

Proposal to the University Curriculum Committee/Freshman Inquiry Course
The Constructed Self

I. Cover Sheet

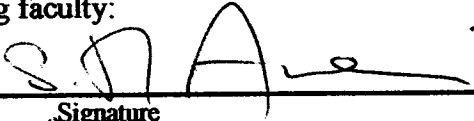
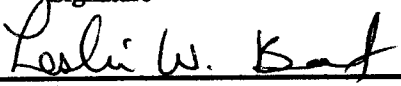

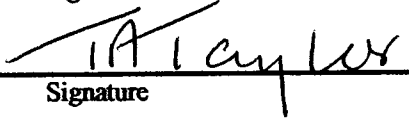
Course Title **The Constructed Self: Me, Us, and Them**

Date first offered Fall 2003

Sections per year 4-5

Statement of theme We will explore the development of individual identity and its interplay with similar and dissimilar social/cultural groups in understanding "us" and "them" in the creation and resolution of conflict.

Signatures of participating faculty:

<u>Sussan Ameri</u>	<u></u>	<u>9/25/03</u>
Name	Signature	Date
<u>Leslie Batchelder</u>	<u></u>	<u>9-16-03</u>
Name	Signature	Date
<u>Becky Boesch</u>	<u></u>	<u>9/16/03</u>
Name	Signature	Date
<u>Teresa Taylor</u>	<u></u>	<u>Sept. 16 '03</u>
Name	Signature	Date

Contact Faculty:

<u>Becky Boesch</u>	<u>UNST</u>	<u>725-5975(w) (360) 835-7145 (h)</u>	<u>boeschb@pdx.edu</u>
Name	Mail Code	Telephone (work, home)	E-mail

II Course Narrative

A. Statement of theme/topical area:

"The Constructed Self" explores the ways that we, as individuals, as human beings and as social/cultural groups, create and communicate a sense of identity. Certain factors of individual identity such as gender, ethnicity, race, age and social class will be studied as they connect to our understanding of "me" and how our understanding of identity is not static but rather transformational. But "me" cannot exist without "us." To understand this, we will explore how humans develop a sense of collective identity through language and culture and how historical events have shaped our current understanding of

ourselves. From this process, the social and national identities which have emerged inform the concept of “us” and “the other” and will be examined in the context of current social relations as well as domestic and world conflicts. Some of the conflicts which may be examined include current developments in technology, genetics and artificial intelligence, environmental disagreements over land use practices, and national and international clashes over how to maintain world peace and security.

B. Learning objectives specific to this theme:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- ◆ Articulate key theories in the social construction of identity and be able to apply it to their own personal experiences.
- ◆ Be able to delineate the differences in social power based on such individual statuses as race/ethnicity/nationality, class, gender, language and sexual orientation and how these differences are operationalized within American society.
- ◆ Explore the possibility of identity transformation through both life experiences and personal development.
- ◆ Be able to trace the changing historical perspective on how humans have defined and continue to define themselves and others through religion, science and technology.
- ◆ Investigate the concept and role of culture generally and American culture specifically as it relates to the understanding of ourselves and “the other.”
- ◆ Explore the historical process in the building of nationalism and national identity specifically in regards to the issues of inclusion and exclusion of groups and ideologies.
- ◆ Apply conflict resolution theory to current domestic and/or international clashes and explore their social and ethical responsibility towards these conflicts both in their own personal lives as well as in their role within broader national and international movements.

C. Assessment of student learning (specific to theme):

Assessment of student learning in this theme will be based on short analysis papers, graded research projects and essays, oral debates and presentations which will require organization of visual, graphic and other materials to illustrate or interpret the subject matter, community interaction projects as well as an ongoing synthesis of key ideas through reflections and portfolios. Over the year, students’ grades will be apportioned as follows: written analysis and research 30%; group projects 30%; reflections and portfolios 20%; class involvement 20%.

D. Description of methods to ensure coherence of theme across participating faculty.

The “Constructed Self” team will meet weekly during the year to exchange ideas and experiences and create new projects and materials to enrich the classroom experience. The faculty will use a common core of readings and assignments and each team

member will visit the others' classes at least once a term. The team will work diligently to ensure that each student regardless of section will be exposed to similar experiences and learning activities through sharing ideas, expertise and assignments on a regular basis.

E. Interdisciplinarity of theme:

The "Constructed Self" team consists of faculty with knowledge in a variety of areas. Sussan Ameri specialties lie in German literature, French and Cultural Studies. Becky Boesch's background is in English and American literature and immigrant issues and experiences as they relate to Second Language Acquisition and Education. Teresa Taylor's areas of study include Social Anthropology, Archaeology and Medieval History. Finally, Leslie Batchelder's expertise is in German Cultural Studies, European Intellectual History and Women's Studies.

