HISTORY 479/679: RACE AND ETHNICITY IN AMERICAN HISTORY

TR 4:00–5:15 pm
MSS 216

Note: Supplemental information regarding course requirements is posted on the course WebCampus site. Students should read the material on WebCampus as well as this syllabus in the first week of class and check the site at least once a week for new information and announcements that will be added during the semester.

Instructor Information

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Course Description and Core Objectives

This course focuses on the role that ideas about race and ethnicity have played in American history from the colonial period to the present. Racial ideologies vitally influenced the experiences of all Americans, including the dominant white majority along with other groups such as Native Americans, African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Asian Americans. We will look at the development of these ideologies over time and the ways perceptions of inassimilable differences were used to exclude some Americans from full citizenship. We will also look at the strategies used by racialized groups to resist this exclusion and to push the nation into ensuring all citizens the same rights to freedom, equality, and democracy. By the end of the course students will have developed a sophisticated understanding of how racial ideologies emerged in North America, the role these ideas played in the development of the United states, and how they shaped the different experiences of the groups studied. Through the assigned readings, essays, class discussions, group activities, and research projects, students will also practice critical thinking and communication skills that can be applied in other academic and professional contexts. In their research and written work, students will adhere to ethical principles that govern scholarly inquiry, including the accurate representation of evidence, proper citation of sources, and respectful interactions with colleagues.

This capstone course satisfies Core Objectives 10 and 13 of the Silver Core Curriculum:

CO10. Diversity and Equity: Students will develop a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate attentiveness to and analysis of diversity and equity.

CO13. Integration and Synthesis: Students will be able to integrate and synthesize Core knowledge, enabling them to analyze open-ended problems or complex issues.
In addition, HIST 479/679 helps students to hone the skills described in Core Objectives 1 and 3. These objectives are reinforced throughout the curriculum in other courses students take to fulfill core and major requirements:

**CO1. Effective Composition and Communication:** Students will be able to effectively compose written, oral, and multimedia texts for a variety of scholarly, professional, and creative purposes.

**CO3. Critical Analysis and Use of Information:** Students will be critical consumers of information, able to engage in systematic research processes, frame questions, read critically, and apply observational and experimental approaches to obtain information.

By examining the ways that racial ideologies and nonwhite Americans’ struggles for equal treatment and a fair share of the nation’s resources were shaped by international events such as the global trade in slavery, the two world wars, and post–1945 anticolonial struggles, this course also integrates Core Objective 12 (Ethics) and Core Objective 11 (Global Contexts), enhancing the knowledge that students gain in other courses taken to satisfy those objectives.

**Skills-Based Curriculum**

The history program at UNR helps students to develop proficiency in broadly applicable skills while mastering specific subject areas. In addition to learning about the role of racial ideologies in shaping United States history, students will have opportunities to practice and improve the following skills in this course:

- critical thinking (through reading and analyzing written documents and cultural sources, formulating arguments supported by historical evidence, and organizing information in a clear and logical manner)
- historical research (through finding information about historical topics in short assignments and an integrative essay)
- written communication (through writing short assignments, a film analysis, and an integrative essay)
- primary source analysis (through reading and identifying the key points, meaning, and significance of arguments and ideas presented in historical documents and cultural artifacts created during the time periods we are studying)
- secondary source analysis (through reading and identifying the key points, meaning, and significance of arguments and ideas presented in books and articles written by scholars about the time period we are studying)
- cultural text analysis (through thinking about the significance of cultural texts such as news reports, magazine articles, music, and films and placing them in historical context)
- oral expression (through small group and whole class discussions and student presentations)
- using the internet (through research assignments and guidance on how to evaluate internet sources)

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Correlation to Core Objectives (COs)**

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:
1. explain how racial ideologies were formed and transformed over time in the United States, with attention to the interaction between social context and racist beliefs (CO3, CO10, CO11, CO13)
2. analyze and synthesize primary, secondary, and cultural sources (CO3, CO13)
3. find and use historical scholarship and sources to answer a research question (CO3, CO13)
4. present ideas in a clear and persuasive manner both orally and in writing, in accordance with the ethical principles governing scholarly inquiry (CO1, CO3, CO12, CO13)
5. use relevant scholarship and historical evidence to analyze the experiences and struggles for justice of nonwhite ethnic groups in the United States (CO3, CO10, CO12, CO13)

You may notice that the abbreviation SLO followed by a series of numbers appears on some course materials. This simply means that the lecture, discussion, assignment, or other activity offers opportunities for students to practice skills related to the learning outcomes listed above (e.g., “SLO 1, 4” means the activity builds your knowledge of how racial ideologies developed over time (SLO 1) and requires you to present ideas orally or in writing (SLO 4)).

