

ARSC 121: AMERICAN PLURALISM: A SEARCH FOR JUSTICE
PROPOSED GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE FOR SOCIAL / BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE and DIVERSITY
REQUIREMENT

This interdisciplinary course is designed to examine the American experience from a multicultural perspective while integrating the methods, assumptions, and values of politics, philosophy, literature, sociology, history and other disciplines. The ideals of freedom and equality are examined through primary documents and the historical study of social experience to explore how gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic class, and sexual orientation influenced the realization of the “American Dream.” The course begins with an examination of self-identity within the context of pluralistic society. It will also explore the social construction of difference and power.

In the course, students use historical documents, demographic statistics, documentary film, oral history interviews and experiential group and individual exercises to examine the perspectives of Americans from diverse backgrounds. Origins and impact of prejudicial attitudes and structured inequalities will be examined. This course will give students a forum for communicating across the complex boundaries of ethnicity, religion, race, gender, class, disability, and sexual orientation.

ARSC 121 students are provided with numerous opportunities for evaluation. The format of these opportunities includes class discussions, website analysis, group projects, informal reaction papers, and formal papers.

COMMON COURSE OUTLINE
ARSC 121
AMERICAN PLURALISM
3 Semester Hours

The Community College of Baltimore County

Description

This course examines multiculturalism in the United States and focuses on contemporary issues of race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic class, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation from an interdisciplinary perspective. It provides students with a critical awareness of the causes and effects of structured inequities and prejudicial exclusion in and by the United States, as well as processes and policies leading to a more equitable society. Prerequisites: Reading Skill 2; Math skill 1; English skill 2.

Overall Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course the students will be able to:

1. Summarize and critique in writing a variety of sources including secondary sources, interpretive essays, electronic sources, and primary sources such as biographies, diaries, letters, newspapers, and statistical reports. (I, II, III; 2, 3) **(2)**
2. Analyze the origins of structured inequalities and prejudicial attitudes and actions with regards to race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation in the lives of citizens of the United States. (I, II, III, V; 1,2,4) **(1,2,3,4)**
3. Examine the impact of the Internet and other research technologies on various populations. (I, II, III, IV; 1,3) **(3)**
4. Explain perspectives other than their own with regard to the meaning of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation in the United States. (I, II, III, V, VI; 1,2,4) **(1,2,4)**
5. Determine and explain the role that religion, race, class, gender, and ethnicity play in influencing historical issues and events. (I, II, III, V; 1, 2, 4) **(1, 2, 3, 4)**
6. Compare and contrast students' own culture in terms of art, literature, science, and/or technology with that of another. (I, II, III, IV, V, VI; 2,3) **(1, 2, 4)**
7. Explain how selected course material has contributed to the formation / formulation and or evolution of their own worldview. (I, II, III, IV, V, VI; 1, 2, 3) **(1, 2, 3, 4)**
8. Identify and explain policies and actions that would lead to a more equitable society. (I, II, III, V; 1, 2, 3, 4) **(3, 4)**

9. Compare and contrast the historical experiences of Americans on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation in the lives of the citizens of the United States. (I, II, III, IV, VI; 1, 2, 4) **(1, 2, 3, 4)**
10. Articulate and support the validity of their own perception of structured inequalities and prejudicial attitudes regarding race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, religious affiliation and sexual orientation in the lives of citizens of this country. (I, II, III, V; 1, 2) **(1, 2, 3)**
11. Define terms appropriate to the subject matter such as structured inequalities, social construction, internalized oppression, etc. and analyze theories related to the terms. (I, II, V; 1, 2) **(2, 3)**

Major Topics

1. An exploration of self-identity within the context of a pluralistic society.
2. The pre-Revolutionary War convergence of Native American, European and African cultures on the North American continent.
3. History of immigration and / or assimilation of Americans of native and foreign origin.
4. Origins and impact of prejudicial attitudes and structured inequalities.
5. The contributions made to expanding democracy by Americans of diverse backgrounds and circumstances.
6. The widely divergent points-of-view expressed by diverse social groups on public policy issues.
7. Policy issues and alternatives
8. Re-envisioning the future

Course Requirements (VII)

Individual course requirements will be determined by the instructor and will be described in the syllabus for each section. Minimally each section will require:

1. Midterm exam or project
2. Final exam or final project (i.e. service learning or project for change);
3. A minimum of two unit papers;
4. At least one oral project or presentation;
5. Class participation (includes attendance, meaningful discussion, group work, on-line discussions, etc.);
6. Website analysis (for example having students explore relevant websites related to race, class, gender, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, and socio-economic class issues and analyze the purpose, reliability, and validity of websites chosen); and
7. A minimum of one collaborative learning project.