

***LA&S 101 –Learning Community:
Multicultural Issues in American Society***

Time & Place: Wednesdays 3:00-3:50pm, Wescoe 4011

Instructor: Santos Núñez
Email: snunez@ku.edu Phone: 864-4350
Location: Multicultural Resource Center
Office hours – Wednesdays 4-5pm and by appointment

Discussion Leaders: Meredith Hauber mhauber@ku.edu

Readings: We will provide you with copies of handouts and other materials.

Course Objectives

This learning community will explore multicultural issues in American society through a study of cultural institutions in a historical context. Students will learn how various cultural groups are affected by oppression and other forms of discrimination. This class offers you the opportunity to study in-depth contemporary issues that our facing our country; by using a discussion-based curriculum, you will be ale to participate in a critical study of contemporary American Society.

Course Format

Our small class size and seminar format means that in addition to traditional lectures we are able to have small group and classroom activities, class discussions, and guest speakers, all of which will require your active participation.

Attendance

It is expected that you will attend every class and that you will arrive on time. If you must miss a class, please contact me ahead of time and let me know the reason. You are responsible for all information covered during your absence.

Grading System

93-100	A	80-82	B-	67-69	D+
90-92	A-	77-79	C+	63-66	D
87-89	B+	73-76	C	60-62	D-
83-86	B	70-72	C-	59 & Below	F

*****Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate this educational opportunity.*

Description of Assignments

Organization Experience

20 points

This assignment involves attending a general meeting of a cultural student organization such as: *Asian American Student Union, Black Student Union, First Nations Student Association, Vietnamese Students Association, Hispanic American Leadership Organization, Inspirational Gospel Voices, Queers and Allies, Hillel or AbleHawks*. You are expected to observe at least one hour of the meeting that you attended and write a one-page reaction paper on your experience.

My Autobiography

20 points

For this assignment you are to refer to Harro's Cycle of Socialization theory and create a descriptive autobiographical piece about YOU. The piece can be a drawing, painting, model, sculpture that incorporates some concrete examples that describe you. Take a reflective stance for this assignment and look back on your life; I encourage you to be creative with this.

Family Diversity Paper

20 points

For most of us, our views and ways of doing things have been influenced by our own experiences and also the people around us. For this assignment you will write a 2-3 page paper that discusses your family's diversity and the influence of that diversity upon you. Remember that 'diversity' can refer to differences in numerous areas, such as age, disability, race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, etc. In class we will talk about the cycle of socialization and components of personal diversity—this information will give you a starting point for your paper.

Final Project

40 points

This project will help you to understand some controversial issues in our society regarding race/class/gender/ sexuality. You will choose one question from below and do some in depth research on the topic, use other sources not just what is listed. Your paper should be 4-6 pages, typed and double spaced, use the readings from class as well as one outside source. Please cite your sources and include a works cited page. You may use either APA style or MLA style to write your paper. I have included some sample questions to guide you but feel free to expand on your topic.

Topics:

1. Immigration - Review the documents required to be given a green card/American Citizenship; bring examples of these documents and write a paper detailing your opinion on this determines American citizenship.
2. Class - Research the resources available for low income families in the City of Lawrence, what benefits are available? What documents are required to receive aid to dependent families?
3. Homelessness - What is the City of Lawrence's policy on homelessness and panhandling? What resources are available to Lawrence's homeless, what are their policies?
4. Hate Crimes – What are policies for hate crimes at KU, City of Lawrence etc.? What is the definition of a hate crime based from a national and state point of view? How does the State of Kansas view hate crimes?

5. Race – Watch the entire video series “Race the Power of an Illusion. Write a synopsis of the concept of Race and how it was developed in the United States.
6. Gender – Watch TV for a week and note the differences in commercials geared for men and women. What are some examples of commercials geared for men, for women? What does this tell you about the social construction of gender?
7. Sexuality –review the movies “Brokeback Mountain” and “TransAmerica” and write an opinion paper regarding Hollywood’s interpretation of Gays, Lesbians, Bi-Sexuals and Transgendering individuals in movies. Do these movies accurately portray the life of these individuals? Are these movies an effective way of promoting education about homosexuality?

Extra Credit

10 points

In November the Multicultural Resource Center will sponsor the Colors of KU diversity retreat. If you apply and are accepted to this program you will receive 10 extra credit points added to your final grade. More details about this opportunity will be available later in the semester.

Class Policies

Deadlines

All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. It is your responsibility to make sure you turn in the assignment before the deadline. Computer problems or printing problems are not acceptable excuses. If you have questions or concerns, speak with me prior to the due date of the assignment.

Participation

This course is dependent on student interaction; therefore, you will be evaluated on your level of involvement. Participation involves showing up to class on time, having a willing attitude to learn, participating in discussions, and being respectful of others in the class. It is expected that you will also show proper respect to all guest speakers.

Paper Format

All assignments must be turned in *typed, double-spaced, using no larger than 12-point font (“Times” or “Times New Roman”)*. Margins are to be one inch on all sides, and the heading (your name and the assignment title) should be single-spaced. Assignments not typed will not be accepted. Papers more than one page long must be stapled or paper-clipped. If you do not have access to a computer in your residence hall, you may use the computer labs at the Multicultural Resource Center, Budig Hall, or the Kansas Union, 4th floor. All written assignments must be checked for any grammar or spelling mistakes; I expect all students to write at the college level. If you need assistance with your writing please visit the Writing Center in Wescoe.

Academic Misconduct

In the case of academic misconduct it is my policy to give a failing grade for the assignment/activity in question. If a student engages in academic misconduct a second time, he/she will receive an F for the course. Academic misconduct can include cheating, fabrication and falsification of content, plagiarism, or facilitating academic misconduct of other students. As you write your papers please cite sources appropriately.

Course Outline and Reading Assignments

Date	Topic	Assignments & Readings
Aug 23	Introduction	None
Aug 30	Cycle of Socialization	<i>Readings provided</i>
Sept 6	Social Construction of Race	<i>Readings provided</i>
Sept 13	Video-Race Power of an Illusion	Family Diversity paper
Sept 20	Social Construction of Gender	<i>Readings provided</i>
Sept 27	Guest speaker- Women's Resource Ctr.	
Oct 4	Social Construction of Class	<i>Readings provided</i>
Oct 11	In class review of projects	My Biography due
Oct 18	Social Construction of Sexuality	<i>Readings provided</i>
Oct 25	Guest speaker	<i>Readings provided</i>
Nov 1	Immigration	<i>Readings provided</i>
Nov 8	Hate Crimes	<i>Readings provided</i>
Nov 15	Homelessness	Organization Experience due
Nov 22	<i>No Class – Thanksgiving Break</i>	
Nov 29	Final project presentations	Final Project Due
Dec 6	Final project presentations	
Dec 13	What Now? Discussion	