

University of British Columbia, Faculty of Education
Cultural Studies and Comparative Multicultural/Antiracist Education

Course: EDST 602A/CCFI 601B Cultural Studies and Comparative Multicultural /
Antiracist Education
Section: edst 082 / ccfi 052
Semester: Winter Two, 2007
Location: Scarfe 1033
Meetings: Thurs, 2 - 4:30pm
Instructor: Handel Wright Office: 303F Scarfe Tel: 822-2705 handel.wright@ubc.ca

This course utilizes cultural studies in a re-examination of two discourses that have emerged as dominant in the examination of socio-cultural difference and social justice in American and Canadian education and societies, namely multiculturalism and anti-racism. In the United States there has been a sustained and ongoing struggle over multiculturalism as a sign and a discourse. The result has been a proliferation of discrete positions within or rather competing discourses of multiculturalism (from conservative through liberal to critical/radical/revolutionary multiculturalism). Here in Canada, where multiculturalism is official state policy, the dominant version of the discourse has become more or less fixed as liberal celebration and tolerance of difference. Consequently, critical educators and community activists in Canada have eschewed multiculturalism and developed the more radical discourse and praxis of anti-racism. This course invites participants to dislodge both multiculturalism and anti-racism from their rather fixed moorings as distinct and discrete discourses and render both “floating signifiers.” Thus, for example, it invites students to not only learn about but also to critically examine multiculturalism (not only from the usual anti-racist position but also from a “critical thinking” position); to go beyond the celebration or rejection of anti-racism as the last word in radical discourse; and to tease out points of convergence and divergence between American critical multiculturalism and Canadian integrative anti-racism. Cultural studies is taken up as a “third position” from which it becomes possible to critique, make an intervention in and bridge the divide between multiculturalism and anti-racism. Finally, cultural studies approaches to dealing with issues of social difference and social justice in education and society will be considered as supplementary and/or alternative to multicultural and anti-racist approaches. The object of the course is the consideration of multiculturalism, anti-racism and cultural studies as discourses that are of use in addressing theoretical and/or praxis issues in various contexts including the local (Vancouver and environs), the national (Canadian), the American/Canadian border, and comparative American/Canadian context.

Required Texts

- Barnor Hesse (Ed.). (2000). *Un/settled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas, Entanglements, Transruptions*. London & New York: Zed Books
- Cynthia Levine-Rasky (Ed.). (2002). *Working through whiteness: international perspectives*. New York: SUNY Press.
- David Theo Goldberg. (Ed.). *Multiculturalism: A critical reader*. Oxford, UK & Cambridge, USA: Blackwell Publishers.

Yehudi Webster. (1997). *Against the multicultural agenda: A critical thinking alternative*. Westport, CN & London, UK. Praeger.
Robert Bernasconi. (Ed.). (2001). *Race*. Oxford, UK & Malden, Mass, USA. Blackwell.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

Grades:

Attendance & Participation = 25%

Lecture = 25%

Report = 25%

Final Paper = 25%

Attendance and Participation:

Participants taking the course for credit are expected to attend seminar meetings and participate in discussions. As a seminar, the success of the course depends to a large extent on your participation. Participation grades will be based on the quality of participation and the extent to which such participation reflects the promotion of a safe space for various views, an engagement with the literature and primary issues and an application of the readings and discussions to real world issues of socio-cultural difference and social justice.

Lecture:

This involves each participant individually leading the class on a set of readings for selected theme (from assigned reading for week, suggested list or suggested by lecturer. The lecturer will summarize the arguments of the readings, point to the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments the authors make and raise questions for the class to consider. The lecturer will be evaluated on grasp of the authors' ideas, and the quality of analysis and critique. Use of information and sources on the topic beyond the suggested readings are expected. Please submit written notes of arguments and list of references/bibliography.

Report:

This involves participants reporting to the class on a praxis project that is open to utilization of multiculturalism/antiracism and/or cultural studies analysis. It is expected the report will incorporate the theoretical and praxis work being covered in the course and draw on additional sources. Alternatively, the report can be initial discussion of topic for final paper. Please submit written point form of the report, including references.

Final Paper

Each student will write an individual final paper of about 18 type written, double spaced pages addressing a topic of their choice. Topics must be related to course themes and approved by course instructor. The final paper can be on the report topic.