

# ETHN 101: CRITICAL UNIVERSITY STUDIES

## In Workflow

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## Approval Path

1. Thu, 26 Sep 2024 19:24:17 GMT  
Clarence George III (clarence.george): Approved for ETHN Committee Chair
2. Thu, 26 Sep 2024 22:11:16 GMT  
Brian Baker (baker): Approved for ETHN Chair
3. Thu, 17 Oct 2024 17:48:55 GMT  
Emily Wickelgren (wickelgr): Rollback to ETHN Chair for SSIS College Committee Chair
4. Thu, 17 Oct 2024 20:44:55 GMT  
Brian Baker (baker): Rollback to ETHN Committee Chair for ETHN Chair
5. Thu, 17 Oct 2024 23:11:31 GMT  
Clarence George III (clarence.george): Rollback to Initiator
6. Tue, 22 Oct 2024 15:38:36 GMT  
Clarence George III (clarence.george): Approved for ETHN Committee Chair
7. Tue, 22 Oct 2024 15:41:13 GMT  
Brian Baker (baker): Approved for ETHN Chair
8. Wed, 23 Oct 2024 15:52:33 GMT  
Emily Wickelgren (wickelgr): Approved for SSIS College Committee Chair
9. Sat, 26 Oct 2024 00:10:13 GMT  
Marya Endriga (mendriga): Approved for SSIS Dean

## New Course Proposal

Date Submitted: Tue, 22 Oct 2024 06:13:44 GMT

**Viewing: ETHN 101 : Critical University Studies**

**Last edit: Tue, 29 Oct 2024 20:32:23 GMT**

Changes proposed by: Giselle Cunanan (223024633)

**Contact(s):**

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**Catalog Title:**

Critical University Studies

**Class Schedule Title:**

Critical University Studies

**Academic Group: (College)**

SSIS - Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Studies

**Academic Organization: (Department)**

Ethnic Studies; African Studies

**Will this course be offered through the College of Continuing Education (CCE)?**

No

**Catalog Year Effective:**

Fall 2025 (2025/2026 Catalog)

**Subject Area: (prefix)**

ETHN - Ethnic Studies

**Catalog Number: (course number)**

101

**Course ID: (For administrative use only.)**

TBD

**Units:**

3

**Is the ONLY purpose of this change to update the term typically offered or the enforcement of existing prerequisites at registration?**

No

**In what term(s) will this course typically be offered?**

Fall, Spring

**Does this course require a room for its final exam?**

No, final exam does not require a room

**Does this course replace an existing experimental course?**

No

**This course complies with the credit hour policy:**

Yes

**Justification for course proposal:**

Ethnic Studies has always included a critical examination of the university as a space that perpetuates settler logics, empire, and antiblackness. The field itself was born out of the radical student movements of the 1960s in which the organizers engaged in intellectual and activist work to examine the university. Critical University Studies is a continuation of that spirited work, examining the modern university and its historical origins as well as the contemporary challenges it faces today. The course foregrounds settler colonialism and racial capitalism in its analysis, preparing students to apply theory and knowledge produced in Native American Studies, Pan African Studies, Asian American Studies, and Chicanx/Latinx Studies. It provides an upper-division Area F GE class for Ethnic Studies major, minor, and also serves non-majors interested in fulfilling their Area F GE requirement. The course also serves as an elective course for the Ethnic Studies major and minor. By focusing on how Native American, Pan African, Asian American and Chicanx/Latinx communities enact and practice resistance and solidarity, the course engages with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and practices in aims of preparing students to build a just and equitable society.

**Course Description: (Not to exceed 90 words and language should conform to catalog copy.)**

This course examines U.S. higher education and universities' historical and ongoing ties with chattel slavery and Native land dispossession through the interdisciplinary scholarship of Ethnic Studies. It interrogates structures, policies, and knowledge production within higher education while also considering social movements that shape the trajectory of higher education.

**Are one or more field trips required with this course?**

No

**Fee Course?**

No

**Is this course designated as Service Learning?**

No

**Is this course designated as Curricular Community Engaged Learning?**

No

**Does this course require safety training?**

No

**Does this course require personal protective equipment (PPE)?**

No

**Does this course have prerequisites?**

Yes

**Prerequisite:**

Must have completed 45 units prior to enrollment.

