



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

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GENERAL STUDIES PROGRAM COURSE PROPOSAL COVER FORM

Courses submitted to the GSC between 2/1 and 4/30 if approved, will be effective the following Spring.

Courses submitted between 5/1 and 1/31 if approved, will be effective the following Fall.

(SUBMISSION VIA ADOBE.PDF FILES IS PREFERRED)

DATE 2/5/09

- 1. ACADEMIC UNIT: Division of Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Studies
2. COURSE PROPOSED: AMS 330 Introduction to American Lives
3. CONTACT PERSON: Name: Gloria Cuadraz Phone: 543-3018
Mail Code: 3051 E-Mail: gloria.cuadraz@asu.edu

- 4. ELIGIBILITY: New courses must be approved by the Tempe Campus Curriculum Subcommittee and must have a regular course number.
5. AREA(S) PROPOSED COURSE WILL SERVE. A single course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area.

Core Areas

Awareness Areas

- Literacy and Critical Inquiry-L
Mathematical Studies-MA CS
Humanities, Fine Arts and Design-HU
Social and Behavioral Sciences-SE
Natural Sciences-SQ SG

- Global Awareness-G
Historical Awareness-H
Cultural Diversity in the United States-C

- 6. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED. (1) Course Description (2) Course Syllabus (3) Criteria Checklist for the area (4) Table of Contents from the textbook used, if available
7. In the space provided below (or on a separate sheet), please also provide a description of how the course meets the specific criteria in the area for which the course is being proposed.

CROSS-LISTED COURSES: [X] No [ ] Yes; Please identify courses:

Is this amultisection course?: [X] No [ ] Yes; Is it governed by a common syllabus?

Monica J. Casper
Chair/Director (Print or Type)
Date: 2-18-09

[Signature]
Chair/Director (Signature)

**Arizona State University Criteria Checklist for**

**CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE UNITED STATES [C]**

**Rationale and Objectives**

The contemporary "culture" of the United States involves the complex interplay of many different cultures that exist side by side in various states of harmony and conflict. The history of the United States involves the experiences not only of different groups of European immigrants and their descendants but also of diverse groups of American Indians, Hispanic Americans, African Americans, and Asian Americans--all of whom played significant roles in the development of contemporary culture and together shape the future of the United States. At the same time, the recognition that gender, class, and religious differences cut across all distinctions of race and ethnicity offers an even richer variety of perspectives from which to view ourselves. Awareness of our cultural diversity and its multiple sources can illuminate our collective past, present, and future and can help us to achieve greater mutual understanding and respect.

The objective of the Cultural Diversity requirement is to promote awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity within the contemporary United States through the study of the cultural, social, or scientific contributions of women and minority groups, examination of their experiences in the U.S., or exploration of successful or unsuccessful interactions between and among cultural groups.

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

<b>ASU--[C] CRITERIA</b>		
<b>CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE UNITED STATES</b>		
YES	NO	Identify Documentation Submitted
		<b>1. A Cultural Diversity course must meet the following general criteria:</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The course must contribute to an understanding of cultural diversity in contemporary U.S. Society.
		<b>2. A Cultural Diversity course must then meet at least one of the following specific criteria:</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. The course is an in-depth study of culture-specific elements, cultural experiences, or cultural contributions (in areas such as education, history, language, literature, art, music, science, politics, work, religion, and philosophy) of gender*, racial, ethnic and/or linguistic minority groups** within the United States.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. The course is primarily a comparative study of the diverse cultural contributions, experiences, or world views of two or more gender*, racial, ethnic and/or linguistic minority groups** within the United States.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. The course is primarily a study of the social, economic, political, or psychological dimensions of relations between and among gender*, racial, ethnic and/or linguistic minority groups** within the United States.  *Gender groups would encompass categories such as the following: women, men, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender individuals, etc.  **Cultural, racial, ethnic, and/or linguistic minority groups in the U.S. would include categories such as the following: Hispanics, African Americans, Native Americans/First Peoples, Asian Americans, Jewish Americans, Muslim Americans, members of the deaf community, etc.

Course Prefix	Number	Title	Designation
			CULTURAL

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the specific designation criteria.  
Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

Criteria (from checksheet)	How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)	Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e. where in syllabus)
Example-See 2b. Compares 2 U.S. cultures	Example-Compares Latino & African American Music	Example-See Syllabus Pg. 5

**AMS 330:  
INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN LIVES**

Dr. Gloria H. Cuádriz  
[Gloria.Cuadraz@asu.edu](mailto:Gloria.Cuadraz@asu.edu)  
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11:00-12:00 noon.

This course examines the intersections of biography and history by taking as its theme the notion of meritocracy and meritocratic ideology in the United States. We deliberate “private troubles” and “public issues” in autobiographies, ethnographic studies, and journalistic accounts written and conducted in contemporary U.S. context. The complexity of American lives and the diversity along racial/ethnic and class lines are explored as we tackle the ideology of the American Dream and its significance within U.S. culture and within the context of structures of opportunity and institutional constraints.

