



**School for New Learning
HC 147 American Culture in 2010 ***

Donna Younger, Ed.D.
dyounger@oakton.edu
847-635-1655
847-635-1604 (fax)

Wendy Yanow
wyanow@yahoo.com
847-302-4308

Location: OHare Campus
Credit: 4 quarter hours

Dates: Saturdays, 9/12 – 11/21

Course Description

Is there an American cultural identity that is distinct, or is the notion of "American culture" obsolete? There are more than 100 scholarly definitions of culture and most agree that culture depends on shared beliefs, values, and symbols and provides a means for people to both adapt to and manage the world within which they live. In an increasingly diverse United States, what beliefs and values do its inhabitants share? Have these attributes changed significantly in the past several years so that "American culture" is being redefined? This course will examine the ways that American Culture is perceived and shaped by its inhabitants and how changes in technology, global relationships, and immigration challenge us to clarify it for ourselves and others.

Course activities will be devoted to the examination of issues that shape and reflect cultural identity of individuals and groups, using readings, film, small group exercises, and reflective writing.

Instructors: Donna Younger holds an Ed.D. and a Master of Arts in Teaching from the University of Memphis and has taught, trained, and facilitated in a variety of academic, not-for profit, and corporate settings. Other SNL courses taught include: The Civil War and Contemporary Society, A Separate Country: The American South, Emotional Competence for Adults, and Teamwork for Personal and Professional Development.

Wendy Yanow holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music from the University of Illinois, a Master of Arts and an Ed.D. in Adult Education from National-Louis University. Her research focuses on how race enters and structures the narratives of our life experience. She has taught in a variety of academic settings including undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs, corporate training and development and corporate education. She teaches in SNL's MAEA Program as well as the competence based undergraduate program.

* A revised syllabus with bibliography and expanded course schedule will be distributed at the first class session.

Competencies

- H4 Can analyze power relations among racial, social, cultural, or economic groups in the United States.
- A3X Can articulate and analyze one's cultural identity and its relationship to American cultural identity.
- H1X Can assess the impact of immigration and globalization on the formation and evolution of American cultural identity.
- S3F Can analyze the integration of new technology into a specific field of human endeavor from at least two perspectives.

Learning Experience

The course is organized to address one central question: *What is the nature of U.S. cultural identity and the roles of various forces in shaping it?* The competences will be addressed through exploration of four of these forces: Individual and group cultural identity (A3X), immigration and globalization (H1X), information technology and communication (S3F), and inequities in power relationships between groups (H4). In their individual projects and papers, students will explore these in greater depth, relating their work to competences they have chosen.

The approach of the course will involve close attention to the central text that provides a clear and readable argument regarding the past and future of American cultural identity. For the first six weeks, we will read, discuss, and analyze the author's treatment of the question of American cultural identity; the final four weeks will be devoted to alternative views regarding the issue. Throughout the course, selections from film, music, art and other expressions of popular culture will be used to illustrate the elements of cultural identity that we are exploring.

Demonstration of Competences

Students may choose one of two projects to develop through the course as evidence of their learning. Both require the inclusion of source material beyond the text that are related to the competences chosen. A minimum of 5 scholarly sources should be used for each; the artifacts for the portfolio are not considered scholarly sources.

1. Scholarly Paper – integrating two competences (if appropriate) to address the research regarding the relationship of the two forces represented by the competences.
(see below)

Or

2. Portfolio – artifacts and narrative analysis that illustrate and explain the relationship between the two forces. Elements of the portfolio may include, as appropriate: reflective essay, annotated bibliography, web searches, examples from popular culture (art, music, graffiti, cartoons, film, television). Format and selection of portfolio contents will be discussed and illustrated in class.

Relationship of forces indicated by competences:

A3X and H1X:	Individual/group cultural identity and immigration/globalization
A3X and S3F:	Individual/group cultural identity and information technology
A3X and H4	Individual/group cultural identity and inequities in power relationships with at least one other group
H1X and S3F	Immigration/globalization and information technology
H1X and H4	Immigration/globalization and inequities in power relationships between two cultural groups in the U.S.
S3F and H4	Information technology and inequities in power relationships between two cultural groups in the U.S.

Required Text:

Who Are We? Challenges to America's National Identity. Samuel P. Huntington
2004, Simon and Schuster. ISBN: 978-684-87054-0

Supplemental Materials:

A complete bibliography will be distributed in class and/or posted on BlackBoard. Students will be expected to draw from these and/or other sources to complete projects related to their individual competences.

Learning Outcomes: At the end of the course, students will be able to

- H4 Explain the factors that create inequities in power between two cultural groups
Identify indicators of inequity in power relationships.
- A3X Understand the origins of their individual cultural identity
Use that understanding to enhance their relationships with others.
- H1X Describe immigration patterns in the U.S. from 1630 to the present.
Explain the impact of immigration on American cultural identity.
- S3F Describe the capacity of information technology and its emergence in American society.
Explain the impact of information technology on American cultural identity.

Class Schedule

	Topic	Assignment (due following week)
9/12	Introductions: Who Are We?	CH. 1 and 2
9/19	Fundamentals: Culture, Identity & Change	CH 3 and 4
9/26	Elements of American Identity	CH 5 and 6
10/3	Religion and Cultural Identity	CH. 7 and 8
10/10	Challenges to American Identity	CH. 9 and 10
10/17	Immigration and Denationalization	CH. 11 and 12
10/24	The Future of American Identity	Readings as assigned
10/31	American Identity Defined by Allies	Readings as assigned
11/7	American Identity Defined by Threats	Readings as assigned
11/14	American Identity Defined by Technology	Readings as assigned
11/21	Constructing an American Identity	

In order for learners in the course to be successful, it is important to review the following and participate accordingly:

Attendance: The nature of the course depends on participation of group members, so attendance is central to learning of individuals as well as the group, whether we are meeting in the classroom or on Blackboard. Several in-class exercises will provide evidence of competence and must be completed and are difficult to make up because they require the involvement of others. If you know you will need to miss class due to *unavoidable* travel or commitments, make arrangements in advance for alternate assignments, if possible, to replace those you will miss. If you miss class due to an emergency, contact me as soon as possible. While missing any class time might make it difficult for you to earn the grade you wish, missing more than two classes sessions may lead to a significant grade reduction or a negotiated grade of "Incomplete."

Academic Seriousness: It is expected that students will incorporate sound critical thinking and writing skills into their work in the course and will demonstrate their academic maturity by honoring the Academic Integrity policy, participating actively in class activities, interacting respectfully but honestly with group members, preparing for each class session, seeking connections between course content and other experiences, and assuming responsibility for their own learning.

Incompletes: Students may request a grade of "Incomplete" if a significant change in circumstance prevents their timely completion of class sessions and/or assignments. The Incomplete Contract must include terms for resolving the Incomplete and must be

submitted by the student and signed by the instructor. Failure to submit outstanding work by the specified deadline will result in a grade change from IN to F. Students who do not submit work by the end of the quarter and who have not requested an IN, will be awarded an appropriate letter grade and not an Incomplete.

DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

DePaul University Incomplete Policy

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

n.b. The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.