

North Central **Michigan College**

NCMC CURRICULUM/COURSE OUTLINE FOR YEARS: 2001-2003

DIVISION/AREA: Arts and Sciences

DEPARTMENT: Social Science

AREA DEAN: Timothy Dykstra, Ph.D.

ORIGINATOR: Thomas L. Orlow

TOTAL HOURS OF INSTRUCTION: 3 Lecture: 3 Lab: 0 Total Contact Hours: 3

COURSE NUMBER: AMS 200

CREDIT HOURS: 3

COURSE TITLE: INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN STUDIES

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE(S)/ADVISORY: None.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: This course introduces students to the interdisciplinary study of American culture and history, focusing on the social, political, economic, and religious forces – such as region, gender, ethnicity, and race – that have shaped the experiences of men and women in America. This course explores American culture in such areas as politics, religion, economics, literature, labor, conflict and war, social reform, and popular culture.

GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES OR OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Refer to College catalog or specific occupational program outcomes and describe how this course meets those outcomes.

COURSE OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES: Students will be able to: define & explain the concept of culture as well as its key components and attendants and apply that information in developing an understanding and perspective of American civilization; understand & explain the critical relationship between culture and adaptation as applied to the history of the development of Am. civilization; understand & appreciate the value of using a holistic approach in examining and analyzing the basic precepts of Am. culture; identify characteristics of the Am. experience which are responsible for Am. growth & cultural preeminence in the modern era; identify & explain the major political theories, concepts, and compromises serving as the basis of our Am. system of government; identify & explain the features of American culture which make us similar to and differentiate us from other world cultures; identify & demonstrate an understanding of the process and mechanisms of cultural change as applied to the analysis of Am. culture; explain & analyze how culture is transmitted across subsequent generations and thereby demonstrate why there is often significant cultural change in the process; identify, explain, & apply “The Tipping Point” concept of social and cultural change as a significant force in altering the

COURSE TITLE AND NUMBER: INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN STUDIES AMS 200

(Course Objectives/Outcomes continued)

course of Am. history; identify & explain the roles of competition and conflict in shaping Am. domestic and international relations; explain & analyze the diversity of Am. culture by examining the influences of ethnicity, gender, region, and social class on Am. historical development; explain & analyze cultural pluralism in America including past, present, and future implications for Am. civilization; identify, analyze, & explain the nature and impact of the theories of assimilation, cultural pluralism, and multiculturalism on America’s past, present, and future; explain, analyze, & understand the prospects and problems confronting Am. culture which stem from the rights revolution and the accompanying new individualism.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION: Discussion, lecture, video/film sources, individual/group research & presentations, guest lectures/demonstrations, role playing, case studies, living history projects, & field trips.

METHODS OF EVALUATION: Tests/quizzes, class/semester projects, participation and attendance, conferencing, and term papers.

REQUIRED TEXTS: (Representative List)

Rader, Benjamin G., American Ways: A Brief History of American Cultures, Harcourt College Publishers, 2001.

Primis Online Reader, McGraw-Hill Primis Online; 2001. (Instructor prepared readings book of 73 readings and primary source documents.)

Optional supplementary Materials:

TIME ALLOWANCE AND SEQUENCE OF INSTRUCTION:

Weeks 1 & 2	Course introduction; policies and procedures; review of basic study-, writing-, note-taking-, and organizational skills. Introduction of basic concepts necessary to an interdisciplinary course of this type.
Weeks 3 & 4	Text themes; Native American Cultures; European cultural influence; English influence; Southern colonial culture; Northern colonial culture; Frontier (back country) culture; African-American culture and slavery.
Weeks 5, 6, 7, & 8	Republican political system; Monarchy, hierarchy, and patriarchy; Rejecting the monarchy; limits on hierarchy; Declaration of Independence; Visions of the New Republic; Religion & the Enlightenment; The American Experience: Republican social order; Nurture of “Habitual Virtue”; Opening the doors of opportunity: Egalitarianism; Pursuit of material gain & self improvement; the Celebration of gain and achievement; the southern exception; the search for a new moral order; Popular Christianity & the Evangelical Republic; Reform: turning the world upside down; Slavery and Civil War: cultural divide.
Weeks 9, 10, & 11	Middle class (Victorian/Bourgeoisie culture); Middle class families and values; The quest for refinement; Victorian conceptualization of culture; The creation of the upper class; Native Americans under assault; Ethnic & working class cultures (old v. new immigration); Issues of Assimilation, pluralism, and multiculturalism; Slavery to freedmen; Southern cultural resistance.
Weeks 12, 13, 14, 15, & 16	Origins of modern American culture; Moving from production to consumption; the new Middle class; Searching for excitement; Secularization of American life; The 1920s: Pivotal Decade; Urban America; The New Woman; War: foreign & domestic; The Great Depression: looking backward, looking forward; WWII and the Cold War: The American way of life; Suburbanization.

Reasonable accommodations may be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, and/or psychiatric disabilities. Please contact the Education Opportunity Program (EOP) at (231) 348-6687 to arrange services for this course.

APPROVED FOR ADOPTION BY THE CRD/AP COMMITTEE ON _____