

Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity Studies

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Jason Pribilsky, Anthropology and Indigeneity, Race, and
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The critical study of Indigeneity, race and ethnicity at Whitman College takes up the global challenges posed by anti-Blackness and settler colonialism, from Turtle Island to Palestine. Our study begins from our location on the traditional lands of the Walúlapam (Walla Walla), Weyiiletpuu (Cayuse) and Imatalamláma (Umatilla) peoples and the structures of human migration and anti-Black racism that produce and reproduce the modern world. In IRES courses, you will delve into pre-colonial realities and peoples' ways of knowing across the Americas and beyond, attending to their dynamism and creative resilience. At the same time, IRES also centers the afterlives or legacies of slavery and colonialism, questioning their status as relics of the past. We examine how racism and xenophobia today stem not only from Western modernity's narrow definition of the human as exclusively white, male, and European, a notion that underpinned the exploitation and domination of non-Europeans, but also from the very idea of a group or people's claim to supremacy over another, from ancient to contemporary times.

Through study in a variety of fields, students of IRES will develop the analytical tools to compare, discern, and critically engage racial supremacy, along with its shifts over time and space. Majors will investigate, for example, the historical and contemporary logics and practices of segregation or apartheid (as in South Africa, the United States, or Palestine/Israel), and their role in sustaining nativism, nationalism, and exclusionary models of belonging. Additionally, majors will develop an understanding of the many faces of racism and their historical specificities. Islamophobia, colorism, anti-Asianness, anti-Blackness, antisemitism, and Orientalism, for example, all manifest racism in varying forms, yet cannot be reduced to it. In confronting these processes, students will also explore various modes of survival and resistance, studying the rich and divergent ways individuals and communities affirm their sovereignty, create futures, and actively contest their subjugation and dispossession.

Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity Studies intersects with many other fields and programs. Students considering graduate study are strongly advised to pursue study of a second language and to minor in a related discipline.

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 critical study of Indigeneity, race, and ethnicity.
 - Explore major theories of Indigeneity, race, and ethnicity and their intersections and constitutive relations with class, religion, gender, sexuality, and ability.
 - Develop an interdisciplinary approach to the study of Indigeneity, race, and ethnicity and be able to apply various interdisciplinary theories and methods to the analysis of historical and contemporary issues arising from the institutionalization of differences.
- **Critical Thinking**
 - Analyze issues dealing with power, privilege, and oppression 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.

Distribution: Indigeneity, Race and Ethnicity Studies designated courses count toward the cultural pluralism distribution area.

The Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity Studies major:

- 36 Credits
- Required Courses
 - IRES 105; 210 or 225; 490; and 497 or 498
 - Additional credits from elective courses (see course list below)
- Honors
 - Students do not apply for admission to candidacy for honors
 - Accumulated at least 87 credits
 - Completed two semesters of residency at Whitman.
 - Cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 on all credits earned at Whitman College
 - Major GPA of at least 3.500
 - Complete a written thesis project
 - Earn a grade of at least A- on the thesis project and pass the oral assessment with distinction
 - Director of the department will notify the Registrar of students attaining Honors no later than the beginning of week 12 of the semester.
 - An acceptable digital copy of the Honors Project must be submitted to Penrose Library no later than Reading Day
- Notes:
 - Courses applied to the IRES major or minor may also be applied to other majors and minors.

The Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity minor

- 18 credits
- Required courses
 - IRES 105, 210 or 225
 - Additional credits from elective courses (see course list below)

Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity courses:

Elective Courses

Anthropology/Religion 153 *Religion and Native America*
Anthropology 206 *Anthropology and Europe*
Anthropology 217 *Language and Culture*
Anthropology/Religion 225 *Global Christianity*
Anthropology 228 *Medical Anthropology*
Anthropology 320 *Language and Nationalism*
Anthropology 349 *Urban Life: Readings in the Anthropology of Cities*
Anthropology 360 *Cultural Politics of Science*
Art History 325 *Inventing Egypt*
Classics/History 280 *The "Other" Greece & Rome*
English 231 *Introduction to Shakespeare: Race, Nationality, and Power*
English 245 *Native American Literatures*
English 246 *Introduction to African American Literature*
English 346 *African American Historiographic Fiction*
Art History 135 *Architectures of Race*
Art History 353 *Blackness and the Arts*
Art History 355 *Indigenous Aesthetics: Native North American Art and Visual Culture*
English 376 *VT: Counterpoints: Edward Said's Work and Anti-Colonial Literature*
Film and Media Studies 210 *The Monstrous Other: Race, Gender and Colonialism in Horror Media*

