



Multicultural Studies Syllabus

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Course Description

Multicultural Studies will analyze, as a central theme, the *issues* affecting both Americans and global citizens and will promote direct social action to address these issues in our private and public lives. This course will challenge students to be active citizens in their communities as well as active participants in the classroom. Students will also be empowered to move beyond the traditional methodology for instruction and assessment, positively affecting their own lives in the process. Its central purposes are to:

- **Expand knowledge** by exposing students to individuals, events and issues from many different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- **Create understanding** by drawing connections and highlighting relationships between individuals, events and issues.
- **Promoting social activism** by demonstrating how issues in American (and global) politics, economics and society can be addressed.

Unit Outline

1. Cultural Unity & Diversity
2. Identity & Community
3. Power & Authority
4. Peace, Non-Violence & Tolerance
5. Ethics, Justice & Rights
6. Class Division
7. Gender Equality & Sexual Identity
8. Racism
9. Social Activism

Attendance

Attendance is one of the highest priorities. It is the student's responsibility to see the teacher for any work missed. All work is due three days after one absence. If a student is out for multiple days, all work is due five days from their return. The school's attendance policy will also be strictly enforced (students must maintain 95% attendance for the semester). If a student misses 5 or more days, no credit for the course will be issued.

Sample Grading Policy

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|------------------------|-------------|
| Projects/Portfolio | 20% |
| Reflection Exams | 20% |
| Forum/Wiki Assignments | 20% |
| Seminar Discussions | 20% |
| Effort/Participation | 10% |
| Homework/Classwork | 10% |
| | 100% |

Frequently Asked Questions

On an average day, what will we do in class? I like to use many different methods of teaching and learning in my lessons. We will be using a lot of video, research articles and websites, pictures, music, poetry, art for resources and will be doing many projects and activities each week that focuses on different themes and topics. Some of the projects will be mock trials, role plays, debates and discussions. The class will also use online discussion forums and our own student-created wiki pages to explore topics. Finally, we will be joining an online email program that links students in classes together from over 100 countries around the world. You will be able to correspond through email with students, like you, from different countries and cultures.

What are we going to learn? The goal of the class, as stated earlier, is to build knowledge, understanding and action on issues of culture and diversity. I want to expose students to global cultures, have them think about how different issues and topics connect in the world today, and be able to act on what they've learned. So, in short, you're going to learn about different people and places, what they mean to you today, and how you can change the world in a positive way.

Is there homework? Yes, there will be homework, but nothing from texts. Most of the work in the course is exploratory. In other words, the answers to questions won't be right or wrong. They will simply help you explore more about yourself and the world. Some of the work will be online, but options will always exist for students who don't have online access at home.

Are there tests or quizzes? Yes, there are tests or quizzes in the course. They will be reflective, open-ended essays, not content specific, multiple-choice questions. There are major assignments and projects that count for your grade as well. Some of them are the 'Essential Questions' and 'RAFTS' assignments for each unit. This work will be explained in greater detail by the teacher in class and online.

Can I disagree with something taught in class? The point of the class is to expose you to new ideas, new people, and new cultures. It isn't to tell you what to think. On the other hand, many of the topics covered in this course will be controversial. The class examines injustice, inequality and racism in depth as well as non-violence, civil rights and social (and political) activism. There are bound to be different opinions and perspectives. In class discussions and online conversations it is essential to respect different points of view. A closed (or intolerant) mind and a Multicultural Studies course definitely do not mix.