

BDP 101 – CULTURAL STUDIES FORUM SEMINAR
FALL 2009

Unique #: 08420
Class time: Wednesdays 3-5 pm
Class location: [BUR 208](#)
Teaching Assistant: Esme Ramirez
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Office hours: T/Th 3:30 - 4:45 pm & by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What is culture? How is it practiced? How do we differentiate culture from other aspects of our lives? What is the difference between high culture, popular culture, folk culture, and mass culture? What are subcultures? What is the significance of economics and politics to culture? What is the relationship of culture to identity, taste, and ideology? How do modes of production affect cultural content and form? What roles do consumers play in cultural meaning? How has contemporary popular culture been affected by digital media? How are power and knowledge exercised and negotiated in culture? Can culture contribute to social change?

These questions provide our foundation for an introduction to cultural studies as an interdisciplinary field of critical inquiry and scholarly analysis. In this course we will study culture from a variety of perspectives, including artifacts and practices, ideas and emotions, events and rituals, spaces and institutions, identities and communities. In addition, we will consider the relationship of cultural practices to sociohistorical context and everyday life. While many of the cultural phenomena discussed in this class are U.S.-based, we will be exploring several that are not American, while also examining issues of migration and globalization.

Part of UT's Bridging Disciplines Program, this seminar introduces students to key concepts, methodologies, theories, and questions related to Cultural Studies and exposes them to the diverse ways culture is studied and researched across campus. Professors from such disciplines as Anthropology, Sociology, Architecture, Communication Studies, and Radio-Television-Film will give guest lectures about such subjects as folklore, media, sports, music, and subcultures.

COURSE GOALS

After successfully completing this course, students will have the ability to:

- understand the history of Cultural Studies;
- comprehend the primary topics, questions, and theoretical perspectives of Cultural Studies;
- connect UT faculty research with different approaches in Cultural Studies; and
- apply Cultural Studies concepts and approaches in research projects.

COURSE MATERIALS

Readings available on our class Blackboard site under "Course Documents."

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Requirements:

Percent of Final Grade:

Attendance	25%
Participation	20%
Response Essays (2 total)	10%
Paper 1	20%
Paper 2	25%

COURSE GUIDELINES

Class Conduct: Students are expected to behave like respectful, professional adults in class. This means adhering to the guidelines outlined here, participating in class, and showing respect for the Professor, Teaching Assistant, guest lecturers, and your classmates. You will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions in this class, and sometime you will not agree with the opinions expressed by others. This is to be expected; we will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. Nevertheless, you are required to engage with others in a spirit of respect, professionalism, and intellectual development.

Class/screening attendance: Attendance is required for all class meetings, and roll will be taken at the beginning of each. Please be respectful of your fellow students and the Professor by arriving on time. If you plan on being absent from or excessively late to a class meeting or screening, you should notify the Professor in advance. To be excused for absences, students must provide documentation of an illness, family emergency, or religious holy day. Unexcused absences will lower your grade for both attendance and participation.

Class participation: It is expected that students will have completed the assigned readings prior to the beginning of class. It is helpful to take notes on the readings and lectures, as well as to formulate questions that can contribute to class discussion. Students are expected to engage fully with the course material and to participate actively in class discussions. You are encouraged to express your own opinions assertively and to raise questions during class discussions.

Response essays: Each student is required to write two (2) short response essays, each based on one (1) guest lecture. Each essay should be 350-500 words in length and should reflect critical engagement with one guest lecture. Since there will be several guest lectures during our seminar, you have multiple presentations from which to choose. The format of your essay should include an introduction, body, and conclusion. In the body of your paper, please address the following questions:

- 1) Who was the presenter and what was the topic of her/his presentation?
- 2) How do the topic and issues discussed during this presentation relate to Cultural Studies?
- 3) What important questions were raised by this particular presentation?
- 4) How does this presentation relate to your own experience and/or to current events in U.S. culture?

These essays are due at the beginning of class on 9/30 and 10/14 and must be delivered to either the TA or the Professor. Both essays will be graded on a credit/no credit basis, and both must be completed to pass this class.

Papers: Two (2) short research papers are required for this course. Paper topics and guidelines will be distributed at least 2 weeks prior to the paper deadline. Papers must be submitted directly to the Teaching Assistant or Professor at the beginning of class on the day due, unless other directions or arrangements have been made beforehand. Late papers will be excused only in the case of a documented illness or family emergency. No papers will be accepted after 5 pm on Wednesday, October 21, 2009. Both papers will be graded via the traditional A-F scale. You cannot receive a passing grade for the course without completing both papers.