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*
Gender Studies 328 *Queer Desires*
German Studies 230 *Conceiving and Re-conceiving Race*
Global Literature 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 308 *Spanish for Heritage Speakers*
Hispanic Studies 425 *Tropics of Disaster: Speculative Fiction in the End of Times*
Hispanic Studies 444 *Decolonial Strategies in Latin(o) America*
Hispanic Studies 446 *Indigenous Performativity in the Andes*
Hispanic Studies 447 *Staging Memory & Cultural Identities: Performative Discourses in the Contemporary Hispanic World*
History 105 *Histories of North America*
History 112 *Modern Africa*

History 188 *Modern Latin America*
History 204 *Syria: From Ruin(ation) to Restoration*
History 208 *Latinx in the US: A History*
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 220 *Ottomania! History, Politics, and Memory of the Ottoman Empire*
History 243 *Japan's Modern Empire*
History 247 *Early Chinese History*
History 250 *New Worlds, New Empires: North America, 1600-1800*
History 254 *Social History of Stuff*
History 267 *Protest & Organizing: A History of U.S. Social Movements*
History 268 *Im/migration and US History: Population Flows, Experience, and Nation*
History 275 *Modern European Imperialism*
History/Classics 280 *The "Other" Greece & Rome*
History 286 *Making Modern Mexico*
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 344 *China in Revolution*
History 348 *Horseriders and Samurai: Comparisons in Early Modern East Asia*
History 364 *Sugar, Sex, & Slavery: The History of the Black Atlantic*
History 366 *The Americas, 1968-1999: Dictatorship, Neoliberalism & Solidarity*
History 371 *African American History*
IRES 230/GNDS 230/GLIT 230 *Unsettling Masculinities in French Fiction and Film*
IRES 270/REL 270 *Race and Religion*

Politics 312 *Humanism Europe and Others*
Music 160 *Study of Jazz*
Politics 110 *Introduction to the Politics of Migration and Immigration*
Politics/History 120 *History and Politics of Mexican Food*
Politics 125 *The Politics of Indigeneity*
Politics 228 *Political Ecology*
Politics 240 *Mexico: Politics and Society in the Age of NAFTA*
Politics 254 *Gender and Race in Law and Policy*
Politics 301 *Art of Revolution*
Politics 311 *Deservingness in US Social Policy*
Politics 334 *The U.S.-Mexico Border: Immigration, Development, and Globalization*
Politics 335 *The Politics of the Body as Territory*
Politics 351: *The Politics of International Hierarchy*
Politics 359 *Gender and International Hierarchy*
Politics 362 *Food, Culture, and Politics*
Psychology 230 *Social Psychology*
Psychology 231 *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*
Psychology 322 *Seminar in Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination*
Religion/Anthropology 153 *Religion and Native America*
Religion 219 *Modern Jewish Thought*
Religion 205 *American Islam*
Religion 207 *Islamic Traditions*
Religion/Anthropology 225 *Global Christianity*
Religion 304 *Muslim Bodies*
Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse 255 *Rhetoric and Social Protest*
Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse 342 *Rhetoric and Capitalism*
Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse 353 *The Rhetoric of the Black Freedom Struggle*
Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse 380/English 377 *Rhetorical Bodies*
Sociology 220 *Latin@s in the United States*
Sociology 267 *Race and Ethnic Group Relations*
Sociology 279 *Sociology of Education*
Sociology 353 *Environmental Justice*
Sociology 369 *Social Stratification*

100 Special Topics in Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity Studies

4 credits

Courses under this category explore selected topics in Indigeneity, Race, And Ethnicity Studies at the introductory level. Any current offerings follow.

105 Introduction to Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity Studies

Fall, Spring

Zalloua

4 credits

This interdisciplinary course is designed to introduce students to the foundational concepts and critical debates animating the study of Indigeneity, race, and ethnicity. We will interrogate how the categories of Indigeneity, race and ethnicity circulate in the United States and globally, as well as in contemporary and historical contexts. Open to First-year and sophomore students only, and others by consent of instructor.

135 Architectures of Race

Fall

Uddin

4 credits

The built environment plays a major role in how we understand and experience race. Racial difference also shapes the buildings and landscapes we occupy and imagine. In this course, we will approach these phenomena by studying 1. how modern and contemporary architecture has enclosed, divided, circulated, and framed bodies in particular ways, and 2. how specific architectural structures have emerged as racial formations, from the eighteenth century to present day. Topics may include: plantations, parks, skyscrapers, slums, suburbia, freeways, prisons, camps, shantytowns, and zoos. Students will acquire historical contexts and develop analytical skills for engaging both race and the built environment. Lecture-based with discussion posts, papers, and presentations. May be elected as Art History 135.