F. Relation of course to other University Studies offerings (cohesion, ties to future learning):

The theme grew from the interests of the faculty involved and links conceptually with several existing clusters. These clusters include American Studies, 19th Century, Women's Studies, European Studies, Freedom Privacy and Technology, Popular Culture, and the Science and Humanities Cluster. While this course is not formally linked with these clusters, students interested in concepts raised by this course will have ample opportunity to pursue related studies in these areas.

G. How this theme will address the University Studies Goals:

University Studies Goal	Representative Assignments	Assessment Plan/Type
Communication: Writing	Each term: analysis and reflective papers. Winter and Spring term: research articles and papers	Assessment will be based off multiple drafts. The UNST writing assessment rubric will be used.

Graphics	<p>Fall Term: Appropriate use and layout of images and graphs in both PowerPoint and Excel</p> <p>All terms: Web Design in terms of appropriate layout and navigation style</p>	<p>Assessment will be based on organization, effectiveness of layout, appropriateness of content as well as a peer evaluation component.</p>
Oral Communication	<p>All terms: oral presentations both individually and group, class discussions and debates</p>	<p>Assessment will be based on effectiveness of organization and content and effective delivery strategies such as eye contact, volume and use of visual aids.</p>
Numeracy	<p>Fall term: statistical studies based on immigration census data.</p> <p>Winter and Fall term: statistical analysis of data based on differing research topics and web projects</p>	<p>Assessment will be based on ability to critically analyze and interpret statistics presented both for accuracy and information as well as the effectiveness of the presentation of that data.</p>
Visual Communication	<p>Each term: analysis and presentation of art representative of the focus of the study, i.e. Picasso, Dali, Van Gogh as well as the creation of their own original collages and artwork</p>	<p>Assessment will be based on ability to interpret and analyze form, color, composition as they reflect the significance of the artwork and web design.</p>
Group Process	<p>Each term: group work based on a group projects and interactions which will require differing group skills. These activities may include such things as collages, statistical analyses, web projects, group debates and oral presentations</p>	<p>Assessment will based on students assessment of each other's contributions to the group as well as an overall class evaluation as to the effectiveness of the group collaboration as represented by the group work/presentation.</p>
Computer Literacy	<p>Fall term: Excel statistical assignment, E-Collage, PowerPoint, Basic Web Construction</p> <p>Winter: Continued work in Excel and Web Construction as related to a Research Project as well as Library Research involving the use of electronic resources and online materials</p> <p>Spring: Electronic Magazines and Electronic Portfolio based on Web Construction and</p>	<p>Assessment will be based on effective use of the technology in terms of layout, ease of navigation, appropriateness of the content. Also, assessment will be based on the effective use of this technology in class presentations/discussions.</p>

	continued work on electronic Library Skills	
Inquiry and Critical Thinking	Each term: in depth examination of class texts and material in terms of understanding, synthesis, and soundness of argument with specific instruction on how to approach a text critically	Assessment will be based the depth of analysis and questions asked, ability to view different perspectives outside their own and the movement of their own thinking from one of bias to reasoned inquiry to informed opinion.
Diversity of Human Experience	Fall Term: Examine the experiences of a variety of peoples based on their different gender, race, ethnicity, nationality and language Winter Term: Explore how different cultures and times have defined themselves as it relates to the historical milieu of the time Spring Term: Investigate differing viewpoints of social and cultural groups in regards to ongoing domestic and international conflicts.	Assessment will be based on ability to engage with and appreciate the experiences and perspectives of others different from themselves as well as acknowledge the validity of those views.
Ethics and Social Responsibility	Fall Term: Malcolm X trial, Reflective Paper on their Identity and Placement in Society Winter and Spring Terms: Interviews with individuals of differing views and perspectives as well as community involvement with social and cultural groups, debates and presentations on contrasting viewpoints on issues and ideas from differing groups as well as possible steps towards resolution of these conflicts, i.e., TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission)	Assessment will be based on the student's ability to identify key ethical dimensions within specific conflicts and highlight alternative resolutions based on established codes and guiding principles. Assessment will also include the student's ability to place themselves within these conflicts and what personal actions/attitudes they need to take to address the conflict.

II. *Course Schedule and Topics*

TERM	TOPICAL OUTLINE	FACULTY
Fall Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Deconstructing identity: examining statuses and their role in understanding ourselves <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Structuralist versus Interpretativist approaches (Saussure, Mead's "The Reflected Self", Cooley's "Looking Glass Self" ◆ Examining such identity factors of race/ethnicity, class, gender and their interaction in terms of power and oppression <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Functionalism: social institutions, status roles, norms, values, learned behavior and social sanctions as evidenced in media, formal/informal education, family and peer influence and religion ◆ Examining autobiographical narratives of persons from a variety of social statuses in order to understand a variety of perspectives i.e. Malcolm X, Janet Campbell Hale, Richard Rodriguez, Eva Hoffman ◆ Exploring social transformations of self through such famous Americans as Malcolm X. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply Campbell's "Heroes Journey" analysis to individual transformations 	All
Winter Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How past history has attempted to understand "us" through both religious and scientific lenses and how current technological developments are 	All

