

Race and Ethnicity Requirement

The Race and Ethnicity requirement provides students with opportunities to consider racial, ethnic, and cultural dynamics; political, economic and social exclusions; and social difference, inequality and identity more generally, to gain an awareness of how these affect structural inequality amongst individuals and communities. The requirement focuses on understanding how historical, political, and cultural processes, as well as literary and aesthetic forces, among a range of factors, shape concerns about race, ethnicity, and immigration—both domestically and in the global arena. Courses offered in this area should examine the processes and/or consequences of historical, political, or social power dynamics among historically marginalized and dominant populations in society, and in addition to race and ethnicity, may optionally further engage analysis of such factors such as language, religion, class, ability, nationality, sexuality, age, and gender.

While courses fulfilling this requirement may originate in any discipline or department, they share a common commitment to exploring the many ways that race and ethnicity shape our world and affect our understanding of it.

Notes from the Implementation Committee:

Course Focus: *A holistic approach to Race and Ethnicity needs to be a primary focus of courses approved for this requirement. Because racial and ethnic antagonisms and inequality are never "genderless", existing outside socioeconomic exigencies, nor without sexuality, course syllabi submitted to meet the Race and Ethnicity General Education Requirement should consider gender, sexuality, and class as inextricably linked to race and ethnicity. For example, when looking at the experience of African Americans, the group is not singular, nor are their experiences homogenous. The committee also reminds faculty that they may include global perspectives on race and ethnicity. The Committee hopes to see courses from a variety of disciplines and perspectives.*

An instructor can demonstrate that race and ethnicity are a primary focus in the course in a number of ways. Here are some examples, though there may be other ways to demonstrate this as well:

- 1. Course hours: more than half of course meetings are focused on race and ethnicity as topics.*
- 2. Grading: a substantial percentage of the final grade that relates to assignments about race and ethnicity, and/or identification of significant assignments and activities involving race and ethnicity.*
- 3. Integration of race and ethnicity into topics throughout the course (the weekly topic may not be about race and ethnicity, but attention to race and ethnicity occurs regularly in all topics).*
- 4. Reading lists include more than half of texts involving race and ethnicity as a topic, or texts written from the perspective of a marginalized group.*
- 5. The course includes and highlights knowledge produced by a group marginalized because of race or ethnicity.*

Resources and Readings: *Library resources on race and ethnicity are available in all fields. Faculty offering or considering a course for the Race and Ethnicity requirement should consult with subject librarians about materials in their own field.*

In the spirit of this requirement, the reading list should include a diverse (in all respects) set of authors and readings. The Committee welcomes knowledge generated by communities marginalized because of race and ethnicity, not simply readings about those communities.

Learning Objectives

To meet the requirement, a course must include three of the following four learning objectives:

Goal 1: Develop a critical awareness of how racial and ethnic antagonisms and inequality develop historically through individual, institutional, and cultural forces.

Committee notes for Goal 1: Race and ethnicity is neither an empty nor homogenous category, and is always shaped by gender, sexuality and class; developing a critical awareness of race and ethnicity is inextricable from understanding how gender, class and sexuality operate within it. Courses should focus on the forces connected to racial and ethnic identities, antagonism, and inequality, but also reflect the diversity within racial and ethnic communities.

Topics for discussion and assignments may range from exploring ways in which groups have traditionally been excluded, marginalized, denigrated, as well as various methods and strategies that provide a means for inclusion.

Goal 2: Discern how racial and ethnic power dynamics shape and may be reflected in intellectual inquiry across disciplines.

Committee notes for Goal 2: Syllabi will be evaluated on course design that attends to racial and ethnic power dynamics, including the ways in which gender, sexuality and class inform those very dynamics that shape and may be reflected in intellectual inquiry in the course discipline. Discerning such dynamics should include efforts to interrogate a field's pedagogical approach; the ways in which these dynamics impact the production of knowledge, its relation to structures that include economic, political, cultural norms and practices; efforts to expand or digress from a field's canon; and efforts to address citational power structures. Courses may contextualize the role of race and ethnicity in events, discoveries, and conflicts within a field of study.

Diverse reading lists, discussion topics, lectures, and/or student assignments will incorporate archives, methodologies, and debates within and across disciplines centering knowledge produced by silenced racial and ethnic groups.

Goal 3: Recognize the ways in which race and ethnicity intersect with other group identifications or ascriptions, such as language, religion, class, ability, nationality, sexuality, age, and gender.

Committee notes for Goal 3: All courses should examine race and ethnicity in a holistic fashion, especially concerning the ways gender, sexuality and class inform them. Some courses may explicitly include discussions of other identities and inequalities not only in relation to race and ethnicity, but as sources of identity, exclusion, and inequality themselves. Other courses may focus on the intersection of race and ethnicity and other identities or ascriptions as a main focus of the course.

Goal 4: Adopt tools to communicate more effectively and respectfully with others from various racial and ethnic perspectives.

Committee notes for Goal 4: This goal focuses on communication, and courses using this goal need to have assignments and/or activities in the course that encourage communication by students on this topic, and help them develop tools for the future. Because gender, sexuality and class always inform racial and ethnic identity formation, activities should thoughtfully reflect the diverse array of identities that operate even within a single racial and/or ethnic collective identity. The Committee has provided (in an attached document) some examples of types of activities that might reflect this goal, but these are examples, not required activities. There are also resources about inclusive instruction to support instructor communication and teaching.