

COURSE CONTENT

Course Code / Title : HS2004 Culture, Self and Identity

Pre-requisites : HS1001 Person and Society

No. of AUs. : 3

Contact Hours : 39

Course Aims

In a broad sense, culture refers to the socially (as opposed to genetically) transmitted bases for the behaviors that characterize the human species. In a narrower sense, it refers to the ways of life that are cultivated by people in particular times and places and which provide frameworks within which human beings go about everyday life. This course will teach Year 1 and Year 2 Sociology majors about the sociological significance of culture in terms of its material, ideological, and practical aspects; its production, transmission and consumption; and its relation to people selves and identities. Such knowledge is important for anyone who wishes to be critically aware of how and why people think and act as they do, and to be able to act on that knowledge and informed and active citizen.

The course should provide working answers to the following questions:

- What is culture? How does culture relate to individual and collective human life?
- How have social scientists approached the study of culture? What methods to sociologists use to study culture?
- How does culture relate to the human mind, as well as to social institutions?
- How does culture relate to self and identity?

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Describe what culture is and how it relates to individual and collective human life.
2. Evaluate different ways social scientists have approached the study of culture, including what kinds of things cultural sociologists study and what methods they use.
3. Describe how culture is related to human minds and social institutions.
4. Describe the relation among culture, self and identity.

Course Content

Week 1	Introduction to the course
Key concepts:	Social construction of culture, culture and meaning
Week 2	Meaning and culture
Key concepts:	History of culture as a concept Culture as a meaning structure Definitions of Culture and cultures
Week 3	Methodological approaches to culture
Key concepts:	Discourse and semiotics Ethnography and field research
Week 4	Mind, meaning, and action
Key concepts:	Cognitive and micro-oriented approaches to culture Culture as a problem-solving mechanism, culture as local
Week 5	The production and consumption of culture
Key concepts:	How culture is produced; how production is cultured Cultural industries and cultural production Cultural consumption, consumerism Status and identity
Week 6	The circuit of culture
Key concepts:	Circuit of culture and its 'moments' (production, consumption, regulation, representation, identity)
Week 7	Culture and control
Key concepts:	Culture as a source of control Center and periphery Cultural hegemony
Week 8	Culture and contestation
Key concepts:	Alternative and oppositional cultures Dimensions and methods of contestation/resistance

