



COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

This course introduces and acquaints students with the critical study of social identities and inequalities in the United States. The ideas and analysis presented here is reflective of the interdisciplinary scholarship of Cultural Studies, a hybrid of humanities and social science that includes history, literary studies, gender and sexuality studies, sociology, communication studies, and more. At its core, these interrelated disciplines assert ideals promise wonderful possibilities, but that unequal manifestation render social injustice as harmful aspects of US society, negatively impacting the people, processes, and institutions of this nation. Therefore, understanding social identities is presumed to be a crucial lens of social analysis. In other words, the course/field asserts that one cannot fully understand or analyze US society without a well-developed awareness of the complexity of our social identities.

As we study the diversity of social identities, sociopolitical ideals, and sociopolitical injustice and inequality, this course will focus on the United States as our primary context. This US focus should not be taken to imply a disregard for social dynamics in other societies. Instead, this course recognizes that each region or nation has its own history and modern complexity, while also acknowledging the transnational nature of a multiplicity of cultures. Therefore, this class will focus on the United States with the recognition that national boundaries are always and already permeable.

Few places offer a more illustrative account than the history of US acquisition of Hawai'i and its aftermath. As preparation for our Jan-term trip, we engage in some broad-strokes concerns of the field, analyzing language and story and diversity and power, all in an attempt to develop our skills in developing the world as it should be.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Burgett and Hendler. eds. *Keywords in American Cultural Studies* (Hybrid, 3rd Ed., NYU Press, 2020)

<https://keywords.nyupress.org/american-cultural-studies/>

Additional materials made available online and Canvas

COURSE POLICIES

COURSE OBJECTIVES

[knowledge]

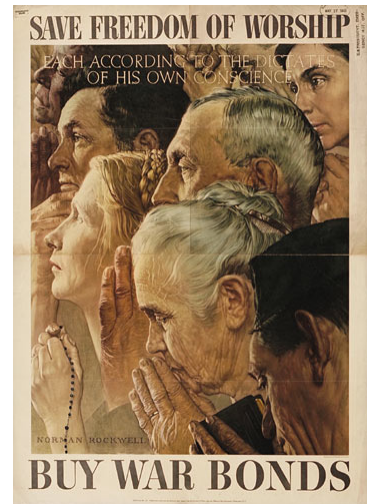
- Provide foundational knowledge of social dynamics that will be useful in future USCS courses, related subjects throughout the liberal arts, and a life of engaged citizenship.
- Develop knowledge of language and concepts used in Cultural Studies and related disciplines.

[skills]

- Familiarize students with analytical concepts (e.g. keywords, auto-ethnography) that are commonly used in Cultural Studies and related disciplines.
- Help students practice critical thinking and articulate critical analyses of diversity-related issues within the United States, in written and oral communication.

[understandings]

- Deepen students' understanding of the complexity and value of engaging with social difference.
- Encourage students to reflect on their own experiences and that of others in relation to the concepts presented in class, fostering insights into personal journeys and future vocations.



SHARED CURRICULUM CREDIT (1): CULTURE AND DIVERSITY, US TAG

**When combined with USCS 119H (2 credits) in Jan Term, the C&D with U-Tag is satisfied*

Courses in this area investigate the formation and shaping of diverse cultures, communities, beliefs and identities. These courses ask students to examine primary and/or secondary sources, respond to relevant scholarship, and/or participate in experiential learning activities and respectful discourse.

The “U: Tag: These courses focus on issues of power, privilege, hierarchy, identity, and/or interdependence specifically within the United States. This content is consistently explored through readings, class discussions and assignments/assessments throughout the course.

ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR

Students should attend all class sessions throughout the term. Circumstances might cause absences, but students are responsible for all assignments that are due and material covered in any missed class. If you miss a class, check the website and ask a classmate for details; the professor would also appreciate an email as expediently as possible. And, as we will be sharing personal stories and discussing potentially controversial topics, it is important that everyone remain respectful and considerate of the opinions of others. Accordingly, you should act constructively in all phases of this class—both in person and online.

WRITING SUPPORT

The Whitworth Composition Commons (WCC) offers individual and small-group writing consultations to any person affiliated with Whitworth. You can visit the Commons for feedback on any aspect of writing, including getting started on an assignment, developing an argument, or final revising and editing. Sessions are somewhat short (30-60 minutes), so come with some specific questions about your project. To make an appointment for a consultation, navigate to www.whitworth.edu/compositioncommons, click on the “Make an Appointment” button, and follow the instructions provided. Meet your consultant in the Commons’ physical location: Cowles Library Room 242.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Please note the university's policy on academic honesty (see Whitworth Catalog and Student Handbook). Consequences for any form of dishonesty may range from a failing grade on a specific assignment to a failing grade in the course. Violations of academic honesty become part of your educational record.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES: In accord with SSB 5166, Whitworth University accommodates student absences, for up to two days per academic year, for reasons of faith or conscience, or for an organized activity conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization. Written notice and request for accommodation must be given within the first two weeks of the beginning of the course and provide specific dates the student requests accommodation. Faculty will work with such students to reach mutual agreement about the terms of the accommodation. Grievances about a failure to accommodate should be directed to the Associate Provost Stacy Hill, McEachran Hall 220, 509.777.4657, shill@whitworth.edu.

ACCOMMODATIONS (ADA/504): Whitworth University is committed to providing its students access to education. If you have a documented physical or mental/psychological impairment that impacts your ability to learn and perform to your potential in the classroom, contact the Office of Educational Support Services (ESS) to identify accommodations that can help mitigate barriers to your success. ESS also works with students with disabilities who seek housing or other accommodations at Whitworth for disability-related needs. Students must engage with the ESS portal each term in order for faculty/staff to be notified of your accommodations. Services are not retroactive.

