COURSE CONTENT

Course Code / Title : HS2004 Culture, Self and Identity

Pre-requisites  : HS1001 Person and Society

No. of AUs.  : 3 AUs

Contact Hours  : 39

Course Aims

In a broad sense, culture refers to the socially (as opposed to genetically) transmitted bases for the behaviors that characterize the human species. In a narrower sense, it refers to the ways of life that are cultivated by people in particular times and places and which provide frameworks within which human beings go about everyday life. This course will teach Year 1 and Year 2 Sociology majors about the sociological significance of culture in terms of its material, ideological, and practical aspects; its production, transmission and consumption; and its relation to people selves and identities. Such knowledge is important for anyone who wishes to be critically aware of how and why people think and act as they do, and to be able to act on that knowledge and informed and active citizen.

The course should provide working answers to the following questions:

- What is culture? How does culture relate to individual and collective human life?
- How have social scientists approached the study of culture? What methods do sociologists use to study culture?
- How does culture relate to the human mind, as well as to social institutions?
- How does culture relate to self and identity?

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Describe what culture is and how it relates to individual and collective human life.
2. Evaluate different ways social scientists have approached the study of culture, including what kinds of things cultural sociologists study and what methods they use.
3. Describe how culture is related to human minds and social institutions.
4. Describe the relation among culture, self and identity.
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Course Content</th>
<th>Key concepts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to the course</td>
<td>Social construction of culture, culture and meaning</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Meaning and culture</td>
<td>History of culture as a concept, Culture as a meaning structure, Definitions of Culture and cultures</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Methodological approaches to culture</td>
<td>Discourse and semiotics, Ethnography and field research</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Mind, meaning, and action</td>
<td>Cognitive and micro-oriented approaches to culture, Culture as a problem-solving mechanism, culture as local</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>The production and consumption of culture</td>
<td>How culture is produced; how production is cultured, Cultural industries and cultural production, Cultural consumption, consumerism, Status and identity</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>The circuit of culture</td>
<td>Circuit of culture and its ‘moments’ (production, consumption, regulation, representation, identity)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Culture and control</td>
<td>Culture as a source of control, Center and periphery, Cultural hegemony</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Culture and contestation</td>
<td>Alternative and oppositional cultures, Dimensions and methods of contestation/resistance</td>
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Week 9  This week will be a work week on presentations. We will meet with groups individually to discuss their projects and to give intermediate feedback.

Week 10  Conceptualizing self and identity
Key concepts: Self and identity as sociological concepts
Culture, self and identity in an information age
Gender, age and class as components of identity

Week 11  Postcolonialism, hybridity, cosmopolitanism
Key concepts: Conceptualising hybrid and postcolonial identities
Contemporary cosmopolitanism and difference

Week 12  Identity and the Singaporean nation
Key concepts: Self and identity in Singapore; national identity
Ideological state apparatuses

Week 13  Semester-end review/revision

Course Assessment

CA1  (LAMS activity)  : 10%
CA2  (LAMS activity + online quiz)  : 10%
CA3  (Analytic essay)  : 20%
CA4  (Analytic essay)  : 20%
CA5  Course participation  : 10%
Final Examination  : 30%

Total  --------
100%