Incompletes: Students are not permitted to take an Incomplete in this class except in the case of a documented health or family emergency discussed with the Professor. If you feel you are falling behind in your work, it is your responsibility to meet with the Professor and formulate a plan of action well in advance of the end of the semester so that you can complete the course successfully.

Assistance with writing: You are strongly encouraged to meet with the Professor and/or Teaching Assistant prior to writing your papers, in order to obtain further clarification of the writing assignments and to discuss possible topics, reference materials, and/or writing difficulties.

In addition, you are encouraged to use the Undergraduate Writing Center, which is located in FAC 211. The UWC offers individualized assistance at no charge to students who want to improve their writing skills. There is no charge, and students may visit on a drop-in or appointment basis. Call 471-6222 for hours and/or an appointment. For more information, visit their website at <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/uwc/>.

Students may also utilize UT's Learning Center to get assistance with their studying and writing. The Learning Center is located in the Jester Center, Room A332. For hours and/or an appointment, call 471-3614. For more information, visit their website at <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc>.

Services for Students with Disabilities: The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Students with physical or learning disabilities should provide the Professor with a letter requesting reasonable academic accommodation, and work directly with the Professor to determine what accommodations are needed. This letter can be obtained from Services for Students with Disabilities, located in the Student Services Building. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY, or visit their website at: <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

The University of Texas Honor Code: The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Scholastic Dishonesty: The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor. By accepting this syllabus, you have agreed to these guidelines and must adhere to them.

Scholastic dishonest damages both the student's learning experience and readiness for the future demands of a work-career. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. For more information on scholastic dishonesty, please visit the Student Judicial services website at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.

Religious Holidays: Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. If you miss a work assignment or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day you will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence. It is the policy of the University of Texas at Austin that you must notify your instructor at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent to observe a religious holy day.

University Electronic Mail Notification Policy: All students should become familiar with the University's official email student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her email address. Students are expected to check email on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that email be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>.

In this course e-mail will be used as a means of communication with students. You will be responsible for checking your e-mail regularly for class work and announcements.

Use of Blackboard: This course uses Blackboard, a web-based course management system in which a password-protected site is created for each course. Our Blackboard site will be used for posting the course syllabus, writing assignments, and class announcements.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 What is Culture?

Aug 26 **Reading:** Longhurst et al. – “Culture and Cultural Studies”

Week 2 What is Cultural Studies?

Sept 2 **Reading:** Rojek – “The Four ‘Moments’ in Cultural Studies”

Week 3 Memory, Music, and Place

Sept 9 **** PAPER 1 DUE ****

Reading: Flores - “Memory-Place, Meaning, and the Alamo”

Guest lecture: Richard Flores (ANT/MAS) – “Rethinking Culture”

Guest lecture: Ward Keeler (ANT) – “Burmese Rap”

Week 4 Sports & Work Space

Sept 16 **Reading:** Cole - “Close Encounters: Sport, Science and Political Culture”

Guest lecture: Ben Carrington (SOC) – “Sport and Cultural Studies”

Guest lecture: Nancy Kwallek (ARI) – “Color in Office Environments”

Visit from the BDP office regarding applying to the program

Week 5 Genre Today & Yesterday’s Art

Sept 23 **Reading:** Gunn – “Gothic Music and the Inevitability of Genre”

Guest lecture: Joshua Gunn (CMS) – “Genre and Popular Music”

Guest lecture: Glenn Peers (ARH) – “Byzantine Things”

Week 6 The Past & the Future

Sept 30 **** RESPONSE ESSAY 1 DUE ****

Reading: Michaels – “For a Cultural Future”

Guest lecture: Maria Franklin (ARY) – “Archaeology, History, and Power”

Guest lecture: Madhavi Mallapragada (RTF) – “Media and Migration”

Week 7 Globalization, Ethnicity, & Gender

Oct 7 **Reading:** Rajadhyksha – “The ‘Bollywoodization’ of the Indian Cinema”

Recommended reading: Lieu – “Remembering ‘The Nation’ through Pageantry”

Guest lecture: Shanti Kumar (RTF) – “The Place of Bollywood in Indian Cinema”

Guest lecture: Nhi Lieu (AMS) – “Ethnic Beauty Pageants”

Week 8 The Future of Cultural Studies

Oct 14 **** RESPONSE ESSAY 2 DUE ****

Reading: Rojek – “Situating Yourself in Culture”

Oct 21 ** PAPER 2 DUE **

papers must be emailed to the Professor as a Word attachment by 5 pm