	<p>redefining "us"</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand what it means to be human: exploring the religious and teleological "us" <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Comparative analysis of various religious texts for emerging definitions of humanity 2. Examine scientific theories of human development as they emerged historically: evolutionary theory (Darwin), psychoanalytic theory (Freud), Chaos Theory (Einstein). 3. Understand what it means to be human biologically: exploring our physical bodies and minds in understanding "us" <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Explore the relation between the brain and the mind: the role of language and symbolic thinking b. Explore how Sociobiology tries (and fails) to explain human behavior (Hall, Gould) 4. Explore the historical movement of human definition from primarily a religious definition (Christianity, Buddhism et al) to a scientific definition (Darwin, Freud, Einstein) to an uneasy metamorphosis of both in the creation of the cyborg, i.e., genetic screening, designer babies, medical implants 5. Compare interpretations of human reality and existence: creationists, evolution, romantics, chaos and randomness 	
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<p>Spring Term</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What is culture: the exploration of belief systems, values and norms in the construction of “us” and “them” <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore the current norms, values and beliefs of American culture 2. Examine how American culture has developed “us” and “them” through various types of assimilation—Anglo conformity, melting pot and cultural pluralism—and nation building strategies—manifest destiny, economic imperialism ◆ Culture and ethnocentrism: the conceptualizations of “The Other” <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine historical cases where the dominant culture as abused or misapplied its power in the silencing and marginalizing of certain subcultures—e.g., Native Americans, American Blacks, Chinese immigrants, Women ◆ Clashes with “The Other”: Domestic Disputes, Imperialism and Globalization—Jihad vs. MacWorld, Mass Culture vs. Indigenous Worlds, Consumerism vs. Environmentalism ◆ Renegotiating Difference and Conflict Resolution in regards to ongoing conflicts 	<p>All</p>
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III. Preliminary Reading List: (Selections from the following may be assigned.)

IV. Preliminary Reading List: (selections from the following maybe assigned

Aguirre, A. & Turner J. *American Ethnicity: The Dynamics and Consequences of Discrimination*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1998.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. London and New York, Verso, 1991.

Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Campbell Hale, Janet. *Bloodlines: Odyssey of a Native Daughter*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1993.

Campbell, Joseph. *The Power of Myth*. New York: Anchor Books, 1988.

Casti, John. *Paradigms Regained: A Further Exploration of The Mysteries of Modern Science*. New York: HarperCollins, 2000.

Clifford, James. *The Predicament of Culture*. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988.

Cronen, W. (Ed.) *UnCommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*. New York: W.W. Horton, 1996.

Deacon, T. *The Symbolic Species: The Co-Evolution of Language and the Brain*. New York: W. W. Horton, 1997.

Dick, Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*. New York: Ballantine, 1992.

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Culture*. New York: Basic Books, 2000.

Gould, Stephen J. *The Mismeasure of Man*. New York: WW Norton, 1981.

Haley, Alex. And Malcolm X. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Ballantine, 1973.

Jablonski, N. & Aiello, L. (Eds.) *The Origin and Diversification of Language*. San Francisco: California Academy of Sciences, 1998.

Kellner, Douglas. *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity, and Politics Between The Modern and the Postmodern*. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Loeb, Paul. *Soul of a Citizen: Living with Conviction in a Cynical Time*. New York: St Martin's, 1999.

Mander, Jerry. *In The Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology & The Survival of the Indian Nations*. Sierra Club Books, 1992.

- Marks, Jonathan. *What It Means to Be 98 Percent Chimpanzee: Apes, People, and Their Genes*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.
- Mead, George Herbert. *Mind, Self and Society. Volume 1*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967.
- Newman, Robert S. *American Lives, American Issues*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003.
- Olson, J. *The Ethnic Dimension of American History*. New York: St Martin's Press, 1994.
- Pinker, Steven. *The Language Instinct: How the Mind Creates Language*. New York: Harper Collins, 1995.
- Pinker, Steven. *Words and Rules: The Ingredients of Language*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2000.
- Rodriguez, Richard. *Hunger of Memory*. New York: Bantam Books, 1982.
- Rothenburg, Paula S. *Race Class and Gender in the United States*. 6th Ed. New York: Worth, 2001.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Random House, 1979
- Said, Edward. *Covering Islam: How the Media and Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*. New York: Random House, 1999.
- Steele, S. *The Content of Our Character*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1990.
- Sturken, Marita. & Cartwright, Lisa. *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture*. Oxford England and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Takaki, Ronald. *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1993.
- Takaki, Ronald. *A Larger Memory: A History of Our Diversity with Voices*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1998.
- Utts, Jessica. *Seeing Through Statistics*. 2nd Ed. Pacific Grove California: Duxbury Press, 1999.