

**Proposal – Comparative Ethnic Studies Major  
Possible Future Elective Courses**

The plan of the new major in Comparative Ethnic Studies calls for, as the name of the major suggests, a comparative approach to Ethnic Studies. As such, new elective courses currently in development and those that will be developed in the near future are all “thematic” and “topics” oriented, and not specific to any particular racial or ethnic group. The aim of these courses is to examine a series of different subject matters integral to Ethnic Studies from multiple points of reference. Over time, currently existing courses that examine a particular racial or ethnic group, such as ES 330 (The Chinese American Experience), will be gradually phased out and replaced with those that examine a particular topic, “Borders and Frontiers,” for example, that takes into consideration several different groups in relation to and comparison with each other. A few of the new elective courses that are in the works for the near future (i.e., after the start of the major) includes subjects such as:

*Indigeneity and the Settler Nation:* Investigation of the relationship between Indigenous peoples and settler societies, between competing myths and narratives of origins and rights. Special focus on disputes over land, natural resources, treaties, as well as examples of conciliatory moments and cooperative gestures. Examples drawn from various moments of Indigenous-settler contact in the Americas, Australasia, Africa, and the Pacific.

*Race, Gender, and Cultural Production:* Overview of cultural productions by Indigenous, Latino/a, African, and Asian peoples in the United States. Special attention paid to literary, filmic, performative, and visual culture by or about women and gendered subjectivities.

*Development, Gender, and Globalization:* Focus on social, political, and economic development in a global context, in particular within gendered experiences. Examination of important theories about social stratification, economic growth, nation-state and NGO apparatuses, reproductive and nutritional health, educational policies, and other women- and gender-centered issues integral to globalization and development.

*Borders and Frontiers:* Investigation of concepts of “borders” and “frontiers” – their origins, transformations, disappearances, and as loci of dramatic social change. Focus on meanings, symbolism, and disputes that accompany the emergence of borders and frontiers, especially in the context of the U.S. and its global connections. Special consideration paid to both the geographic and imaginative boundaries that define the normative notion of “Americans” vis-à-vis “other” peoples, in particular those of Indigenous, Latino/a, African, and Asian origins.

*War, Peace, and Migration:* Investigation of how events surrounding war and peace directly and indirectly influence mass migration of peoples, particular to the U.S. from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and within the U.S. by Indigenous peoples. Examples drawn from both historical and contemporary situations.

*Colonial Subjects, Postcolonial Subjectivities:* Comparative study of how colonial narratives construct and represent colonized and formally colonized subjects in relation to self-representation of colonized and formally colonized peoples. Sources drawn from literary and filmic sources, political treatises, scholarly studies, as well as personal narratives. Special geographic focus on Africa, Asia-Pacific, and the Americas.