**Required Books:**

Ehrenreich, Barbara. 2001. Nickel and Dimed. Owl Books.  
Frank, Robert. 2007. Richistan. New York: Crown.  
MacLeod, Jay. 1995. Ain't No Makin' It. Westview Press.  
Mar, Elaine M. 2000. Paper Daughter. Harper Publishers.  
Nazarro, Sonia. 2007. Enrique's Journey. New York: Random House.  
Wallis, Jeannette. 2005. The Glass Castle: A Memoir. New York: Scribner.

**Course Requirements:**

This course is designed to combine lectures with an array of learner-centered strategies. Be prepared to discuss the readings and supplemental readings by the DATE noted on the syllabus. Quizzes will be announced as we proceed through the readings and they will consist of short answers, exercises, and/or presentations. You will have the option of dropping the lowest grade among your quizzes. Make-ups for missed quizzes will not be allowed. The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus and assignments, including additional readings as I deem necessary.

**\*This is a living, breathing document that you can expect will change over the course of the semester!**

**Grades:**

Grades will be based on quizzes, midterm, and final exam.

- 1) Quizzes, Essays (40%)
  - 2) Midterm (30%)
  - 3) Final Exam (30%)
- 

**Grading Scale:**

A+ = 97 – 100	A = 93-96	A- = 90-92
B+ = 87 – 89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82
C+ = 77 – 79	C = 73-76	C- = 70-72
D = 60-69	E = 59 or below	

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**Week #1:**

1/16: Introductory Lecture  
Video: Who's Getting Rich and Why Aren't You?

**Week#2: The Working Poor and the American Dream**

“Introduction” and “Scrubbing in Maine” in Nickel and Dimed.  
Mills, C.W. “The Promise” in The Sociological Imagination (DR)  
Video: Making Ends Meet

**Week #3: The Culture of Meritocracy and the Psychology of Failure**

“Rejected Managers and the Culture of Meritocracy” in Falling From Grace (DR)  
“Serving in Florida” in Nickel and Dimed.  
“Selling in Minnesota” in Nickel and Dimed.  
“Evaluation” in Nickel and Dimed.

**Week #4: Life Chances, Individualism, and the Meaning of Democracy**

“Selling in Minnesota” in Nickel and Dimed.  
“Evaluation” in Nickel and Dimed.  
June Jordan’s “Waking Up in the Middle of Some American Dream” in Technical Difficulties, (DR)

**Week #5: Why do the Working Class end up in Working Class Jobs?**

“Social Reproduction in Theoretical Perspective”; “Teenagers in Clarendon Heights”; “The Influence of the Family”; “The World of Work” in Ain’t No Makin’ It.

Video: Class Photo

**Week #6: The “Leveling of Aspirations” and the Structuring of Inequality**

“School: Preparing for the Competition”; “Leveled Aspirations”; “Reproduction Theory Reconsidered” in Ain’t No Makin’ It.

Video: The Two Nations of Black America

**Week #7: ...And Inequality Reproduced**

“The Hallway Hangers: Dealing in Depair”; “The Brothers: Dreams Deferred”; “Conclusion: Outclassed and Outcast(e) in Ain’t No Makin’ It.”

**Week #8: In search of the American Dream: Quintessential American Journeys**

Enrique’s Journey (all)

Video: TBA

**Week #9:**

SPRING BREAK

**Week #10: Cultural Diversity, Achievement Ideology, and the ‘Price of the Ticket’**

Paper Daughter (all)

**Week #11: Lives of the Richistanis: Privilege and the Reproduction of Wealth**

Richistan, 1<sup>st</sup> half

**Week #12: Inherited Wealth and Privileged Malaise**

Richistan, 2<sup>nd</sup> half

**Week #13: Life Notes From the “Other America”**

The Glass Castle, 1<sup>st</sup> half

**Week #14: Hope, Poverty, and the American Dream**

The Glass Castle, 2<sup>nd</sup> half

**Week #15:**

REVIEW FOR FINAL EXAM

**Week #16:**

**In-Class Final Exam**



Paper  
Daughter

A MEMOIR

M. Elaine Mar



Perennial

*An Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers*

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# Falling from Grace

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The Experience of  
Downward Mobility in  
the American Middle Class

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KATHERINE S. NEWMAN



VINTAGE BOOKS

A Division of Random House, Inc.

New York

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Nickel  
— *and* —  
Dimed



Barbara Ehrenreich

A METROPOLITAN / OWL BOOK  
Henry Holt and Company • New York

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# THE GLASS CASTLE

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a memoir

*Jeannette Walls*

SCRIBNER

*New York London Toronto Sydney*



# Ain't No Makin' It

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*Aspirations and Attainment  
in a Low-Income  
Neighborhood*

*Jay Macleod*

WESTVIEW PRESS

Boulder • San Francisco • Oxford

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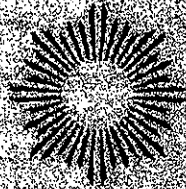
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# ENRIQUE'S JOURNEY



*Sonia Nazario*



RANDOM HOUSE TRADE PAPERBACKS  
NEW YORK

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