180 James Baldwin's America

Spring

Schultz

4 credits

The work of African American writer James Baldwin has probed the enduring contradictions of America's troubled history with race and the legacies of slavery. Drawing from both his literary and non-fiction work, this course explores how Baldwin excavates, confronts, and rewrites his own story and the story of America through the lens of religion, race, and sexuality. We will consider the political dimensions of Baldwin's autobiographical writing and study the ways Baldwin reads the racial imaginary of literature and film. We will examine the ambiguities of Baldwin's Pentecostal upbringing, something he rebelled against yet continued to deploy rhetorically in his writing. Students will learn to analyze how forms of literary and visual representation produce, rank, and value racial difference. The course will also incorporate the perspectives of Baldwin's interlocutors, in addition to exploring contemporary voices that engage enduring problems of race and its entanglements with religion. May be elected as Religion 180.

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.

201 ST: African American Philosophy

Spring

Golden

4 credits

A study of the relationship between philosophy and the African American experience, including methodological questions, and questions related to traditional philosophical topics such as metaphysics, epistemology, existentialism, phenomenology, social and political philosophy, and the philosophy of religion. Thinkers studied may include Ida B. Wells, Angela Davis, bell hooks, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Cheryl I. Harris, Frederick Douglass, James Baldwin, W.E.B. DuBois, James Cone, Derrick A. Bell, Jr., Cornel West, Charles Mills, Bill E. Lawson, George Yancy, Lewis R. Gordon, Timothy J. Golden, and Tommy J. Curry. May be elected as Philosophy 206. Distribution area: humanities

210 Problems with Privilege

Spring

Simek

4 credits

This course engages the now widespread liberal activist slogan “check your privilege” so prevalent on U.S. college campuses. What does it mean today to “check” privilege? Is “checking privilege” enough? When consuming the news and educating ourselves in class, whose voices get to be heard? Who aren’t we hearing from? What questions haven’t we raised? How do we listen effectively? Intersectionality as theory and method responds to many of these questions. It posits that various structures of discrimination and privilege (such as sexism, racism, and colonialism among others) intersect, influencing our daily lived experience as well as our social institutions and policies. This course presents foundational concepts that allow us to understand power through debates in the field of Gender Studies, and a genealogy of intersectionality and its discontents. The course explores theories and methods based on intersectionality beyond a race/gender pairing, engages critiques of intersectionality, and facilitates a more nuanced understanding of challenges and opportunities surrounding social justice and identity through the lens of intersectional analysis. May be elected as Gender Studies 210.

215 Dialogue, Difference and Social Justice

Not offered 2023-24

2 credits

The course will provide a context in which students from a variety of social locations and identities will explore deeply the meaning and the impacts of socially constructed realities that tend to limit the full humanity of others. Categories such as race, class, gender, gender identity, national origin, religion, ability, and how they shape social interactions will be explored, with the view of providing and developing skills that will enable course participants to have these dialogues across difference with the goal of working towards a more inclusive and just community. Through theoretical readings, experiential learning and actual engagement around critical contemporary issues, the course participants will refine their abilities to have meaningful dialogue in ways that lead to a praxis of social change. Graded credit/no credit.

220 Settler Colonialism & Native Resistance

Spring

Zalloua

4 credits

In this course we will examine the meanings and specificity of settler colonialism: its eliminative logic and goals, and how it frames the question of race in relation to the land and the Native. Students will analyze how settler colonialism traffics in racial assemblages: how it divides land, and classifies and disciplines the Indigenous population, setting them apart ontologically from the White settlers. Whereas the latter are made to stand exclusively for the human, the former are relegated to the categories of “infrahuman” or “nonhuman.” This course will also pay attention to the ways Indigenous peoples resist their classification, domination, and dispossession across the world. Short papers, oral presentations, and active participation are required.

225 Race, Class, Violence

Not offered 2023-24

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.

230 Unsettling Masculinities in French Fiction and Film

Not offered 2023-24

4 credits

This course provides a critical exploration of masculinity in French and Francophone film and fiction. In examining the politics of gendered and racial representations of masculinity, we ask: What types of desires and actions are associated with certain models of masculinity? How does France’s colonial heritage impact and inform the projection of its own masculinity and that of its formerly colonized others? How do writers, theorists, and filmmakers unsettle the fantasy of French masculinity? This course also takes up masculinity’s vexed relation to femininity, tracking how the ideological production of the latter is often premised on the former’s hegemonic stance.