To request accommodation, fill out an application on the ESS webpage: <https://www.whitworth.edu/ess/>

Contact Information: Phone: 509.777.3380 | Email: ess@whitworth.edu

TITLE IX: Whitworth University faculty members are committed to the well-being of each student. It is common for students to discuss non-course related issues with faculty and, when possible, faculty will keep such conversations strictly confidential. However, because federal law views faculty members as mandated reporters of any incidents of sexual misconduct, if a student informs a faculty member of an issue of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, or discrimination, the faculty member is required by federal law to bring it to the attention of Tim Caldwell, Interim Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will make the student aware of all options and resources available to them under Whitworth University policies and under the law.

There are Whitworth University employees whom federal law does not view as mandatory reporters, to whom a student could speak without the conversation being reported to the Title IX Coordinator. These include counselors in Counseling Services, Health Services staff, and any of the university chaplains on the staff of Campus Ministries.

Contact Information: Tim Caldwell, Interim Title IX Coordinator

Phone: 509.777.3749 | Email: timohtycaldwell@whitworth.edu

Counseling Center: 509-777-3259; Schumacher Hall

Campus Ministries: 509-777-4345; Beeksma Family Theology Center

Health Services: 509-777-3259; Schumacher Hall

NON-DISCRIMINATION: Whitworth University is committed to delivering a mission-driven educational program that cultivates in students the capacity to engage effectively across myriad dimensions of diversity.

Whitworth University is committed to the fair and equal treatment of all students in its educational programs and activities. The University does not discriminate against students based on race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, or disability and complies with all applicable federal or state non-discrimination laws in its instructional programs.

FAIR AND EQUITABLE TREATMENT: Whitworth University professors strive to treat all students fairly and equitably, applying the same rigorous standards and expectations to each of our students and working to invite students from all backgrounds into the challenges and rewards of our academic disciplines. Students who have concerns about classroom fairness should contact Associate Provost Stacy Hill, McEachran Hall 220, 509.777.4657, shill@whitworth.edu.

SAFETY INFORMATION: Whitworth University cares about your welfare in the event of an emergency.

During the first week of this course, please familiarize yourself with safety information posted in this classroom.

Please visit <https://www.whitworth.edu/generalinformation/health&safety/index.htm> if you have further questions.

GRADING

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

ASSESSMENT

Students will demonstrate their learning in four types of assignments:

1. AGENDA ITEMS (20%): With the conviction that students should learn how to drive classroom discussion agenda, students will submit one or two agenda items for most class periods, sometimes individually, sometimes in groups. (Instructions will be provided each time.) All should be submitted to Blackboard 11am on the day of each class, and we will use these agenda items to prompt discussion. Agenda Items should provide evidence of engaged reading and reflect developing understandings of course concerns. Specifics to be discussed and developed in class, and these preparations should demonstrate developmental learning.

2. STORY CIRCLES AND AUTOETHNOGRAPHY PROJECT (30%): Students will regularly participate in story circles in class, listening to the experiences of others and sharing their own. Students will write a 1-2 page story articulating their own experiences in relation to identity and diversity, privilege and oppression. Stories will evolve throughout the term as we develop our critical vocabulary, working our way to a final autoethnography assignment. More details on separate assignment sheet.

3. KEYWORDS PROJECT (30%): Students will work in groups of three on a specific keyword selected from *Keywords of American Cultural Studies*. Early on, they will assess the meanings as detailed in the text. Later, students within the group will be responsible for weekly updates that track the usage of the term in various cultural contexts, assessing its various meanings in relation to the *Keywords* essay. Near the end of the term, groups will produce a new collaboratively-written Keywords essay of their own along with a poster presentation in the Honors Semester Showcase. More details on separate assignment sheet.

4. MIDTERM (20%): The first exam will test for half the term to assess individual grasp on key terms and issues in the first half of our study.



CALENDAR

UNIT 1: BUILDING OUR VOCABULARY

Week 2 – Stage Building

9.8 – Syllabus Distribution and Course Concerns

Week 3 – Keywords and Story Circles

9.15 – *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*: “[Introduction](#)” & “[Identity](#)”

Week 4 – Sharing is Caring

9.22 – *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*: “America” (pdf)
[Story Circle #1](#)

Week 5 – Disciplinary Anchors

9.29 – *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*: “Culture” (pdf) & “[Empire](#)”

Week 6 – Dominant Conflicts

10.6 – *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*: “[Exceptionalism](#)” & “[Race](#)”
[Keywords Task 1 due](#)

Week 7 – What Might We Do About It?

10.13 – *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*: “[Democracy](#)”; *Democracies in America* excerpt (pdf)
[Story Circle #2](#)

Week 8 – What Do We Know?

10.20 - MIDTERM

Week 9 – Take a break...

10.27 – NO CLASS – FALL BREAK

UNIT 2: HAWAII

Week 10 – Historically-Minded, Part I

11.3 – [Nation Within: The History of the American Occupation of Hawai'i](#)

Week 11 – Historically-Minded, Part II

11.10 – [Nation Within: The History of the American Occupation of Hawai'i](#)

Week 12 – Ethnographies Shared

11.17 – [Story Circle #3](#)

Week 13 – Gratitude

11.24 – Project Workday

Week 14 – Detours

12.1 – Reading TBA; [Projects Due](#)

Week 15 –

12.8 – PROJECT PRESENTATIONS – HONORS SHOWCASE – 5:30pm – HUB MPR