**Required Reading**

*Asterisks indicate primary sources (historical documents created by people who lived during the time period they cover). All other assigned readings are secondary sources (interpretations of the past created by people who lived after the time period they cover).*

**Books to be purchased:**
Edward Countryman, ed., *How Did American Slavery Begin?* (Bedford/St. Martin’s, 1999)

**Additional readings posted on course WebCampus site:**


*Frederick E. Hoxie, Talking Back to Civilization: Indian Voices from the Progressive Era (Bedford/St. Martin’s Press, 2001), 66–86.


**Film:**

Lone Star, directed by John Sayles (1996), 135 min

Shown in class in Week 8.

**Assessment for HIST 479 (undergraduate students)**

Students will receive grades according to how well they complete the following tasks:

| Participation in discussions and other class activities | 20 percent |
| Quizzes (top four scores): Weeks 2, 4, 6, 11, 13 | 20 percent |
| Assignments (top four scores): Weeks 3, 5, 7, 12, 14 | 20 percent |
| Film analysis (4–5 pages): Due Thursday, March 29 | 20 percent |
| Integrative essay (10–15 pages): Due Thursday, May 10 | 20 percent |

**Class participation (SLOs 1, 2, 4, 5)**

This course will be taught in a lecture/discussion format. Short lectures will provide historical background and explain key concepts, but much of your learning will occur through discussion of the assigned readings and other class activities. Therefore, regular attendance and participation are essential. If you are not present, you cannot participate, so excessive absences will lower your final grade. It is also very important that you complete the readings before the days they are assigned. Students who have not
done the reading will find it hard to fulfill the class participation requirement, and this makes up a significant part of your grade.

You will not acquire the knowledge and skills you need to pass this course through passive reading or listening. Instead, you will need to take an active role in the learning process. This means working through the assigned texts carefully and critically, analyzing the information and not just summarizing it, and coming to class prepared to share your own thoughts and interpretations of the material. See “Participating in Discussions” in the Course Mentor folder on WebCampus for more information about how to do well in class participation.

**Quizzes and assignments (SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)**
The quizzes and assignments are designed to encourage you to keep up with the reading and help you to prepare for class discussions and activities each week. In addition, the research and writing exercises required by the assignments provide opportunities to practice skills related to studying the history of American social movements. Developing these skills through short assignments will help you to do well on the longer research and writing assignments required later in the course.

Guidelines and questions to consider as you work through the readings will be posted on WebCampus before the start of each week. You should familiarize yourself with these before you begin the reading assignments. You should also download or print out the assignment sheet in the weeks when these are due so that you know what to focus on as you are reading.

Although the quizzes and assignments will not be cumulative (i.e., they will only include material covered during the week when the quiz is given or the assignment is due), you may sometimes be asked to think back to things we looked at earlier in the semester and draw comparisons or make other connections to the current week’s material. This is another reason why regular attendance and paying close attention to lectures and discussions are essential.

**Film analysis (2, 4)**
Students will view the film *Lone Star* (shown in class in Week 8) and write a 4–5 page paper that analyzes the treatment of race and ethnicity themes in the film. Detailed guidelines for this assignment are posted in the Film Analysis and Integrative Essay folder on WebCampus.

**Integrative essay (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)**
Students will write a 10–15 page essay on one of the broad course themes, synthesizing material from the assigned readings, lectures, videos, and discussions. Students may also incorporate other sources into this essay if they choose. The essay will include analysis of primary and secondary sources and present an argument in response to a historical question. Question options and more detailed guidelines for writing the essay are posted in the Film Analysis and Integrative Essay folder on WebCampus.

**Assessment for HIST 679 (graduate students)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in discussions and other class activities</td>
<td>30 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching segment</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historiographical or research essay (25–30 pages)</td>
<td>50 percent</td>
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Graduate students will meet with the instructor in the first week of class to discuss ideas and options for their essays and how they might contribute to class activities and discussions. We will also have additional meetings throughout the semester to check students’ progress on their projects. Students will
also prepare a mini-lecture, discussion, or other teaching activity on a topic of their choice in consultation with the instructor.

Grading Criteria

Grading criteria for written work are set out below. Students should also read and follow the guidelines set out in “Advice for Writing Assignments and Essays” and “Common Problems in Student Essays” in the Course Mentor folder on WebCampus to ensure they meet the highest standard possible in their written work.

F (less than 60%)
F is for work that is not acceptable. It demonstrates that the student has no idea what the course material is about, suggesting a lack of interest or effort and possibly some absences from class. Students who do the reading and come to class regularly rarely receive an F. If you think you have been trying hard and you get an F on an assignment, I encourage you to come to me for help.

D– (60–62%), D (63–66%), D+ (67–69%)
D is given for work that is inadequate. It omits important points, contains more than a few inaccuracies, and is badly organized. It suggests that the student has not been paying much attention to the course or is having problems understanding the material. As in the case of an F grade, if you think you have been trying hard and receive a D grade for a writing assignment, come and see me for help. I will do everything I can to assist students who want to work to improve their grades.

