

# Race and Ethnic Studies

## *Director:*

*Fall:* Nicole Simek, French and Interdisciplinary Studies

*Spring:* Zahi Zalloua, French and Interdisciplinary Studies  
(on Sabbatical, Fall 2018)

Susanne Beechey, Politics

Shampa Biswas, Politics (on Sabbatical 2018-2019)

Helen Kim, Sociology

Nina E. Lerman, History

Gaurav Majumdar, English (on Sabbatical, Fall 2018)

Gilbert Mireles, Sociology Suzanne Morrissey,

Anthropology and Gender Studies

Jason Pribilsky, Anthropology and Race and Ethnic  
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Matt Reynolds, Art History and Visual Culture Studies

Lisa Uddin, Art History and Visual Culture Studies

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The race and ethnic studies major takes an interdisciplinary approach to the study of race and ethnicity — What do these categories of difference mean? How have they been defined, constructed, and applied in different socio-historic contexts? How do they intersect or overlap with other axes of difference (e.g., gender, class, nation, religion)? Exploring these questions with analytical tools and approaches developed in a range of academic disciplines, this major leads to a critical examination of many historical and contemporary social issues that arise from the institutionalization of race and ethnicity.

In all courses, the student's work should focus on issues of race and ethnicity whenever that is possible.

In addition to the 36 credits required for the major, the student will complete three courses totaling at least 11 credits of college-level study in a language other than his or her first language. Courses used to satisfy requirements in other majors or minors cannot also be used to satisfy the race and ethnic studies major or minor.

**Distribution:** Courses completed in race and ethnic studies apply primarily to the cultural pluralism distribution area.

**Learning Goals:** Upon graduation, a student will be able to:

- **Major-Specific Areas of Knowledge**

- Identify and interpret important ideas, assumptions, and debates that are central to the study of race and ethnicity.
- Explore the intersection of broad theoretical claims with different socio-historic contexts, as well as with other categories of difference such as nation, class, religion, and gender.
- Develop an interdisciplinary approach to the study of race and ethnicity and a critical ability to analyze the historical and contemporary issues arising from the institutionalization of racial and ethnic differences.

- **Critical Thinking**

- Analyze issues with a variety of tools and approaches in a range of disciplines.

- **Research Experience**

- Conduct a substantial academic inquiry about a focused research question, demonstrating a critical awareness of competing arguments, the mastery of relevant methods, and a capacity to generate substantive results from original research.

**The Race and Ethnic Studies major** will complete two foundational courses, a concentration designed with the adviser and approved by the Race and Ethnic Studies Steering Committee, a senior seminar and thesis, and elective courses totaling 36 credits and chosen such that the overall coursework is drawn from a minimum of three departments. Three courses in addition to the senior seminar and thesis must be at the 300 or 400 level; at least two of these must be taken at Whitman. No more than 12 credits earned in off-campus programs and transfer credit, nor more than four credits in independent study, may be used to satisfy the race and ethnic studies major requirements.

**Foundation courses:** Race and Ethnic Studies 105, plus one other course centered on racial and ethnic analysis (Art History 235; Art History 353; English 376; Gender Studies 328; History 268; History 371; Politics 100; Race and Ethnic Studies 305; Sociology 267; World Literature 320).

**Concentration:** Three courses from at least two disciplines (typically nine to 12 credits) defining focus of study in a topic or region, providing context for the thesis. Two of the three courses must be taken at Whitman, and independent study classes are not permitted. The concentration must be submitted to the Race and Ethnic Studies Steering Committee by the end of the week following Thanksgiving break in the fall semester of the junior year. Examples of regional concentrations include: race and ethnicity in Latin America, ethnicity and race in Africa, U.S. race and ethnic studies, African American studies, or race and ethnicity in South Asia. Examples of thematic or topical concentrations include: ethnicity and identity; race and gender; literary representations of race and ethnicity; race and class; ethnicity and nation; race, ethnicity, and nature; religion and ethnicity. The proposal must include a title, a list of the three courses proposed, and an explanation of how the courses fit together and complement each other.

**Electives:** Usually three courses chosen to complement the concentration, such that, in combination with foundational and concentration coursework, the student has worked in three disciplines overall. It is recommended that the student explore more than one geographic area.

**Capstone:** A senior seminar (four credits) in the fall, in which students discuss common readings and case studies and begin thesis research, and completion of thesis (two credits) in the spring. The oral portion of the major exam will begin with a thesis defense and proceed to a broader synthesis of the student's work in the major. Students will propose thesis topics to the Race and Ethnic Studies Steering Committee by midterm in the second semester of the junior year.

**Language requirement** (in addition to the 36 credits required for the major): The language requirement places value on the linguistic dimensions of difference and provides students with at least minimal direct exposure to this dimension. The student will complete three courses totaling at least 11 credits of college-level study in a language other than the student's first language. No more than two languages are allowed within the 11 credits. These credits may be earned at Whitman College, through transfer credit from accredited U.S. institutions of higher learning, or from a Whitman-approved study abroad program.

