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: Race and Ethnic Studies designated courses count toward the cultural pluralism distribution area.

Total credits required to complete the Race and Ethnic Studies major: 36

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/ Race and Ethnic Studies 235; Art History 353; English 376; Gender Studies 328; Global Literatures 320, Global Literatures 395, History 268; History 371; Politics 100; Race and Ethnic Studies 225; Race and Ethnic Studies 305; Race and Ethnic Studies 325; Sociology 267).

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 Ethnic Studies 235 *Forms and Feels Race and 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*
- Global Literatures 320 *Race, Trauma, Narrative*
- Global Literatures 395 *Contemporary Literary Theory*
- History 268 *Immigration 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 225 *Race, Class, Violence*
- Race and Ethnic Studies 305 *Continental Philosophy, Postcolonial Theory, and the Palestinian Question*
- Race and Ethnic Studies 325 *Afro-Pessimism and Its Critics*
- Sociology 267 *Race and Ethnic Group Relations*

### 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 *Peoples of the Tibeto-Burman Highlands*
- Anthropology 259 *Culture, Environment, and Development in the Andes*
- Anthropology 304 *Anthropology of Complementary, Alternative and Integrative Medicine*
- Anthropology 309 *Urban Life: Readings in the Anthropology of Cities*
- Anthropology 328 *Medical Anthropology*
- Art History 235/ Race and Ethnic Studies 235 *Forms and Feels Race and Visual Culture*
- Art History 257 ST: *Inventing Egypt*
- Art History 353 *Blues, Blood, Bruise: Blackness in Art*
- Art History 354 *Race, Ethnicity, and the Urban Imaginary*
- Classics 280/ History 280 *The “Other” Greece & Rome*
- English 231 *Introduction to Shakespeare: Race, Nationality, and Power*
- English 246 *Native American Literatures*
- English 247 *African American Literature*
- English 376 *Colonial and Anti-Colonial Literature*
- Film and Media Studies 315 *Bad Objects: Popular Culture and Questions of Taste*
- Film and Media Studies 345 *The Middle East in Cinema & Media*
- Film and Media Studies 350 *Latinxs in U.S. Media*
- French 316 *Contemporary France and the Francophone World*
- French 407 *Ironic Enchantments*
- Global Literatures 320 *Race, Trauma, Narrative*
- Global Literatures 395 *Contemporary Literary Theory*
- Hispanic Studies 143 *U.S. Latinx Literatures and Culture: An Introduction*
Hispanic Studies 305 & 306 Advanced Spanish: Topics in Contemporary Hispanic Culture
Hispanic Studies 325 Translation: Healthcare and Language
Hispanic Studies 326 Translation: Public Affairs, the Law and Language Change
Hispanic Studies 447 Staging Memory & Cultural Identities: Performative Discourses in the Contemporary Hispanic World
History 112 Modern Africa
History 188 Modern Latin America
History 204 The Syrian War: From the Rise of Asad to the Specter of ISIS
History 209 Religion in Latin America
History 211 The World Wars in Africa
History 214 Sex in the Casbah: Sex, Gender & Islam
History 217 Decolonization in Africa
History 218 Africa to 1885
History 219 Nation Creation: Latin America in the Nineteenth Century
History 247 Early Chinese History
History 250 New Worlds, New Empires: North America, 1600-1800
History 254 Social History of Stuff
History 259B ST: Jim Crow: the long struggle for civil rights in the US
History 268 Immigration and US History: Population Flows, Experience, and Nation
History 280/Classics 280 The “Other” Greece & Rome
History 287 Colonial Latin America
History 288 Reform or Revolution: Latin America in the Twentieth Century
History 297 Nineteenth-Century United States
History 314 Colonial Moment in Africa
History 322 History of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict
History 335 Modern European Imperialism
History 344 China in Revolution
History 346 Modern Japanese History
History 364 Sugar, Sex, & Slavery: The History of the Black Atlantic
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 Deservingsness 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 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 304 Muslim Bodies
Religion 358 Feminist and Liberation Theologies
Religion 387 ST: Mormonism: Race, Gender, and Sexuality, and Marriage in America
Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse 303/Film and Media Studies 365 ST: The Sunken Place: Racism, Black Aesthetics, and Violence in American Film
Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse 353 The Rhetoric of the Black Freedom Struggle
Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse 360 The Rhetoric of Social Protest: Exploring the Arab Spring
Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse 380/English 377 Rhetorical Bodies
Sociology 220 Latin@ 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 335 Environmental Justice
Sociology 369 Social Stratification
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  
Pribilsky  
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. This course is open to first years and sophomores only, and others by consent of instructor.

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.

225 Race, Class, Violence  
Spring  
Zalloua  
4 credits  
In this course we will examine the complex relationships between race and class in contemporary structural modes of violence. Students will analyze various bodies of social theory (such as Marxism, Critical Race Theory, feminism, and postcolonial theory) and evaluate the ways they account for the interplay of race and class, of domination and exploitation. By considering the analytical category of race together with that of class (and vice versa), our goal is to strengthen each term’s explanatory force and better account for the dynamism and complexities of racial and economic struggles.

235 Forms and Feels: Race and Visual Culture  
Fall  
Uddin  
4 credits  
Race is foundational to modern life and complex in its permutations. How does one go about engaging it in a critical and sensitive way? This course cultivates observation, analysis and response in this direction. We will study how racial meaning, experience and power are produced through practices of visual representation in art, film, education, science and the law, and how the visual field itself is a racial formation. We will also explore the lines between seeing race and feeling race. Topics may include racial identifications, embodiments, caricature, performance, surveillance, spectatorship, and archives. Students develop conceptual vocabularies, historical contexts and interpretive skills for understanding race in and through the visual world. Lecture-based with short papers, projects, presentations and exams. May be elected as Art History and Visual Culture Studies 235.

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  
Not offered 2019-20  
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, Writing and Public Discourse major.
This course examines Afro-Pessimism’s controversial claim that it is anti-blackness rather than white supremacy that governs the production of meaning and value in white civil society. Afro-Pessimism is skeptical of narratives of racial progress, as well as the ability of coalitional alliances to address the roots of racism. We will consider the ontologies underpinning Afro-Pessimism, the opposing contemporary movements with which it dialogues, and the differing visions of social and political change that each offers. We will also evaluate Afro-Pessimism’s definition of the black experience and its criticism of movements organized instead around commonalities between people of color.

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.

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.

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

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.