C– (70–72%), C (73–76%), C+ (77–79%)
C is given for work that is average. The student shows familiarity with the material and is mostly accurate, but the paper lacks detail or effective organization. The C essay might make general points but fail to support them with specific evidence, or it might be merely a collection of facts, with no coherent theme or thesis. You can pass the course with this kind of work, but you should aim higher.

B– (80–82%), B (83–86%), B+ (87–89%)
B denotes work that is above average in quality. It demonstrates that the student knows and understands the material covered in class, and that s/he is capable of synthesizing it into a competent essay. It is accurate, detailed, and well organized, with an introduction, a thesis, and a conclusion.

A– (90–94%), A (95–100%)
A is for work of exceptional quality. This grade is for essays that present a clear thesis supported by persuasive evidence and analysis, logically organized, and free from typing or grammatical errors. The A essay does more than just competently summarize material from the readings or lectures. It shows the student has thought things through on a deeper level and offers his or her own perspective on the topics under consideration.

Deadlines and Policies Regarding Missed Work

Assignments and essays are due in class on the dates indicated in the Weekly Schedule below. Late papers will be penalized (3 points deducted from your grade for the late assignment) unless you have contacted me before or on the due date to arrange an extension. There are ways to make up for points lost for late work or absences and to earn extra credit points to improve your grade—see “Policies Regarding Missed Work” in the Course Mentor folder on WebCampus for more information.
Academic Dishonesty

I expect all students to do their own work in this course unless I have specifically assigned a group activity or project. Copying someone else’s work, or allowing your own work to be copied, is dishonest and unfair to other students who are striving to complete assignments and essays on their own.

The university’s Academic Standards policy states:

Academic dishonesty is against university as well as the system community standards. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Plagiarism: defined as submitting the language, ideas, thoughts or work of another as one’s own; or assisting in the act of plagiarism by allowing one’s work to be used in this fashion.

Cheating: defined as (1) obtaining or providing unauthorized information during an examination through verbal, visual or unauthorized use of books, notes, text and other materials; (2) obtaining or providing information concerning all or part of an examination prior to that examination; (3) taking an examination for another student, or arranging for another person to take an exam in one’s place; (4) altering or changing test answers after submittal for grading, grades after grades have been awarded, or other academic records once these are official.

Sanctions for violations of university academic standards may include the following:

(1) filing a final grade of “F”; (2) reducing the student’s final course grade one or two full grade points; (3) awarding a failing mark on the test or paper in question; (4) requiring the student to retake the test or resubmit the paper.

Copying someone else’s entire paper or article is a clear example of academic dishonesty, but note that plagiarism can take other, less obvious forms as well. “Language, ideas, thoughts or work of another” includes any material used in your assignments and essays that was written or produced by others. Using brief phrases or sentences from books, articles, internet sites, documents, or other sources without letting your reader know where they came from is a form of plagiarism. You must properly acknowledge your use of other people’s words by placing them in quotation marks and citing all sources used in your paper. Even if you paraphrase someone else’s ideas and do not quote them directly, you must still indicate where those ideas came from. Citations should also be given for little-known facts and statistics.

Any student found violating academic standards in this course will receive a zero for the assignment in question. A second offense will result in an F in the course. In addition, all cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Office of Student Conduct and become part of the student’s academic record. Potential employers as well as the directors of graduate and professional programs to which students may apply can request copies of these records, in which case the academic dishonesty charge will be disclosed.

Academic Success Services

Your student fees cover use of the Tutoring Center, the University Writing Center, and the Math Center. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these services as needed.

Tutoring Center: ph. 784-6801 or visit www.unr.edu/tutoring
University Writing Center: ph. 784-6030 or visit www.unr.edu/writing_center
Math Center: ph. 784-4433 or visit www.unr.edu/mathcenter
Students with Disabilities

The History Department is committed to equal opportunity in education for all students, including those with documented physical disabilities or documented learning disabilities. If you have a documented disability and will be requiring assistance, please contact me or the Disability Resource Center (Thompson Building Suite 101) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

Audio and Video Recording

Surreptitious or covert videotaping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may be given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.

Submissions to The Montag

The Montag is a student-edited undergraduate research journal that publishes essays, art, creative writing, and other work by students taking courses in the College of Liberal Arts. If you receive a grade of A for an essay written in this class, I encourage you to consider submitting it for publication in The Montag. The maximum page limit for submissions is 20 pages, and there is no minimum. To submit a piece of work, e-mail it along with your name and contact information to themontag@unr.edu.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Part I: The Roots of American Racism

Week 1
SLOs: 1, 4
January 24 Introduction
January 26 Where does racism come from?
Read: Omni and Winant, “Racial Formations,” 13–22

*Final date to add a class without instructor’s permission is Friday, January 27.