**The Race and Ethnic Studies minor:** The student completing a minor in race and ethnic studies will take one of the foundation courses (see list below), and three elective courses chosen from the list of eligible courses. Courses used to satisfy requirements in other majors or minors cannot also be used to satisfy the race and ethnic studies major or minor.

I. **"Foundation" courses:** courses incorporating race and ethnicity as central, defining issues:

Art History 235 *Race and American Visual Culture*  
Art History 353 *Blues, Blood, Bruise: Blackness in Art*  
English 376 *Colonial and Anti-Colonial Literature*  
General Studies 245 *Critical Voices*  
Gender Studies 328 *Queer Studies*  
History 268 *Im/migration and US History: Population Flows, Experience, and Nation*  
History 371 *African American History*  
Politics 100 *Introduction to Race, Gender and the Politics of the Body*  
Race and Ethnic Studies 105 *Introduction to Race and Ethnic Studies*  
Race and Ethnic Studies 305 *Continental Philosophy, Postcolonial Theory, and the Palestinian Question*  
Sociology 267 *Race and Ethnic Group Relations*  
World Literature 320 *Race, Trauma, Narrative*  
World Literature 395 *Contemporary Literary Theory*

II. **Race and ethnic studies courses:** a list from which majors will draw concentration and elective courses in consultation with adviser and approved by committee. For a thorough listing of courses used in the race and ethnic studies program, please consult the department web page at [www.whitman.edu/academics/courses-of-study/race-and-ethnic-studies](http://www.whitman.edu/academics/courses-of-study/race-and-ethnic-studies) or see the list below.

Anthropology 258 <i>Peoples of the Tibeto-Burman Highlands</i>	History 209 <i>Religion in Latin America</i>
Anthropology 259 <i>Culture, Environment, and Development in the Andes</i>	History 217 <i>Decolonization in Africa</i>
Anthropology 304 <i>Anthropology of Complementary, Alternative and Integrative Medicine</i>	History 218 <i>Africa to 1885</i>
Anthropology 309 <i>Urban Life: Readings in the Anthropology of Cities</i>	History 219 <i>Nation Creation: Latin America in the Nineteenth Century</i>
Anthropology 328 <i>Medical Anthropology</i>	History 247 <i>Early Chinese History</i>
Art History 235 <i>Race and American Visual Culture</i>	History 250 <i>New Worlds, New Empires: North America, 1600-1800</i>
Art History 353 <i>Blues, Blood, Bruise: Blackness in Art</i>	History 254 <i>Social History of Stuff</i>
Art History 354 <i>Race, Ethnicity, and the Urban Imaginary</i>	History 268 <i>Im/migration and US History: Population Flows, Experience, and Nation</i>
English 246 <i>Native American Literatures</i>	History 287 <i>Colonial Latin America</i>
English 247 <i>African American Literature</i>	History 288 <i>Reform or Revolution: Latin America in the Twentieth Century</i>
English 376 <i>Studies in Colonial and Anti-Colonial Literature</i>	History 297 <i>Nineteenth-Century United States</i>
Film and Media Studies 345 <i>The Middle East in Cinema &amp; Media</i>	History 302 <i>The Syrian War: From the Rise of Assad to the Specter of ISIS</i>
French 316 <i>Contemporary France and the Francophone World</i>	History 314 <i>Colonial Moment in Africa</i>
French 407 <i>Ironic Enchantments</i>	History 322 <i>History of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict</i>
History 112 <i>Modern Africa</i>	History 335 <i>Modern European Imperialism</i>
History 188 <i>Modern Latin America</i>	History 344 <i>China in Revolution</i>
	History 346 <i>Modern Japanese History</i>
	History 364 <i>Sugar, Sex, &amp; Slavery: The History of the Black Atlantic</i>

History 370 *Gendered Lens on US History*  
History 371 *African American History*  
History 389 *History of Mexico*  
Music 160 *Study of Jazz*  
Politics 100 *Introduction to Race, Gender, & the  
Politics of the Body*  
Politics 101 *ST: Power, Body, Resistance*  
Politics 220 *American Political Theory*  
Politics 236 *Concepts of the Political in Southeast Asia*  
Politics 240 *Mexico: Politics and Society in the Age of  
NAFTA*  
Politics 242 *Politics of Development in Latin America*  
Politics 250/Sociology 250 *Latinos in US Politics and  
Society*  
Politics 254 *Gender and Race in Law and Policy*  
Politics 311 *Deservingness in US Social Policy*  
Politics 312 *Humanism Europe and Others*  
Politics 316 *Culture, Ideology, Politics*  
Politics 318/Sociology 318 *Community-Based Research  
as Democratic Practice I*  
Politics 319 *Public Communication about Community-  
Based Research II*  
Politics 329 *Theories of Empire*  
Politics 334 *The U.S.-Mexico Border: Immigration,  
Development, and Globalization*  
Politics 337 *Globalizing Southeast Asia*  
Politics 351 *Necropower and the Politics of Violence*  
Politics 359 *Gender and International Hierarchy*  
Politics 367 *African Political Thought*  
Psychology 230/Sociology 230 *Social Psychology*  
Psychology 232 *The Psychology of Prejudice*  
Psychology 336 *Social Stigma*  
Religion 153 *Religion and Native America*  
Religion 222 *Hindu India*

