web browser and search engines. They are also expected to distinguish among web sites in terms of legitimacy of information. It would be difficult to imagine success in the course unless such computer skills were mastered.

Self Assessment/ Lifelong Learning	1	
Group Processes	1	
Ethics	2	As this course concerns American culture, the issue of citizenship and its responsibilities is a theme, as is the factors that contribute to the well being of community. Much time is spent identifying social issues and examining the pros and cons of diverse values and worldviews. Dialogue in forums is partly evaluated in terms of students' ability to represent diverse value orientations and articulate their own positions.
Global Citizenship	0	
Historical and Intellectual Perspectives	3	The course is set up--through lectures and texts--to present information on American cultural history, the dynamics of culture change, and the significance of major thinkers and intellectual traditions. Students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of this knowledge in posted discussions and exams.
Aesthetic Awareness	0	
Cultural Diversity	3	The course focuses on American cultural and ethnic diversity and reading and lectures highlight the history of discrimination, stereotypes, and political-

economic conflicts related to class, race, and gender. On exams and in discussions students are evaluated partly on their ability to demonstrate their knowledge of the multicultural history of the country and their appreciation of its rich diversity.

The Nature of Science	0
Science & the Natural World	0
Technology and Society	1

ONLINE PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCE DIVISION

Revised Spring 2009

Bellevue Community College's Affirmation of Inclusion

Bellevue Community College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination. We value our different backgrounds at BCC, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.

The college's "Affirmation of Inclusion" is in line with the principle of free speech in a free society: we have the right to express unpopular ideas as long as we don't show disrespect for reasonable people who might believe otherwise. In an online course, you will be expressing ideas through the medium of the course site rather than face to face in the classroom. In that case, these expectations refer to the courtesy with which you communicate with one another through e-mails and e-discussions. Part of this respect involves professional behavior towards the instructor, colleagues, and the class itself.

Cheating, Stealing, and Plagiarizing* and Inappropriate Behavior

Cheating, stealing and plagiarizing (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source) and inappropriate/disruptive behavior are

violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue Community College. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to: plagiarizing material from the Internet and posting rude or personal attacks in discussions. When you are in doubt about any behavior, please consult your instructor. In addition, you may wish to review the general applicable rules of cyberspace, such as in the Core Rules of Netiquette. The instructor reserves the right to remove posted messages, and downgrade assessments as a result of these types of behaviors. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Vice President of Student Services for possible probation or suspension from Bellevue Community College. Specific student rights, responsibilities and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct, available in the office of the Vice President of Student Services, [link to Student Code](#).

Incomplete

If a student fails to complete all the required work for a course, an instructor may assign the grade of Incomplete (“I”). It is the student’s responsibility for maintaining contact and adhering to the agreed-upon actions. Vista class sites, and material, may not be directly accessible after the end of the quarter so it is important to make arrangements before the quarter ends. The student must complete the coursework by the end of the next quarter, or receive the assigned letter grade (usually an “F”). There is a standard form that instructors have access to in their instructor’s grade briefcase.

F Grade

Students who fail a course will receive a letter grade of "F."

Final Examination Schedule

Final examinations may involve proctored on-campus arranged exams or may be administrated completely online at the discretion of the instructor and in keeping with the stated policies provided in the course syllabus. Please refer to the syllabus at the start of the quarter for additional details and contact the instructor directly for any clarifications. A student who is not in compliance with the scheduled format may forfeit the right to make up the examination. If, for illness or some other circumstance beyond the student's control, the student is unable to be in compliance with any scheduled examination and has contacted the instructor on a timely basis, the student may be permitted to take such examination at a time designated by the instructor.

Withdrawal From Class

College policy states that students must formally withdraw from a class by the end of the seventh week of the quarter during the standard academic year (Registration Office, B125). If a student has not withdrawn by that date, an appropriate letter grade will be assigned for the course. Check Enrollment Calendar Deadlines, Refunds/Withdrawals, for additional details. As with most enrollment deadlines, it is the student's responsibility to be aware of these dates and act accordingly.

Hardship Withdrawal (HW)

From page 9 of the current course catalog, 2008-2009 online catalog, HW indicates a withdrawal request made because of extenuating circumstances after the official withdrawal period is over. The student must contact the instructor to request this withdrawal option, or the faculty member may initiate the contact. No points are calculated into the grade-point average. Students may also contact the Enrollment Services office BEFORE grades are assigned in cases of hardship.

Students Who Require Disability Accommodations:

Students with disabilities who have accommodation needs are encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Centre (DRC) link to DRC. The office is located in B132 (telephone 425.564.2498 or TTY 425.564.4110, email drc@bellevuecollege.edu). Students will need to establish their eligibility for accommodation. The DRC office will provide each eligible student with an accommodation letter or contact your online instructor directly by email. Students who require accommodation in a course should review the DRC accommodation letter with each instructor during the first week of the quarter.

Distribution of Grades

Students should access their grades through the BCC Web site. Any returned material should be accessed prior to the end of the quarter. After the end of the quarter, Vista class sites may not be accessible by students. Individual instructors may use non-Vista tools for recording and maintaining the students' progress. Questions about grades assigned should be initially directed to your instructor.

Submission and Returning of Papers, Assignments and Assessments:

Specific guidelines for taking exams and submitting assignments are published in the syllabus. Please contact instructor at the start of the quarter for any clarifications.

Technical Assistance

Vista-related or technical issues should be referred to Distance Education, link to Distance Education web resources. You may also email them at landerso@bellevuecollege.edu or call 425-564-2438 (1-877-641-2712). Vista tutorial help and basic instructions can be found at <http://bellevuecollege.edu/distance/studentguide/>

*If you are accused of cheating, stealing exams and/or plagiarism, there is a Bellevue Community College Student Discipline and Appeals Procedure (the right to due process) which you may pursue. Contact the office of Division Chair (D110), the Vice President of Student Services (B231A) or the Associated Student Body (C212) for information regarding the appeals process.