Week 2
SLOs: 1, 2, 4, 5
January 31 Native Americans and Europeans in the colonial period
Read: Riley, Growing Up Native American, 7–24, 39–53, 56, 87–95
February 2 Africans in America: The first generation
Read: Countryman, How Did American Slavery Begin?, 1–84

Week 2 quiz

*Final date to add a class (with instructor’s permission) or drop a class with full refund is Wednesday, February 1.
Week 3
SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
February 7 One law at a time: The development of racial slavery
Read: Countryman, *How Did American Slavery Begin?*, 85–98
February 9 Race and the Revolution
Read: Montag, “The Universalization of Whiteness,” 281–293
Week 3 assignment due

Week 4
SLOs: 1, 2, 4, 5
February 14 The white republic
Countryman, *How Did American Slavery Begin?*, 119–145
February 16 Scientific racism: Explaining and justifying inequality
Read: Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair*, 1–71
Week 4 quiz

Part II: Diversity and Discrimination in the Nineteenth Century

Week 5
SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
February 21 Guest lecture: Dr. Stephen Tuck, Oxford University
February 23 The struggle to abolish slavery
Read: Berlin, et al., *Slaves No More*, 3–76
Week 5 assignment due

Week 6
SLOs: 1, 2, 4, 5
February 28 Expansion into Native American and Mexican territory
Ruiz de Burton, *The Squatter and the Don*, 55–91
March 1 Asian and Mexican immigration
Read: Chan, *This Bittersweet Soil*, 7–32
Overmyer-Velázquez, *Beyond La Frontera*, 28–50
Week 6 quiz

Week 7
SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
March 6 European immigration and the white “underclass”
Read: Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 39–90
March 8 Nativist responses to immigration
Read: Knobel, “Relationship Between the Portrayal of Irish Americans and Citizenship at Midcentury,” 160–168
Week 7 assignment due
**Week 8**
SLOs: 2, 4  
March 13 *Lone Star* (first half)  
March 15 *Lone Star* (second half)

**Spring break (March 19–23)—No classes**

**Note:** The final date to drop a class and receive a W grade is Friday, March 23. If you decide to withdraw from HIST 479/679, you must officially drop the class to avoid receiving an F grade at the end of the semester. Instructors cannot assign W grades—this can only be done by Admissions and Records. If you did not complete the course and your name still appears on the class list at the end of the semester, I will be forced to give you an F.

**Part III: Struggles for Justice in the Twentieth Century**

**Week 9**
SLOs: 1, 2, 4, 5  
March 27 Lost opportunities: Interracial democracy during Reconstruction  
March 29 The “New South” and the rise of Jim Crow  
Read: Fields, *Lemon Swamp and Other Places*, 35–65  
**Film analysis due**

**Week 10**
SLOs: 1, 2, 4, 5  
April 3 Surviving and resisting the Jim Crow system  
Read: Wright, “The Ethics of Living Jim Crow,” 23–32  
April 5 Bordering on blackness: Race and poor whites  
Foley, *White Scourge*, 64–117

**Week 11**
SLOs: 1, 2, 4, 5  
April 10 Race, reform, and the mixed legacies of the New Deal  
Read: Barnard, *Outside the Magic Circle*, 116–134  
April 12 The black civil rights movement and the end of Jim Crow  
Read: Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, 261–307  
**Week 11 quiz**

**Week 12**
SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5  
April 17 Native American resistance to assimilation  
Read: Riley, *Growing Up Native American*, 115–133, 151–188  
Hoxie, *Talking Back to Civilization*, 66–86  
April 19 Struggles for autonomy and sovereignty  
**Week 12 assignment due**
**Week 13**
SLOs: 1, 2, 4, 5
April 24 Surviving and resisting “Juan Crow” in the southwest
April 26 Mexican American struggles for equality
Read: Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 179–205
*Week 13 quiz*

**Week 14**
SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
May 1 Asian American non-citizens in the era of exclusion
Read: Zhao, *Remaking Chinese America*, 8–28
May 3 Internment of Japanese Americans during World War II
Read: Uchida, *Desert Exile* (all)
*Week 14 assignment due*

**Week 15**
SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
May 8 Postwar struggles for citizenship
Read: Omatsu, “The ‘Four Prisons’ and Movements of Liberation,” 80-112
May 10 Globalization, immigration, and diversity after the 1960s
*Note: This class takes place in the final exam period, 5:00–7:00 pm*
Read: Overmyer-Velázquez, *Beyond La Frontera*, 103–124, 179–203
MacIntosh, “White Privilege,” 177–182
*Integrative essays due (HIST 479)*
*Historiographical/research essays due (HIST 679)*