

European and Middle-Eastern Americans
POSC 592.01/Ethnic Studies 592.01

Spring 2012
MR 2:00-3:50 p.m.
AC 215

Office Hours: MWR 4:00-5:00
and by appointment

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Course Description: This course examines the history, society, politics, and cultural production of some of the major European- and Middle-Eastern-origin ethnic groups in the United States: the English, Irish, Dutch, French, Germans, Scandinavians, Italians, Russians, Poles, Jews, Arabs, and Armenians. Major topics include immigration history, ethnic politics and identity, ethnic prejudice and conflict, white supremacy, and institutions of cultural maintenance. Counts as a core course for the Ethnic Studies minor and an upper-division American politics course for the Political Science major.

Prerequisites: None.

Student Learning Outcomes: After successfully completing this course, a student should be able to:

- explain the historical patterns of migration to the United States from Europe and the Middle East;
- identify the cultural and political differences and similarities among the principal European and Middle-Eastern nationalities in the United States; and
- detail how the social, political, and economic institutions in this country benefit certain ethnic groups to a greater or lesser extent.

Requirements: Successful completion of this course will require attending class regularly and participating actively in class discussions (10% of grade), reporting orally on an interview with a European or Middle-Eastern American (10% of grade, pass/fail converts to rest of term grade if pass); reading the assigned texts, performing creditably on the midterm (25% of grade) and final (30% of grade) examinations, and completing a 10-12 page research paper (25% of grade). In addition, students will participate in one required, all-day field trip to related sites in Los Angeles.

Students with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in class activities or meet course requirements should contact the Disabilities Services Office (TCC 264, 506-6500) as soon as possible. Students needing to be absent during a religious holiday should also notify the instructor beforehand.

Course materials prepared by the instructor, together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by the instructor, are the property of the instructor. Video and audio

recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the instructor is prohibited. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, recordings of lectures and review sessions may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person. Electronic devices other than laptops (e.g., cell phones, PDAs, calculators, recording devices) are not to be used during lectures or exams without prior permission of the instructor.

Academic dishonesty is inexcusable! Examples include writing notes on one's extremities and consulting said notes during a closed-book exam, forging the professor's signature, down-loading term papers from the Internet, copying a paper or problem set from another student (though reasonable cooperative efforts are allowed on problem sets in this class), hiring a graduate student to write your term paper for you, and submitting the same term paper for two classes without having previously obtained the permission of both instructors. If you are caught cheating in this class, I will do my best to see that you at least receive an F for the course. The Seaver College Academic Integrity Committee may impose additional sanctions, including suspension from Pepperdine. In short, don't even think about it!

A student requesting a grade change on substantive grounds (e.g., the number of points given for a particular answer on an exam; substantive grounds do not include errors in adding up the total number of points for an exam) must submit her or his request to me in writing within one week of the date I returned the graded assignment to her or him. My response will be in writing and is subject to review by and carbon-copying to the chair of the Social Science Division.

Readings: The following works are *required* and may be purchased at the campus bookstore:

- Cainkar, Louise A. 2009. *Homeland Insecurity: The Arab American and Muslim American Experience after 9/11*. New York: Russell Sage.
- Ignatiev, Noel. 2008. *How the Irish Became White*. New York: Routledge.
- Luebke, Frederick C. 1974. *Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans and World War I*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.
- Wenger, Beth. 2007. *The Jewish Americans: Three Centuries of Jewish Voices in America*. New York: Doubleday.

Schedule:

- Week 1: Theoretical Background to American Ethnic Studies; European and Middle-Eastern History in a Nutshell
- Reading: Ignatiev.
- Week 2: English, Scottish, and Dutch Americans
- Reading: Ignatiev.
- Week 3: Irish and French Americans
- Reading: Ignatiev.

Week 4: German and Scandinavian Americans

- Reading: Luebke.

Week 5: Italian, Polish, and Russian Americans; Midterm Review

- Reading: Luebke.

- **Note:** The latter part of class will be devoted to review for the midterm exam. Be sure to come prepared with questions about the previous weeks= material.

Week 6: Field trip to Los Angeles (Skirball Cultural Center; Alpine Village; and Armenian Cultural Foundation)

Week 7: Midterm exam

Week 8: Jewish Americans

- Reading: Wenger

- **Note:** No class Feb. 27 & 30: Spring Break.

Week 9: Arab Americans

- Reading: Cainkar.

Week 10: Iranian/Persian and Armenian Americans

- Reading: Cainkar.

Week 11: Ethnic Media, Literature, and Art

- Reading: Wenger.

Week 12: Class Bias and Poor Rural Whites

- Reading: Wenger.

Week 13: White Supremacism and Neo-Nazis

- Reading: tba.

Week 14: Critical Whiteness Studies

- Reading: tba.

- **Note:** Research paper due in class.

Week 15: Final examination