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CUBA CURRICULUM

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TITLE: Changes in Cuba and its relations with the U.S.

LEVEL: college, introductory

DURATION: 3 class periods of 85 minutes

This curriculum for a brief unit on Cuba was used in fall, 2016, at the Milwaukee Area Technical College.

The course is Introduction to Sociology, a three-credit class that transfers to universities for a four-year degree. The textbook has a few pages on Cuba and general discussion of terms such as “socialism.”

NOTE: For teachers who have not been to Cuba nor have visiting Cubans available to speak in class, the growing plethora of information and videos about Cuba available on-line could help meet these goals and objectives.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

By the end of the three sessions, the students will know key terms and concepts relating to Cuba, key people and some history, and how the textbook treats the subject.

Goals concerning the content of the Cuba unit:

* Awareness that Cuba has a very different culture and is organized very differently than the U.S.
* Awareness of political/military tensions between the U.S. and Cuba, and recent changes.

This unit meets the larger goals of a sociology course by encouraging students to wrestle with:

* The value of studying other cultures and cultural diversity.
* How to study distant peoples, places, and environments.
* How people create and change structures of power, authority, and governance.
* Global connections and interdependence.

Specific sociological objectives covered in this unit:

* Be able to define policy disputes.
* Be aware of point of view for speakers and other information.
* Be able to find main points and specific details.
* Be able to imagine how to do social science research in a foreign country.

Concepts and Vocabulary

Cold War  
Bay of Pigs

Cuban missile crisis  
embargo

communism  
socialism

ideology

revolution

imperialism

development

IN THE CLASSROOM

***Day 1:***

Begin by asking students what images, names, or events come to mind when they think about Cuba. When they run out of ideas, prompt them with mention of Fidel Castro, communism, and the Bay of Pigs.

Teacher introduces the issues and the in-class assignment:

**to find a main point in the presentation and develop two questions about the topic.**

Main activity: slides from teacher’s July visit to Cuba, including notes on culture, history, medical system, food, politics, education, tourism and transportation.

***Day 2:***

Review of the topic and explain the new in-class assignment:

**find one connection in the speeches to the textbook, define one policy dispute, find a political and an economic claim by the Cuban presenters, and develop a criticism or evaluation of the speakers.**

Main activity: Two Cuban women on tour, speaking in English about U.S.-Cuba relations and life in Cuba.

***Day 3:***

Discussion of the speakers, assignments and remaining questions, and then a quiz.