

HUM 121
THE NATURE OF AMERICA

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Prerequisites: ENG 090 and RED 090, or satisfactory score on placement test

Corequisites: None

This course provides an interdisciplinary survey of the American cultural, social, and political experience. Emphasis is on the multicultural character of American society, distinctive qualities of various regions, and the American political system. Upon completion, students should be able to analyze significant cultural, social, and political aspects of American life. Students should also be able to identify the frames of reference that shape the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of various cultural, social, and political groups. *This course has been approved to satisfy the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement for the general education core requirement in humanities/fine arts.* Course Hours Per Week: Class, 3. Semester Hours Credit, 3.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The student will be able to:

- a. Develop a definition of “cultural diversity”.
- b. Use critical thinking to investigate aspects of cultural diversity.
- c. Show an understanding of the effects of cultural diversity within the United States in the American political system, in the workplace, in the judicial system, in the media, and in communication with others in personal and professional relationships.
- d. Use annotation and other critical reading strategies to examine ideas and opinions of authors who have written about cultural diversity.
- e. Produce a research paper or project focused on the effects of cultural diversity in a specific geographical section of the country.

OUTLINE OF INSTRUCTION:

- I. Develop a working definition of "cultural diversity"
 - A. Examination of assumptions; prejudice; stereotyping
 - B. Consideration of frames of reference
- II. Examine the influences of country of origin
 - A. Values
 - B. Customs

- III. Consider gender issues
 - A. Sexuality
 - B. Gender roles

- IV. Study the workplace
 - A. Affirmative action
 - B. Harassment issues

- V. Understand the influence of the media
 - A. Representation of cultural groups
 - B. Myths

- VI. Experience cultural diversity in the arts
 - A. The music industry
 - B. Painting, sculpture, architecture

- VII. Evaluate the criminal justice system
 - A. Enforcement
 - B. Trials; sentencing
 - C. Incarceration; rehabilitation

- VIII. Explore the Southern United States
 - A. Historical and political influences
 - B. The triangle as text

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

To be selected by instructor.

STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students who require academic accommodations due to any physical, psychological, or learning disability are encouraged to request assistance from a disability services counselor within the first two weeks of class. Likewise, students who potentially require emergency medical attention due to any chronic health condition are encouraged to disclose this information to a disability services counselor within the first two weeks of class. Counselors can be contacted by calling 686-3652 or by visiting the Student Development Office in the Phail Wynn Jr. Student Services Center, room 1309.