

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Code / Title : HS2011 Ethnicity and Ethnic Relations

Pre-requisites : HS1001 Person and Society

No. of AUs. : 3

Contact Hours : 39

Course Aims

Ethnicity has become “the pandemic of contemporary social life”. This course explores how and why ethnicity and ethnic relations matter so much to social life, now and then. Ethnicity and ethnic relations have strong and sometimes unconscious influences upon how we see ourselves, how we view other people and on how other people see us.

The course fosters understanding of how and why cultural, social, emotional, economic and political dimensions come into play when ethnicity and social constructions of race influence the social relations of people. The topics focused on are: feelings of home and belonging; the competition over access to resources; ethnic loyalties; social inequalities; the characteristics of multi-cultural societies; nationalism; ethnic/racial violence and inequality; ethnic cooperation; assimilation; globalization; and intersectionality. The scope of the course is necessarily world-wide, yet includes many comparisons with events in Singapore.

The aim of the course is produce understanding of how perceptions of ethnicity and race work in social interactions; and to be able to critically assess the enormous consequences ethnicity has for social life and for the structures of contemporary society. The course emphasizes that ethnicity means different things to different people, that ethnicity often does not work alone as a criterion to classify people into systems of social hierarchies and that ethnicity works in conjunctions with social class, race and gender, as well as other vectors of difference.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of the course students should be able to

- Define and critique historical and contemporary definitions of race and ethnicity and how they are employed in the practice of power, inequality and domination.
- Accurately define and discuss concepts of privilege, intersectionality and groupism with relevant examples.
- Identify different forms of racial and ethnic discrimination as well as speak about difficulties in distinguishing between these categorizations and actions.
- Describe with in-depth empirical knowledge the different systems states’ utilise in dealing with diverse ethnic populations. Students should be able to discuss the everyday implications of these policy initiatives for both minority and majority groups.

- Describe attempts at anti-racism and the ways in which ethnic and racial minorities deal with ethnic inequalities.

Course Content

Week 1 Introduction to the course

- Key concepts: The social construction of race
Biological determinism
Genetics and the re-emergence of “science” of race

Week 2 Colonial and post colonial constructions of race and ethnicity

- Key concepts: Colonial capitalism and commodification
Stereotyping

Week 3 What is Ethnicity? What is Race?

- Key concepts: Difficulties of defining ethnicity
Discourse and power

Week 4 Ethnicity without Groups

- Key concepts: Groupism
The boundary-making approach

Week 5 Ethnicity and nationalism

- Key concepts: Primordialism
Civic nationalism
Everyday nationalism

Week 6 Ethnicity as Resource

- Key concepts: Ethnic Enclaves, Social networks, Ethnic Politics

Week 7 Ethnicity and Intersectionality

- Key concepts: Intersectionality, feminism
Gender, religious and class identities

Week 8 Intra-ethnic diversity

- Key concepts: Pan-ethnicity
Intra ethnic differences

Week 9	Race and Ethnicity in Singapore
Key concepts:	Multiracialism Everyday racism
Week 10	Ethnic Privilege & Inequality
Key concepts:	Chinese Privilege/majority privilege White privilege Social capital
Week 11	Ethnic Conflict
Key concepts:	Ethnonationalism National identity Populism
Week 12	Questioning the continued significance of ethnicity
Key concepts:	Post-racial society Limits of social constructivist approach
Week 13	Review
	Summary and review of key points in the course

Course Assessment

CA1	Class participation	: 10%
CA2	Poster	: 30%
CA3	Discourse Analysis	: 30%
	Final Examination	: 30%
	Total	----- 100%