

International Studies 202

Cultural Encounters & Tensions Winter 2008

Instructor: M. Shiva, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: (by appointment)

The purpose of the course is to offer a “socio-cultural” approach to International Studies. Though drawing heavily from socio-cultural anthropology, the course is interdisciplinary and a wide range of material will be covered in lectures and readings.

This is one of a series of core courses for the International Studies program at Bellevue Community College. This course may be taken as part of the INTST sequence or by itself without any prerequisite.

This is a research-oriented, seminar-like, and interactive class.

Learning is approached as a collaborative and hands-on process.

Students are also encouraged to approach all readings, discussions, lectures, and audio-visual materials critically.

Class activities vary depending on the nature of the material with which we are studying, and will include short lectures, presentation of audio-visual materials, as well as discussion of readings, films, student assignment and papers.

Class communication, instruction and participation are carried out in the class as well as on the internet (via the class's homepage).

Class attendance and participation is required if you expect to do well for your final grade.

If you find that you are having problems with the course please do make an appointment and come and see me.

In addition to the class lectures, discussions, films and readings, the class will keep up with the current international developments, paying particular attention to “cultural encounters and tensions,” “the changing world political system,” and issues relating to “globalization,” “politics of culture,” “gender relations,” “ethnicity,” “nationalism,” and human rights.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To introduce a number of concepts, models, and strategies for learning about other cultures and inter-cultural relations.
2. To provide conceptual frameworks to comprehend the major global transformations of the last few hundred years--as a historical background to explicate present conditions.
3. To furnish a socio-cultural framework for the study of modern forms of collective identity based on ideologies of religion, ethnicity, and nationalism in the context of a globalizing world.
4. To provide an introduction to the field of gender studies, and to evaluate various roles of women in social, political and cultural process pertaining to collective identity formation, globalization and social change.
5. To demonstrate the complex nature of contemporary intercultural encounters, tensions, and peaceful coexistence through case studies.

READINGS:

All readings are accessed via the internet. I will post the readings on the class's website.

A major part of the information presented in the class is audio-visual in nature. Because of the comparative nature of anthropological and global studies method, we rely on films on various peoples and places to discuss various concepts, issues and perspectives to make sense of contemporary cultural differences and similarities, of cultural change, and of intercultural encounters and tensions around the world.

Grading -- Total of 100 points

Class Attendance and Participation: 15 points

Weekly Feedbacks: 15 points

Mid-Term Take-Home Exams: 20 points

Final Take-Home Exam: 20 points

Final Project: 30 points

Students choose the focus of their final project by the end of the second week of the quarter. Projects have to do with subjects and information from our readings, class discussions, class visual materials, and your own research and interest.

Minimum length – Five typed pages, including bibliography, but should show the progress of the research process and thinking behind it.

WEEKLY TOPICS

Week One – Culture

Recent approaches to the study of Culture; Cultural Diversity and Change; Cultural Relativism and Ethnocentrism; Culture and Power; Culture and Language; Culture and Gender; Culture and International Relations

Week Two – Globalization

The Historical Context of the Modern World; Origins of the Modern World; Modernity; The European Century and Colonialism; Social Change in the Twentieth Century; Culture, Globalization and Social Change

Week Three – Nations and Ethnic Groups

Ethnic Group and Nation; Ethnic Classification and Change; Social Organization of Cultural Distinctiveness; State, Civil Society and Cultural Groups; Hinton: Part One

Week Four – Gender

Gender and Social Change; Gender and Globalization; Gender, Religion, Ethnicity and Nationalism; Class, Gender and Ethnicity

Week Five – Human Rights

Human Rights, Culture and Globalization

Week Six – Violence and Non-Violence

Violence, Non-Violence, Globalization, and Communal Identities

Week Seven – Case Studies

Women, Globalization and the Nation-State in Islamic Societies

Week Eight – Case Studies

Ideologies of Self and Other

Week Nine – Case Studies

Case Studies of Genocide

Week Ten – Case Studies

Case Studies of Conflict Resolution and Transformation

Case Studies of Intercultural Communication and Peaceful Coexistence

Week Eleven – Review