

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – MADISON
SEMESTER II, 1996-1997**

**History 404
Ethnicity in 20th Century America**

TR: 2:30-3:45 P.M., 1651 Humanities

Staff

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Introduction

History 404 focuses on immigrant flows to the United States since the late nineteenth century, and examines the impacts of those movements on the evolution of ethnic identity and inter-group relations in this country. The course discusses the experiences of European, Asian, and Latin American immigrants and their descendants. For purposes of comparison and contrast, it also takes into account the experiences of African-Americans in the United States. Likewise, especially for the period since World War II, History 404 attempts to put what has happened in the United States in the context of events and developments in other nations that have become destinations of substantial numbers of immigrants.

Reporting basic information about immigration and ethnicity is fundamental to History 404, and students interested in learning more about the stories of individual ethnic groups or particular events will receive advice and encouragement. The emphasis in the course, however, is on analysis rather than on narrative. The special

concern is to expose students, through the concepts and techniques of the social science approach to the study of the past, to an examination of underlying forces and processes.

Lectures & Readings

After an introductory week, History 404 divides into three blocks. The first covers the period from the beginning of the "New Immigration" late in the post-Civil War era to the imposition of an overall program of immigration restriction in the 1920s. The second discusses developments associated with the Depression, World War II, and the 1950s. The final segment of History 404 begins with an outline of immigration to the United States and to other destinations since the revision of American admissions policies in 1965. It discusses legal and clandestine immigration and refugees flows in the contemporary world, and examines a variety of cultural, demographic, economic, and legal issues stemming from those movements and from ethnic group relations.

Students will read the following five books:

- Thomas J. Archdeacon, *Becoming American: An Ethnic History* (NY: Free Press, 1983)
- David M. Reimers, *Still the Golden Door: The Third World Comes to America* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1992)
- Hasia Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983)
- George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1993)
- Mary C. Waters, *Ethnic Options: Choosing Identities in America* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1990)

Although not textbooks, the Archdeacon and Reimers volumes can serve as such for purposes of this course. The remaining books are supplementary readings: Diner for Block 1, Sánchez for Block 2, and Waters for Block 3.

Electronic Media

Use of electronic media will be integral to History 404. As a student, each of you has a right, free from additional charges beyond your tuition and fees, to an E-mail account and access to the Internet. In order to perform satisfactorily in History 404, you will have to take advantage of that right. I intend to use E-mail to distribute to the class notes and other lecture-related materials that can be put in a format suitable for use with that medium. Finally, E-mail will serve as a means of enabling students to contact me outside of office hours and of allowing me to deliver messages, individually and collectively, to members of the class.

Last semester I constructed a home page for History 404. During the first couple of weeks of the current semester, I hope to update the materials for use with the new syllabus. The WWW offers advantages beyond those of E-mail, which is a medium best suited for the dissemination of simple text documents. The WWW makes possible the transmission of enhanced graphics and other similarly complex materials that I may include in classroom presentations. Moreover, a number of web pages with contents relevant to historians and to other students of immigration and ethnicity already exist, and the web page for History 404 can incorporate links that will enable students to have easy recourse to those sites. The 404 web is likely to move to a new address early in the semester; its current URL is <http://www.wisc.edu/history/404tja/>.

Grading

History 404 involves three, non-cumulative, 75-minute examinations. Each will cover material from the block of the course just completed. The first examination will take place during class on Tuesday, 25 February. The second examination will take place during class on Tuesday, 15 April. The third exam will constitute end-term scheduled for Tuesday, 13 May, at 7:45 A.M. Like the preceding pair of examinations, the final will also take 75 minutes.

Combined performances on the three exams will substantially determine each student's grade. Unless the student requests otherwise, the three exams will be equally weighted. Flexibility in the grading parameters, however, will allow students to minimize the impact of a substandard early performance. At the student's option, he or she may choose either to drop the score on the first exam or to have it count twice as much as the grade on the second. In the former situation, Exam 1 will not count, Exam 2 will contribute 50 percent of his or her grade, and Exam 3 the other 50 percent. In the latter Exam 1 will contribute 44 percent; Exam 2, 22 percent; and Exam 3, 34 percent of his or her grade.

Your participation is essential to all aspects of the course, and especially to the section meetings. The teaching assistant will evaluate each student's participation and, on the basis of that assessment, will advise me regarding adjustments in final grades. Depending on the evidence supplied by her, I may raise or lower the final grades of individual students by as much as five (5) points. Please remember that absence from class or from section is a fundamental form of non-participation, and that a passive presence at moments requiring active involvement is only slightly better.

Students with final averages of 90 or better will receive an "A." Likewise, students whose final averages fall in the following ranges will receive no less than the letter grade specified: 85-89, "AB"; 80-84, "B"; 75-79, "BC"; 70-74 "C"; 60-69, "D"; and below 60, "F." Beyond those guarantees, final grades will reflect the average of each student's point total and her or his standing relative to the mean cumulative score earned across the class during the semester.