Course Description

This course presents a working genealogy of Ethnic Studies by looking to analysis and scholarship that has helped shape the field and its central conversations. The first half of the course, “Foundations,” will pose several methodological and historical problems that help chart the condition from which Ethnic Studies emerged, ongoing and developing since its formation in the 1960s. The second half, “Departures,” explores some of the self-reflexive turns in the field, particularly around critical, cross-disciplinary methods, theory, and modes of analysis.

Participation (20%)

At its best, our class can be a space of intellectual interaction and dialogue, where think through our ongoing and transforming relationships to critical reading, writing, and teaching practices. This will require that you engage the weekly readings thoroughly and arrive prepared to discuss them in detail. You should also seek out ways to take intellectual, emotional, and political risks when developing and sharing your ideas, reading texts and participating in discussions with generosity and the well-being of each other in mind.

Précis (20%)

A précis is a brief summary of the essential points, statements, or arguments of a longer piece of writing. Writing a précis is also an invitation to read purposefully. The goal is to communicate the main thesis and the major points of a chosen article or book chapter in a succinct form, which will make it easier to synthesize and compare with other readings at a later time. A successful précis explains the argument, logic, methods/evidence, and significance of the original reading, but in a much shorter form. While the précis summarizes a book or longer reading, it should always be written in your own words. Aim to capture the most pertinent points and eliminating the inessential.

Each précis should address the following questions:

- What is/are the main argument(s)?
- What methods does the author use to make the argument?
- What evidence do they use to support it?
- What conversations or debates does the author engage or intervene in, and for what purpose?
- Why is the author’s argument/intervention important or relevant?

For weeks 2 and 3, please turn in a one-page double-spaced précis of one article of your choice (from the week’s assigned readings). I will provide comments. For weeks 4 and 5, please turn in two
one-page double-spaced précis of two articles of your choice (from the week’s assigned readings). You will pair up and comment on each other’s writing.

Responses (20%)
Writing response papers helps you to read and make connections and articulate larger ideas across texts. Response papers treat the week’s readings as a group and indicate what conversations can be traced between the assigned texts, and how these conversations disrupt, challenge, or extend formulations outlined in prior readings.

Each response paper should address the following questions:

- What are the central questions explored across the week’s readings, and what terms/concepts/frameworks are used to answer or address these questions?
- What is/are the central argument(s) of each text? What kinds of evidence are used to support those arguments, and why? How are the arguments in each of the week’s readings related to each other? How might we trace the relationship among the readings for the week? (Beyond each text’s subject matter, you might want to think about the commonalities and divergences in their theoretical frameworks, their methodological approach(es), their relationship to disciplinary conventions, or their collective relationship to readings and discussions from previous weeks.)
- What questions do the readings raise for you?

For weeks 6, 7, 8, and 9, craft an 800-word (3 page) response to the assigned readings. These critical commentaries will serve to organize seminar conversation and debate (see guidelines below). Please include at least two discussion questions that put the assigned texts—and, if appropriate, readings from prior weeks—into dialogue. I will grade your papers for weeks 6 & 7. You will pair up and grade each other’s papers for weeks 8 & 9.

Seminar Presentations (25%)
Each week two or three students will be responsible for leading our weekly meeting. Your seminar presentations are NOT individualized performances of expertise; thus, they are not solely (or even primarily) evaluated on your personal mastery of relevant knowledge. Rather, seminar presentations are collaborative intellectual exercises, both in and out of the classroom. Each week’s presentation should reflect a collective engagement by the presenters with each other, their classmates, and the full set of the assigned readings for the week.

Each week’s oral presentation and accompanying handout should start by addressing the same set of questions as your weekly response papers in such a way as to facilitate a thoughtful, group exploration of the author’s critical intellectual and political projects, their implications for the central questions and/or debates of the week specifically, and for the course in general. Your presentation grade will reflect the degree of critical thought, originality, rigor, and collaborative spirit demonstrated by (1) your oral presentation (2) your preparation of a handout for your peers that reflects and complements your oral presentation, and (3) your posing of a handful of questions that provoke engaged, productive dialogue among the class. Each of these components is given equal weight in your presentation grade.

Final Portfolio (15%)
You will be required to submit a portfolio of your work in the class, plus a 4 to 5-page review
of your cumulative work over the quarter, in which you highlight ongoing themes, key areas of interest, and topics for future exploration.

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**Policies, Procedures, and Resources**

The syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

**COVID-19 pandemic:** I invite you to communicate with me if you encounter difficulties with our class, especially to discuss alternatives related to coursework due to pandemic-related challenges. For UCSD campus resources, additional information is available at [https://returntolearn.ucsd.edu/info-for/students/index.html](https://returntolearn.ucsd.edu/info-for/students/index.html) and at [https://vcsa.ucsd.edu/news/covid-19/index.html](https://vcsa.ucsd.edu/news/covid-19/index.html).

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Office for Students with Disabilities ([https://osd.ucsd.edu/](https://osd.ucsd.edu/)) coordinates appropriate accommodations for eligible students. OSD is located in University Center 202 and can be reached by phone at 858-534-4382 and by email at osd@ucsd.edu. I am available to discuss academic accommodations that may be required for students with disabilities – please be in communication with me as early as possible in the quarter.

**Writing Support:** In addition to writing support from your TA(s) and myself, additional assistance may be available through the Writing and Critical Expression Hub ([https://writinghub.ucsd.edu/](https://writinghub.ucsd.edu/)) and the OASIS Language Arts Tutorial Program ([https://oasis.ucsd.edu/academic-services/lats-folder/index.html](https://oasis.ucsd.edu/academic-services/lats-folder/index.html)).

**Basic Needs:** Any student who has difficulty accessing sufficient food, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in this course, is encouraged to contact foodpantry@ucsd.edu and basicneeds@ucsd.edu. Additional information on food security, housing resources, and financial wellness can be found at [https://basicneeds.ucsd.edu/](https://basicneeds.ucsd.edu/).

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):** CAPS ([https://caps.ucsd.edu/](https://caps.ucsd.edu/)) provides services such as confidential counseling and consultations for psychiatric services and mental health programming.

**Undocumented Student Services:** The Undocumented Student Services Center ([https://uss.ucsd.edu/](https://uss.ucsd.edu/)) provides programs designed to help students overcome obstacles related to immigration status.

**Audio/Visual Recordings in UCSD Learning Spaces:**

No audio or visual recording is permitted without the **written approval** of the instructor and all others who may appear in the recording. Any recordings, should approval be granted, are for personal use for studying purposes only.
Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

Part 1: FOUNDATIONS

Week 1(Sept 28): Foundations of Ethnic Studies


Black Student Union. “Demands and Explanation.” The SF State College Strike Collection, San Francisco State University.


Week 2 (Oct 4): Hegemony and Racial Formation


Week 3 (Oct 11): Racial Capitalism & Settler Colonialism


Week 4 (Oct 18): At the Intersections and Crossroads


Week 5 (Oct 25): Multiculturalism and the Politics of Representation


Part 2: DEPARTURES

Week 6 (Nov 1): What’s the “Ethnic” in Ethnic Studies?


Week 7(Nov 8): Queering Ethnic Studies


**Week 8 (Nov 15): Race & Nation: Encounters in Ethnic, Indigenous, American Studies**


Christen Sasaki, TBD from *Pacific Confluence: Fighting over the Nation in Nineteenth-Century Hawai’i*. (class visit from our own Professor Sasaki).

**Week 9 (Nov 21): Globalizing Ethnic Studies: Borders, Diasporas, Transnational Excesses**


**Week 10 (Nov 29): Archiving Formations of the Future**
