Course Title : Culture, Value and Belief
Course Code : CUS3214
Recommended Study Year* : 3-4
No. of Credits/Term : 3
Mode of Tuition : Lectures and Tutorials
Category in Major Prog. : Elective
Co-requisite(s) : Nil
Exclusion(s); : Nil
Exemption Requirement(s) : Nil

Brief Course Description : What is a “cultural life” like for people and groups who share a society together? What values and beliefs support such a cultural life? What happens when there are multiple value and belief systems that compete for dominance and influence in the society? How can people and groups who have been marginalized make cultural claims based on values and beliefs, so as to try to coexist with — or contest — the dominant groups and their prevailing values?

This course acquaints you with the study of different cultural claims as shaped by multiple and often competing cultural values and beliefs, focusing on how to compare arguments and claims arising in diverse cultural contexts and on developing a self-reflexive evaluation of your own cultural values and beliefs set against strangers or the “others.” Through lectures, workshops, scenarios, in-class exercises, and a series of student-led discussions, you will critically examine how the concept of difference constitutes a major focus in cultural studies’ understanding of values and beliefs.

Aims : 1. To master a body of knowledge regarding the social, cultural, political, and ethical significance of “difference” from within the field of cultural studies;

2. To apply the body of knowledge learned in 1 above to relevant real-life local and non-local situations;

3. To engage in a public discussion of 1 and 2 above, including insights from self-reflection.

Learning Outcomes : On completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the basic concepts and practices associated with “difference” as debated internationally in cultural studies, e.g. when applied to issues of:
   1.1 race and ethnicity
   1.2 migration and diaspora
   1.3 Chineseness
   1.4 media and artistic representations
   1.5 the politics of recognition and hybridity
2. Track, compare, and assess different ideological positions – stated or implied – in a value conflict pertaining to issues such as those listed in 1 above.
3. Organize and conduct a vivid discussion of those positions in a team setting.
4. Analyze and evaluate critically one’s own values and beliefs pertaining to issues such as those listed in 1 above.

Indicative Content : Section I: Introduction

1. Significance of studying cultural value and belief within the formation of a cultural life
2. Key concepts: difference-in-general, value and belief, cultural difference, community, otherness

Section II: Complexities of Racial and Ethnic Identities in Action

1. Meanings of race and ethnicity as identity (i.e. cultural claim) as well as ideology (i.e. representation)
2. Value conflicts arising in discourses of race and ethnicity
3. Problematizing “Chineseness”
4. Key concepts: race, ethnicity, racism, racialism, language as cultural practice, “Chineseness”

Section III: Flow and Mobility: Refiguring Race and Ethnicity

1. Modes of travel, migration, and dispersion, as well as their historical significance
   Changing shape of racial and ethnic feelings, identities, and performances through various modes of mobility
2. State politics of, and popular imagination about, migration
3. Transnational capitalism
4. Key concepts: migration, diaspora, homeland, flexible citizenship, double consciousness

Section IV: On Alternative Racial and Ethnic Imaginaries

1. Theories and politics of hierarchies
2. Theories and politics of recognition and performativity; or politics of racial worth
3. Theories and politics of hybridity and differentiated citizenship
4. Key concepts: freedom, transgression, hybridity, inter-Asia, multi-ethnic public sphere, differentiated citizenship

Teaching Method : Lectures will introduce key concepts and help articulate relevant context, including context of various authors’ background and intellectual pursuit. Class activities will include Student-led discussion, response exercises (individual or in team), and workshops. Those response exercises and workshops will utilize role-playing, informal debates, field study, etc. A high level of student participation in the classes is required.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes : 1. Active oral class participation engages critically with assigned weekly readings, unpacking key concepts in them, assessing historical and social contexts, and debating relevant cultural
values and beliefs (and their conflicts). Final examination assesses comprehension and reflection of issues covered in the readings.

2. Problem based continuous assessment, in the forms of response exercise and workshop, where students work individually or in teams to apply key concepts to real life situations of racial, ethnic, and linguistic complexities articulated through/as difference and otherness.

3. A Student-led Discussion Group in which the central arguments in assigned readings are presented coherently, effectively, and critically; different perspectives of teammates are expressed and debated; an applied case study in the context of Hong Kong is presented and discussed; and meaningful interaction with the rest of the class conducted.

4. Problem based continuous assessment in which students examine their own perspectives, experiences, biases, and struggles with their own values surrounding racial, ethnic, and linguistic complexities. Final examination requires students to express their self-reflective and informed opinions.

Assessment (suggested): Students will be graded on the basis of 70% Continuous Assessment and 30% Final Examination.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-class Exercises / Quizzes</td>
<td>[20%]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-led Discussion</td>
<td>[20%]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation (including class attendance)</td>
<td>[30%]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
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Student-led Discussion (suggested instructions)

Purpose:
To provide students with the opportunity to study 1-2 assigned readings in depth. Working in a team, students are expected to present the central arguments in the assigned readings coherently, effectively, and critically; express and debate different perspectives of the teammates; present and discuss an applied case study in the context of Hong Kong; and conduct a meaningful interaction with the rest of the class.

Guidelines:
1. Students will form small teams of 2-3 members.
2. It is the responsibility of the team to pose in-depth discussion questions to the class from the assigned reading(s) through an effective – and hopefully creative – method of presentation (e.g. debate format, workshop format, visual study, role play, or a combination of some of them). A simple didactic method will not be appropriate.
3. The focus of the discussion in whatever format should:
4. explore the basic meaning of the texts and any comprehension difficulties;
5. attend to both relevant theoretical concepts and practical issues;
6. invite the classmates to express and debate their views; and
7. apply the concepts to a case study (about either a local situation or a situation outside of Hong Kong)
8. This last item requires moderate research, in which the team will identify at least 2 additional readings offering background and/or analysis of the chosen case study. These additional readings should be from a mix of academic and non-academic sources.

9. The team is expected to produce a draft of their discussion at least one week before the presentation for consultation with the instructor. A written summary of their presentation, including any visual materials or powerpoint, will be submitted one week after the discussion.

10. On the day of the discussion, the team will essentially take over the class and lead a meaningful discussion, while the rest of the class is expected to participate actively.

Marking Criteria:
1. Explaining key concepts clearly and effectively?
2. Setting up context of the assigned reading(s) adequately?
3. Presentation format was effective, creative, and stimulating?
4. Team members’ views, whether they were similar or divergent, adequately managed and expressed?
5. Case study well chosen? Its background adequately provided through self-selected readings? Its connection to the assigned readings adequately illuminated and discussed?
6. Interaction with the rest of the class was of high quality?

Required / Essential Readings:


Recommended / Supplementary Readings:


