

## NAS490 North American Studies Seminar

Spring 2010 TR 17:00-18:15

Instructor: Takeshi Akiba

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Office Hours: TBA

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### Course Objectives

To conduct research and write a 12-15 page academic paper on a topic within the field of *race, ethnicity, immigration, and citizenship*. Other topics that touch upon issues of diversity and equality may be allowed. Please refer to sample research topics on this syllabus. Specific topics for each individual will be decided through consultation with the instructor.

### Course Description

This is a required senior seminar for North American Studies students. The first-half of the seminar will be devoted to reading and discussion on race and ethnic relations. The second-half will be presentations and discussions of student research and individual tutorials with the instructor. Students are expected to decide a topic by the end of May and to present a draft of their papers at the excursion, which is scheduled in early July.

### Classroom Activities

**Course format:** The format will alternate between seminar discussion and individual tutorials. **Assignments:** You are expected to present the outlines and drafts of your work on assigned dates. Your work should be uploaded on AIMS prior to the presentations. **Policies:** Attendance is mandatory for all discussion sessions. Exceptions may be made only with approval by the instructor for legitimate reasons. **Feedback:** Your feedback is always welcome. Please feel free to e-mail me or visit my office.

### Prerequisites

You must be a student in the North American Studies major and must have returned from the study abroad program.

### Evaluation

Research paper	60%
Participation	20% (including submission of response papers)
Writing process	20% (10% each for 4 page and 8 page drafts)

### Course Materials

Required: Elizabeth Higginbotham & Margaret L. Andersen, *Race and Ethnicity in Society*  
Additional materials will be distributed in class or placed on reserve at the library.

### Course Schedule

*This schedule is tentative and subject to changes and adjustments.*

Reading and discussion articles will be announced at the first seminar meeting.

Week 1 (Apr. 13, 15)      Orientation and registration

Week 2 (Apr. 20, 22)      Reading and Discussion

Race: Why it matters

The Social Construction of Race and Ethnicity

Week 3 (Apr. 27)          Reading and Discussion

Prejudice and Racism

Race and Identity

Week 4 (May 6)            Tutorial (research topics)

Week 5 (May 11, 13)      Reading and Discussion

Race, Nation and Citizenship

Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity

Week 6 (May 18, 20)      Reading and Discussion

Race, Class, and Inequality

Institutional Segregation and Inequality (Work and Families)

Week 7 (May 25, 27)      Reading and Discussion

Institutional Segregation and Inequality (Education and Social Justice)

Student-chosen topics

Week 8 (Jun. 1, 3)        Tutorial

***4 page draft due on Sun., June 6***

Week 9 (Jun. 8, 10)      First Presentations

Week 10 (Jun. 15, 17) First Presentations

Week 11 (Jun. 22, 24) Tutorial

Week 12 (Jun. 28, Jul. 1) Tutorial

***8 page draft due on Sun., Jul. 4***

Week 13 (Jul. 6, 8) Second Presentations

Week 14 (Jul. 13, 15) Second Presentations

Week 15 (Jul. 20, 22) Concluding discussion

***Final research paper due on Sat., July 31***

**Sample research topics from past seminars**

Hmong Refugees in Minnesota Area

Vietnamese Refugees in Japan and the United States

Cuban Refugees in Miami

Social attitude towards Arabic people in U.S.

Proposition 187 and Proposition 200

Influence of the Concentration Camps and the Military Draft on Japanese Americans

Educational Policy towards Minorities in Japan and U.S.

Protection of Rights and Identity of Indigenous Minorities

White Privilege and Race Relations in the United States

Chinese American Identities

Interracial Marriage in the United States

Bilingual Education in the U.S. and Canada

Discrimination against Speakers of African American Vernacular English

Stereotypes of Asians and Asian Americans in the U.S. media