**Prerequisites Enforced at Registration?**

Yes

**Does this course have corequisites?**

No

**Graded:**

Letter

**Approval required for enrollment?**

No Approval Required

**Course Component(s) and Classification(s):**

Lecture

**Lecture Classification**

CS#02 - Lecture/Discussion (K-factor=1WTU per unit)

**Lecture Units**

3

**Is this a paired course?**

No

**Is this course crosslisted?**

No

**Can this course be repeated for credit?**

No

**Can the course be taken for credit more than once during the same term?**

No

**Description of the Expected Learning Outcomes and Assessment Strategies:**

List the Expected Learning Outcomes and their accompanying Assessment Strategies (e.g., portfolios, examinations, performances, pre-and post-tests, conferences with students, student papers). Click the plus sign to add a new row.

	Expected Learning Outcome	Assessment Strategies
1	Evaluate the university's historical relationship with white supremacy, imperialism and settler colonialism (GE Core Competencies 1)	-Attendance and Participation -Weekly Reflection -Critical Response Papers
2	Assess the critical events, histories, social struggles and contributions of Native American, Pan African, Asian American, and Chicana/Latina communities in higher education and how those groups shape the trajectory of higher education (GE Core Competencies 2)	-Attendance and Participation -Weekly Reflection -Critical Response Papers -Final Group Project/Zine
3	Describe the ways that academic knowledge and the university reproduce race and racism as it relates and intersects with class, gender, sexuality, ability, and citizenship status (GE Core Competencies 3)	-Attendance and Participation -Weekly Reflection -Critical Response Papers -Final Group Project/Zine

4	Determine how Native American, Pan African, Asian American and Chicana/Latina communities struggle, resist, and enact solidarity in the university to achieve justice and liberation (GE Core Competencies 4)	-Attendance and Participation -Weekly Reflection -Critical Response Papers
5	Develop anti-racist and anti-colonial practices and theories based on community accountability, safety, and transformative justice to build a just and equitable society (GE Core Competencies 5)	-Attendance and Participation -Weekly Reflection -Critical Response Papers -Final Group Project/Zine

**Attach a list of the required/recommended course readings and activities:**

CUS Readings and Assignments.docx

**For whom is this course being developed?**

Majors in the Dept  
Majors of other Depts  
Minors in the Dept  
General Education

**Is this course required in a degree program (major, minor, graduate degree, certificate?)**

No

**Does the proposed change or addition cause a significant increase in the use of College or University resources (lab room, computer)?**

No

**Will there be any departments affected by this proposed course?**

No

**I/we as the author(s) of this course proposal agree to provide a new or updated accessibility checklist to the Dean's office prior to the semester when this course is taught utilizing the changes proposed here.**

I/we agree

**Attach Accessibility Checklist: (Optional at submission. Fulfills requirement to file with Dean's office.)**

ETHN 101 Course Accessibility Checklist.pdf

## University Learning Goals

**Undergraduate Learning Goals:**

Competence in the disciplines  
Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world  
Intellectual and practical skills  
Personal and social responsibility  
Integrative learning

**Is this course required as part of a teaching credential program, a single subject, or multiple subject waiver program (e.g., Liberal Studies, Biology) or other school personnel preparation program (e.g., School of Nursing)?**

No

## GE Course and GE Goal(s)

**Is this a General Education (GE) course or is it being considered for GE?**

Yes

**In which GE area(s) does this apply?**

F. Ethnic Studies/6. Ethnic Studies

**Which GE objective(s) does this course satisfy?**

Possess a significant and useful understanding of peoples from a diversity of cultures and backgrounds, including women and ethnic and other minority groups who have been the objects of prejudice and adverse discrimination within our society.

**Attach Course Syllabus with Detailed Outline of Weekly Topics:**

ETHN 101 CUS Syllabus(1).docx

Syllabi must include: GE area outcomes listed verbatim; catalog description of the course; prerequisites, if any; student learning objectives; assignments; texts; reading lists; materials; grading system; exams and other methods of evaluation.

**Will more than one section of this course be offered?**

No

## General Education - Area 6: Ethnic Studies

Section 1.

**Please provide a statement indicating the means and methods for evaluating the extent to which the objectives of Area 6: Ethnic Studies, the cultural diversity requirements, and the writing requirements are met for all course sections.**

Critical University Studies fulfills the objectives of the Area F: Ethnic Studies, cultural diversity, and writing requirements through a series of lectures, discussions, and assignments, and final group project zine. The course is based on core Ethnic Studies principles, frameworks and concepts in order to prepare students to understand the histories, struggles, and achievements of Native American, African American, Asian American, and Chicanxs/Latinxs, the four historically defined racialized core groups. Through an interdisciplinary study and comparative approach to race and ethnicity, students learn about the various histories, perspectives and cultures of U.S. pluralistic society and the ways that communities of color attempted to build a just and equitable society. Student assessment in the form of critical response papers, informal weekly reflection papers, participation in face-to-face discussions, and collaboration in a final group project bolsters student engagement, active learning in class, and a pedagogical practice of Ethnic Studies that prompts students to apply theory into concrete action. Students of the California State University acquire the knowledge and skills that will help them comprehend diversity and social justice history through Critical University Studies. Additionally, students develop the critical thinking skills to build a just and equitable society.

Section 2.

**Indicate in written statements how the course meets at least 3 of the 5 following criteria for Area 6: Ethnic Studies. Relate the statements directly to the course syllabus and outline. Be as succinct as possible.**

**1. Analyzes and articulates concepts such as race and racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethnocentrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, imperialism, settler colonialism, and anti-racism as analyzed in any one or more of the following: Native American Studies, Pan African Studies, Asian American Studies, and Chicanx/Latinx Studies.**

This course covers many of these concepts central to Ethnic Studies, specifically race, racism, equity, eurocentrism, white supremacy, liberation, decolonization, imperialism, settler colonialism, and anti-racism. The course is built upon scholarly works from the four Ethnic Studies fields of Native American Studies, Pan African Studies, Asian American Studies, and Chicanx/Latinx Studies.

Weeks 1-4 set the foundation for the course and begins with an article published in AAPI Nexus: Policy Practice and Community by Sacramento State's very own Dr. Timothy Fong and Bao Lo along with former student Annalise Harlow about the fights for Ethnic Studies at Sac State. By examining Sac State as a place of possibility, students are introduced to ideas about liberation, decolonization and anti-racism through readings about abolitionist university studies, transformative justice, and Ethnic Studies pedagogy. This introductory unit helps students consider the different perspectives on social transformation in the modern university. This first unit concludes with Robin D. G. Kelley's impactful and insightful essay titled, "Black Study, Black Struggle" which reckons with the question of whether social transformation in the university is possible at all.

The first unit sets the stage for every other unit to follow. It is structured so that students do close readings of the texts, begin to write their weekly reflections papers, and engage with culturally relevant material that centers their university campus. It prompts students to question the eurocentric tradition set up in schools, and centers the 1960s students strikes as anti-racist, decolonizing work that has made Ethnic Studies possible.

Unit II Week 6-10 delves into complex Ethnic Studies concepts, specifically white supremacy, imperialism, and settler colonialism. It begins with Craig Wilder's book *Ebony and Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities* to introduce students to the history of Ivy league universities and the Ivy's reliance on African slave labor to fund colleges, build campuses and pay professors' wages. In conjunction, students read, discuss, and write about the Morrill Act and land grant, or rather "land grab" universities from Native American Studies scholars Robert Lee and Tristan Ahtone so that they think about native land dispossession and chattel slavery as intertwined. Lastly, students learn about imperialism within the modern university and examine the university as a place that not only produces knowledge but also polices knowledge.

At the end of each unit, students submit a critical response paper to respond to a collection of readings. The weekly reflection papers help students prepare their ideas for the formal writing expected in the critical response paper. Class discussions (participation) provide opportunities for students to make sense of the readings.

**4. Critically reviews how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation, as experienced and enacted by Native American, Pan-African, Asian American, and/or Chicana/Latina communities are relevant to current and structural issues such as communal, national, international, and transnational politics as, for example, in immigration, reparations, settler-colonialism, multiculturalism, language policies.**

Throughout the entirety of the course, students critically review and evaluate the struggles and histories of resistance of Native American, Pan-African, Asian American, and Chicana/Latina communities, specifically those who have been historically underrepresented and underserved in colleges and universities. The course examines the university as a site of resistance, struggle, and liberation as enacted by racially minoritized communities.

In Unit III, students learn about current and structural issues through an examination of multiculturalism. African American Studies and Gender & Sexuality Studies scholar Roderick Ferguson's *The Reorder of Things: The University and its Pedagogies of Minority Difference* introduces students to critiques of diversity and multiculturalism. The text particularly examines the way that the university absorbs the racial labor of students (the work that students do to transform universities) through the case study of Ethnic Studies. The reading prompts students to think critically about neoliberal multiculturalism and how identity politics absorb the radical project of Ethnic Studies in the university. As a class, we consider how Native American, Pan-African, Asian American, and Chicana/Latina communities reckon with Ethnic Studies' absorption into multiculturalism, a structural issue that Ethnic Studies as field currently faces.

Additionally, Unit II and III discusses the rising costs of higher education and how the costs affect first-generation college students. This is relevant to many students at Sacramento State who are first in their families to attend college. Using readings that are accessible and relatable is one of the tenets of Ethnic Studies: to provide students with a culturally relevant education. By relating the material to students' lives, students are better able to grasp on the social problems occurring structurally and currently with/in the university.

