**LMU**

**FALL 2023**

**COURSE TITLE: Growing Up American**

**COURSE NUMBER: MDGK 1180**

**SECTION DAYS/TIMES: MW 6:00-7:40 pm**

**INSTRUCTOR: Kalliopi Kefalas**

**CORE AREA: Studies in American Diversity (FND)**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The American Dream, an improvement in life that comes from socioeconomic mobility and the realization of one’s mobility, has been chased by people born and raised in the United Stated while also motivating immigration from other countries. However, for many, it remains elusive as they struggle with racial, religious, and gender prejudice and, along with it, socioeconomic hardship. Thus, in this class, not only will we discuss what it means to be American, with all those values and historical baggage that the adjective espouses, but how it is that the aforementioned prejudice shapes the experiences of women, “minorities”, and immigrants to the United States in this country.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

By the end of this class, you will:

* Understand what “American” is and appreciate diversity as a necessary subject for study
* Be able to explain the historical context of historically underrepresented groups in the United States and compare and contrast their experiences
* Be able to draw connections between the histories of these groups and the current diversity debates of which they are the subjects
* Hone critical thinking and writing skills by reading and critiquing argumentative pieces regarding these groups and on topics related to diversity

**PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND:**

None

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Eugenides, Jeffrey. *Middlesex*. New York: Picador, 2002.

Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: Norton, 2013.

Haley, Alex and Malcolm X. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Ballantine, 1992.

Luiselli, Valeria. *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in Forty Questions*. Minneapolis: Coffee House, 2017.

Vuong, Ocean. *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*. New York: Penguin, 2019.

Other assigned readings will be posted on Brightspace.

**COURSE WORK AND EXPECTATIONS:**

Students are expected to attend class regularly and participate in discussions on the assigned readings. They will also write 5 analytical and reflective pieces on 5 of these sets of readings. Finally, they will put together project proposals and annotated bibliographies in groups leading up to a final presentation on topics of their choice related to current debates on subjects we have covered using scholastic and news media sources.

Grade Breakdown:

Participation via class discussions and research workshops: 15%

Reading reflections (5): 50%

Project proposal: 10%

Annotated bibliography: 10%

Final presentation: 15%