Ethnic Studies

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http://ethnicstudies.calpoly.edu/

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Academic Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program name</th>
<th>Program type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Ethnic Studies</td>
<td>BA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Studies</td>
<td>Minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Studies in Natural Resources and the Environment</td>
<td>Minor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Ethnic Studies Department uses inter- and multidisciplinary approaches to study the lives of Indigenous, African, Latino/a, and Asian peoples in the United States within a global and postcolonial context. The Ethnic Studies curriculum provides students with unique forms of critical inquiry that advance their analysis of race, ethnicity, and cultural difference in an increasingly heterogeneous and complex world. Courses in Ethnic Studies examine how social hierarchies frame access to political power, allocate economic resources, and influence cultural expression. By critically exploring such issues, students develop not only a greater understanding of the legacy of racism, discrimination, and injustices in the United States, but also a greater appreciation for new and emerging knowledge about diverse American peoples and their global and transnational connections.

Housed in the College of Liberal Arts, the Ethnic Studies Department at Cal Poly encourages critical dialogue about race, ethnicity, postcoloniality, and transnationalism across the entire university curriculum, with special focus on concepts that integrate the arts, humanities, and social sciences, as well as the sciences and technology. The department offers a number of courses that fulfill both general education and United States Cultural Pluralism requirements. A minor in Ethnic Studies is open to all majors and provides a useful complement to the differing types of inquiry used in the wide variety of disciplines throughout the University.

Undergraduate Programs

BA Comparative Ethnic Studies

It is expected that students who demonstrate the foregoing learning outcomes will be better prepared to understand the social, cultural, political, historical, and economic factors that have shaped their own social and occupational identities, as well as the social and occupational identities of others. This knowledge should better prepare students to work, collaborate, and interact more responsibly and effectively in an increasingly diverse and globalized workplace and world.

Ethnic Studies Minor

An Ethnic Studies minor provides students with special competence in the histories and experiences of diverse communities and the critical skills with which to understand complex social issues. Students majoring in subjects across the university curriculum find Ethnic Studies useful, particularly when their interests require a deeper understanding of race, ethnicity, and diversity in the United States and beyond. The minor prepares students for careers in education, government, and community organizations; for entrance to professional schools in areas such as law, social work, and health; and for graduate studies in all areas of the arts and sciences.

Indigenous Studies in Natural Resources and the Environment Minor

An interdisciplinary minor sponsored by the departments of Natural Resources Management and Environmental Sciences and Ethnic Studies. For more information, see the Natural Resources Management and Environmental Sciences (http://catalog.calpoly.edu/collegesandprograms/collegeofagriculturefoodenvironmentalsciences/naturalresourcesmanagementenvironmentalsciences) section.