

ETHN 7: INTRODUCTION TO PACIFIC ISLANDS & OCEANIA STUDIES

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 3: Arts & Humanities, Area 6: Ethnic Studies
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Description

This introductory course examines the colonization, history, politics, identity, culture, indigeneity, diaspora, immigration, environment, contemporary social issues, and resistance to neo-colonialism experienced by peoples of Oceania. The focus areas of this course are the people of the Pacific Islands of Oceania regions, such as Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia. This course focuses on the experiences of Pacific Islanders from Hawai'i, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Guam, Palau, Marshall Islands, Tahiti, and New Zealand.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Analyze and articulate concepts such as race and racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethno-centrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, imperialism, settler colonialism, and anti-racism, as analyzed in Pacific Islander and Oceania Studies
2. Apply theory and knowledge produced by Pacific Island and Oceania communities to describe the critical events, histories, cultures, intellectual traditions, contributions, lived experiences, and social struggles of those groups, with a particular emphasis on agency and group affirmation
3. Critically review the present day issues of colonialism, urbanization, anti-militarism, economy, land rights, sovereignty movements, tourism, and modernization
4. Evaluate the background and growth of critical Pacific Islander and Oceania Studies in community colleges and universities
5. Analyze the intersectional identities of peoples of Oceania, such as: perspectives of women, gender nonconforming, LGBTQ communities, indigeneity, and mixed-race
6. Evaluate how Pacific Island and Oceania culture is depicted in mainstream media and critically analyze the importance of counter story-telling

7. Describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements in Pacific Islander and Oceania communities, to build a just and equitable society

Course Content

1. Origins of Oceania and Pacific Islander Studies
 - a. Third World Liberation Front strike
 - b. Decolonial methodologies
 - c. Oceania Studies, Pacific Island Studies, and Critical Pacific Island Studies
2. Geography of Oceania and pre-colonial society
 - a. Pacific Islands and Oceania
 - b. Polynesia
 - c. Micronesia
 - d. Melanesia
 - e. Indigenous cultures and beliefs
3. Colonialism
 - a. Encounters with Europeans
 - b. Christian missionaries settlement, culture, and colonialism
 - i. Hawai'i and annexation
 - ii. Samoa and U.S. annexation
 - c. Labor
 - i. Sugar plantations
 - d. Annexation of Hawai'i
 - e. Military presence in Oceania and the Pacific Islands
 - i. Geopolitics
4. Oceania ethnicity and social construction of race
 - a. Indigeneity
 - b. The concept of whiteness in Oceania
 - c. Asian American populations in Hawai'i
 - d. Population shifts on the islands
 - e. Mixed-race
5. Diaspora and community
 - a. Pacific Islanders in the U.S. mainland
 - i. Samoans
 - ii. Hawaiians
 - iii. Tongans
 - iv. Guamanese (Chamorro)
 - v. Micronesia
 - vi. Melanesia
6. The tourism industry and culture
 - a. Globalization
 - b. The commodification of culture
 - i. Tourism and culture
 - ii. Commodification of the Lū#au
 - iii. Stereotypes in the media
 - c. Urbanization
 - i. Hotels
 - d. Tourism and the law
 - i. Golf courses
 - e. Tourism economy
7. Land and sovereignty

- a. Hawai'i as a U.S. state
 - i. State defined indigeneity
 - ii. The court case of Day v. Apoliona
 - iii. Native Hawaiian Land Trusts
- b. Samoa as a U.S. territory
- c. Guam as a U.S. territory
8. Environmental justice
 - a. Access to fresh water and rivers
 - b. Sacred land
 - i. Fight against observatories in Hawai'i
 - c. Rising sea levels and global warming
 - d. Tourism and environmental impacts
 - e. The fishing industry and its economy

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

1. When taught on campus, no special facility or equipment is needed
2. When taught via Foothill Global Access, on-going access to a computer with email software and capabilities; email address

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Critical papers
 Class presentations
 Reading journals
 Midterm examination
 Final examination
 Social justice/service learning project

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Readings of multidisciplinary text from fields including history, social and political sciences, literature, cultural studies
 Viewing and analyzing various media regarding contemporary Pacific Islander issues
 Viewing/observing/hearing Pacific Island and Oceania art, performance, film theater, and music
 Class discussions on relevant topics
 Writing analytical responses to course material
 Actively engaging in social justice/service learning
 Guest speakers
 Field observation and field trips
 Collaborative learning and small group exercises
 Discussion of course topics and videos in relation to real life examples drawn from students' experiences and observations

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Arvin, Maile. Possessing Polynesians: The Science of Settler Colonial Whiteness in Hawai'i and Oceania. 2019.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples. 2021.

Caldwell, Ethan, and Roderick N. Labrador, eds.. Introduction to Ethnic Studies: Oceanic Connections. 2020.

Aikau, Hokulani K., and Vernadette Vicuña Gonzalez, eds.. Detours: A Decolonial Guide to Hawai'i. 2019.

Trask, Haunani-Kay. From a native daughter. 1999.

Kurashige, Lon, ed.. Pacific America: Histories of Transoceanic Crossings. 2019.

Matsuda, Matt K.. Pacific Worlds: A History of Seas, Peoples, and Cultures. 2012.

Texts older than five years are considered foundational texts.

Note: Text(s) may be chosen at the instructor's discretion.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Reading multidisciplinary texts from fields including ethnic studies, psychology, history, social science, political science, literature, and cultural studies
2. Viewing and analysis, including information literacy and media regarding Pacific Island communities and narratives
3. Attending Pacific Islander cultural events, musical performances, or museum exhibits, and responding in writing
4. Analytical essays on readings
5. Journal entries
6. Social justice/service learning projects (e.g., Foothill Research and Service Learning Symposium)
7. Group projects
8. Reflective essays on personal experiences or interviews

Discipline(s)

Ethnic Studies