Lastly, Unit III also extends an analysis of settler colonialism by examining gentrification and the expansion of universities as racial and environmental justice issue that displaces Black, Indigenous, and people of color. The unit concludes with readings from feminist scholar Sara Ahmed who writes about the language of diversity in the university. Her work is built upon through the assignment of an article from African American Studies scholar Rinaldo Wilcott who argues that diversity is a failing neoliberal project and calls for its end. Each of the assigned scholarly works in the course discuss struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation as the structural issues affecting communities of color. Student assessment includes weekly reflection papers, formal critical response papers, classroom participation in discussion, and the production of a collaborative zine.

**5. Describes and actively engages with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements in Native American, Pan African, Asian American, and/or Chicana/Latina communities and a just and equitable society**

Students learn about the Third World Liberation Front Strikes that gave birth to Ethnic Studies during Unit I and relate these student movements to other anti-racist and anti-colonial issues studied and examined in Unit IV. Students examine the current fights for Ethnic Studies at university campuses and K-12 schools across the U.S., as well as the Black student uprisings after the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Unit IV examines students demands (archived documents) across the U.S. always reckoning with the question if justice is possible within the modern university. All throughout the course, students examine "the crisis of the university" as posited by Critical University Studies scholars and how Native American, Pan African, Asian American, and Chicana/Latina communities attempt to address the "crisis." Students identify and evaluate the different and varied ways that Native American, Pan African, Asian American, and Chicana/Latina communities use anti-racist and anti-colonial practices to confront white supremacy in the institution. They compare and conclude different practices and movements that aim to build a just and equitable society.

Students in Unit IV are tasked to imagine if a "third university is possible" as la paperson suggests (assigned reading). Midway through the term students begin work on their group zines to frame the problems and challenges with/in the university while also engaging with the ways that communities of color confront racism and colonialism. This collaborative group zine tasks students to develop their own anti-racist and anti-colonial theories. The development of the zine is pedagogically a practice of liberation (and Ethnic Studies) itself as it asks students to imagine, dream, and enact another university possible.

Included writing component described on the course syllabus

**If the course is lower division, formal and/or informal writing assignments encouraging students to think through course concepts using at least one of the following: periodic lab reports, exams that include essay questions, periodic formal writing assignments, periodic journals, reading logs, or other. Writing in lower division courses need not be graded, but must, at a minimum, be evaluated for clarity and proper handling of terms, phrases, and concepts related to the course.**

**If the course is upper division, a minimum of 1500 words of formal, graded writing. [Preferably there should be more than one formal writing assignment and each writing assignment (e.g. periodic lab reports, exams that include essay questions, a research/term paper, etc.) should be due in stages throughout the semester to allow the writer to revise after receiving feedback from the instructor. Include an indication of how writing is to be evaluated and entered into course grade determination.]**

Students are required to complete four (4) critical response papers. These papers are formal papers, requiring well-polished prose and argumentation. The critical response papers assess students' ability to identify and evaluate concepts central to Ethnic Studies and prompts students to assess the critical events, histories, social struggles and contributions of Native American, Pan African, Asian American, and Chicana/Latina communities in higher education. The papers are due throughout the semester, expected to be 500 words each (approximately two pages double-spaced). The students are invited to choose a major concept from a unit to

describe and interpret using the scholarly texts assigned for the class. Each paper must include a clear thesis statement, strong topic sentences, and an organizational flow or structure. Students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of course concepts through the explanation and development of their ideas, governed by their thesis. The analysis is expected to be original in the sense that students devise an argument of their own. During one of the class lectures, I integrate a writing workshop that reviews and sets expectations for academic writing and formal prose. I grade and provide feedback within one week of receiving their papers. The four critical response papers equate to 2000 words, exceeding the minimum of formal graded writing. Additionally, students practice their informal writing through their weekly reflection papers which bolsters the heavily weighted assignment of the critical response paper.

Section 3.

**Reviewer Comments:**

**Emily Wickelgren (wickelgr)** (Thu, 17 Oct 2024 17:48:55 GMT): Rollback: see email on 10/17/24

**Brian Baker (baker)** (Thu, 17 Oct 2024 20:44:55 GMT): Rollback: Hi Giselle. Rolling this back so you can begin work on the suggestions received from the SSIS Curriculum Chair via email. Please let me know if you have questions. We can also schedule a time to meet over zoom and use the screen share function. Brian

**Clarence George III (clarence.george)** (Thu, 17 Oct 2024 23:11:31 GMT): Rollback: See email

Key: 15064