Religion 358 *Feminist and Liberation Theologies*  
Religion 387 *ST: Mormonism: Race, Gender, and  
Sexuality, and Marriage in America*  
Rhetoric Studies 303/Film and Media Studies 365 *ST:  
The Sunken Place: Racism, Black Aesthetics, and  
Violence in American Film*  
Rhetoric Studies 341/Sociology 341 *The Rhetoric of  
Hip Hop*  
Rhetoric Studies 353 *The Rhetoric of African American  
Civil Rights*  
Rhetoric Studies 360/Sociology 344 *The Rhetoric of  
Social Protest: Exploring the Arab Spring*  
Rhetoric Studies 380/English 377 *Rhetorical Bodies*  
Sociology 220 *Latin@s in the United States*  
Sociology 230/Psychology 230 *Social Psychology*  
Sociology 250/Politics 250 *Latinos in US Politics and  
Society*  
Sociology 267 *Race and Ethnic Group Relations*  
Sociology 271 *Asian Americans in Contemporary  
Society*  
Sociology 290 *History and Sociology of Rock 'n' Roll*  
Sociology 318/Politics 318 *Community-Based Research  
as Democratic Practice I*  
Sociology 341/Rhetoric Studies 341 *The Rhetoric of  
Hip Hop*

Sociology 344/Rhetoric Studies 360 *The Rhetoric of  
Social Protest: Exploring the Arab Spring*  
Sociology 353 *Environmental Justice*  
Sociology 369 *Social Stratification*  
Spanish 305 & 306 *Advanced Spanish: Topics in  
Contemporary Hispanic Culture*  
Spanish 325 *Translation: Healthcare and Language*  
Spanish 326 *Translation: Public Affairs, the Law and  
Language Change*  
Spanish 447 *Staging Memory & Cultural Identities:  
Performative Discourses in the Contemporary  
Hispanic World*  
World Literature 320 *Race, Trauma, Narrative*

### **100 Special Topics in Race and Ethnic Studies**

**4 credits**

Courses under this category explore selected topics in Race and Ethnic Studies at the introductory level. Any current offerings follow.

### **105 Introduction to Race and Ethnic Studies**

**Fall**

**Uddin**

**4 credits**

This interdisciplinary course is designed to introduce students to the foundational concepts and critical debates animating the study of race and ethnicity. It will interrogate categories of race and ethnicity, in the United States and globally, in contemporary and historical contexts.

### **200-201 Special Topics in Race and Ethnic Studies**

**1-4 credits**

The course explores selected topics in race and ethnic studies. Any current offerings follow.

### **301 Special Topics in Race and Ethnic Studies**

**2-4 credits**

The course explores selected topics in race and ethnic studies. Any current offerings follow.

### **305 Continental Philosophy, Postcolonial Theory, and the Palestinian Question**

**Spring**

**Zalloua**

**4 credits**

The Palestinian question has emerged as a growing concern for continental philosophers in recent decades, spurred by postcolonial theory. This course examines this philosophical engagement, scrutinizing the racialization of Palestinians, their normalization as inferior and expendable beings, and the ethical and political hierarchization of lives. Raising the Palestinian question invites us to reframe the relationships between philosophy and history, ethics and politics, so as to scrutinize the tendency to ontologize the other (as in the rhetoric of the timeless victim), to abstract the other from the earthly, historical, and dynamic field of power. Thinkers examined will include Edward Said, Judith Butler, Jacques Derrida, Slavoj Žižek, and Jacqueline Rose. May be taken for credit toward the Rhetoric Studies major.

### **405, 406 Independent Studies in Race and Ethnic Studies**

**Fall, Spring**

**Staff**

**1-3 credits**

Directed readings of topics or works selected to complement the RAES program. The number of students accepted for the course will depend on the availability of the staff. No more than four credits in independent study may be used to satisfy the race and ethnic studies major requirements. *Prerequisite:* consent of instructor.

### **490 Senior Seminar**

**Fall**

**Morrissey**

**4 credits**

Taught by a race and ethnic studies faculty member with guest participation by others, this seminar is intended to engage senior majors in case studies focused on race and ethnicity. Readings, discussion, and papers, including a proposal for the thesis. Required of and limited to senior race and ethnic studies majors. (Fall degree candidates should plan to take this seminar at the latest possible opportunity.) Open to senior Race and Ethnic Studies majors.

### **497 Thesis**

**Fall, Spring**

**Staff**

**2 credits**

Completion of a thesis based on the previous semester's plan. *Prerequisite:* Race and Ethnic Studies 490.

### **498 Honors Thesis**

**Fall, Spring**

**Staff**

**2 credits**

Completion of an honors thesis. Required of and limited to senior honors candidates in race and ethnic studies.

*Prerequisites:* Race and Ethnic Studies 490 and admission to honors candidacy.