Short papers, oral presentations, and active participation are required. May be elected as Gender Studies 230 or Global Literature 230.

240 Global Indigeneities

Spring

Thayne

4 credits

This course focuses on Indigeneity as both an intellectual project and an in-the-world force shaping the lives of Indigenous peoples, including their cultural practices, resistance, and activism. The course will begin with an explanation of varied and often contested genealogies of Indigeneity and Indigenous identity across time, geography, political contexts, and different fields of study (e.g., anthropology, history, political philosophy and theory). Adopting a global perspective, topics will include Indigenous peoples' struggles for autonomy and survival; self-determination and political status under international law; the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues; land struggles and the protection of natural resources; cultural resurgence and revival of select traditions; and varied forms of political resistance and decolonization. This course will also look at the parallels and intersections between Indigenous and Native Studies with wider movements against settler colonialism and anti-Blackness. Open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors. May be elected as Anthropology 240.

270 Race and Religion

Not offered 2023-24

4 credits

How are race and religion related? If we reject the idea of race as a fixed biological essence and think of it instead as a product of human history, how do we understand religion's role in the historical production of race? This course explores the ways religions reinforce and resist practices of racialization, and further asks how religious identity itself comes to be understood in racial, ethnic, and/or nationalist terms. The course will examine pre-modern and modern forms of anti-Semitism, Orientalism and Islamophobia; it will ask whether the caste system in Hindu South Asia can or should be understood in terms of race; and it will take up religion's complex entanglements in the slave trade, the plantation system, and European settler colonialism in the Americas. We will read from the primary source historical texts (Valladolid Debate), a selection of foundational theorists (such as Sylvia Wynter, B.R. Ambedkar, Hannah Arendt, Edward Said and Frantz Fanon), and a range of contemporary voices and perspectives. May be elected a Religion 270.

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, Writing and Public Discourse major.

320 Trauma & its Aftermath: Narrative, Witnessing & Remembrance

Fall

Simek

4 credits

Trauma has attracted critical attention as a limit case through which to explore the nature of selfhood, language, memory and power, and the ethical and political implications of representing violence. Taking contemporary examples of race- and gender-based violence, their intersections, and their specificities as a point of departure, students will examine debates in scholarship and activism over definitions of trauma, its personal and collective

impacts, and the social, cultural, and political actions to be taken in its wake. We will pay particular attention to questions of narrative genre, medium and transmission, as well as the role of commemoration in projects to combat violence. May be taken for credit toward the Gender Studies major or the Global Literatures minor. May be elected as Gender Studies 320 or Global Literatures 320.

325 Afropessimism and Its Critics

Fall

Zalloua

4 credits

This course examines Afropessimism's controversial claim that it is anti-Blackness rather than white supremacy that governs the production of meaning and value in white civil society. Afropessimism 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 Afropessimism, the opposing contemporary movements with which it dialogues, and the differing visions of social and political change that each offers. We will also evaluate Afropessimism's definition of the Black experience and its criticism of movements organized instead around commonalities between people of color.

360 The Cultural Politics of Science

Not offered 2023-24

4 credits

An upper-level introduction to the widening field known as science and technology studies (STS). Interdisciplinary in scope, this course primarily draws on ethnographic attempts to understand how science and technology shape human lives and livelihoods and how society and culture, in turn, shape the development of science and technology. Throughout the course, we will be particularly concerned with ways that scientific visions and projects, broad in scope, articulate, mirror, distort, and shape hierarchies based on such categories as gender, race, class, development, definitions of citizenship, understandings of nature, the production of knowledge, and global capitalism. Topics may include race-based pharmaceuticals, climate debates and "natural" disasters, genomics, politicized archaeology, science in postcolonial contexts, DNA fingerprinting, clinical trials, cyborgs, nuclear weapons production, and human/nonhuman relationships. May be elected as Anthropology 360.

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 IRES 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

Simek

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 Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity Studies majors.

497 Thesis

Fall, Spring

Staff

4 credits

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

498 Honors Thesis

Fall, Spring

Staff

4 credits

Students register for Indigeneity, Race, And Ethnicity Studies 497, not for Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity Studies 498. The registration will be changed from Indigeneity, Race, And Ethnicity Studies 497 to 498 for those students

who attain honors in Indigeneity, Race, And Ethnicity Studies. Open only to seniors. *Prerequisite:* Indigeneity, Race, and Ethnicity Studies 490.