

RACE AND ETHNIC STUDIES

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(Offered within the Department of Race, Ethnic, Gender, and Sexuality Studies)

Established at St. Olaf College in 1969, the Race and Ethnic Studies Program (abbreviated RACE) represents a multigenerational faculty and student commitment to the interdisciplinary study of race and ethnicity. Our program centers the concerns and experiences of people of color and proceeds from the recognition that race and ethnicity have been and continue to be crucial components within interlocking systems of oppression, as well as powerful sites of intersectional resistance. In the United States, our work focuses on the social, cultural, and historical contributions and lived situations of African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Latinx, and Middle Eastern Americans. Migration — historical and contemporary, voluntary and involuntary — is an experience that unites many of these communities. Our program therefore encompasses coursework involving the cultures and nations outside of the U.S. from which such peoples are drawn; it can also include the study of racial and ethnic minorities in other nations. Globalization has brought greater urgency to recognizing that the economic, social, and political forces to which people of color are subjected are not limited to those that originate within the nations in which they reside. Thus we also attend to transnational coalitions, experiences, and phenomena relevant to people of color in the United States and beyond.

Overview of the Major

The race and ethnic studies major includes RACE 121, RACE 396, and six other courses from at least three different departments. RACE 396 Directed Undergraduate Research enables students to fulfill their capstone project requirement in a seminar setting during their senior year. One of the six courses may be an independent study or research, and one may be an internship approved by the program director. Study abroad or away is encouraged.

Unlike many majors which prescribe sequences of courses, race and ethnic studies allows students considerable freedom in choosing classes that fulfill their interests. Many race and ethnic studies majors are double majors, because race and ethnic studies courses complement many majors in the humanities, interdisciplinary studies, social and natural sciences, and the fine arts.

Race and ethnic studies also offers a concentration consisting of RACE 121 Introduction to Race and Ethnic Studies and four other courses from at least two different departments or programs.

Intended Learning Outcomes for the Major

Intended Learning Outcomes for the Concentration

Requirements

Requirements for the Major

Code	Title	Credits
RACE 121	Introduction to Race and Ethnic Studies	1.00
RACE 396	Directed Undergraduate Research	1.00
Select a minimum of six additional approved courses taken in at least three departments or programs. ¹		6.00
Total Credits		8

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One of the six courses may be an independent study or research, and one may be an off-campus internship or course approved by the program director.

Race and ethnic studies majors are required to complete a senior project and to give an oral presentation of their findings before the program faculty in early May of their senior year. Students graduating in 2025 and afterward should register for RACE 396: Directed Undergraduate Research during spring of senior year to complete their projects.

Study abroad or away on race and ethnic studies topics is encouraged. Students may wish to link a race and ethnic studies major with another one from a department represented in the program.

**By completing this major, the student also satisfies the OLE Core Writing in the Major requirement.*

Requirements for the Concentration

Code	Title	Credits
RACE 121	Introduction to Race and Ethnic Studies	1.00
Select four other approved courses taken in at least two departments or programs.		4.00
Total Credits		5

Courses

Required Course

RACE 121: *Introduction to Race and Ethnic Studies*

This course provides an introduction to critical concepts and key readings about race and racism that are important to the field of Ethnic Studies. Focusing on identities and communities, students learn about racial formation and difference in U.S. and comparative cultural and historical contexts. How does race intersect with class, gender, nation, and sexuality to produce privileges and oppressions? Students survey the emergence of Ethnic Studies through literary texts including art, creative writing, film, music, popular culture, and/or the sciences to become acquainted with interdisciplinary approaches and how concerns for racial equity and social justice formed this academic field. Offered annually.

Elective Courses

RACE 220: *Korean Arts and Critical Indigenous Studies (study abroad)*

Through immersive, multifaceted engagement with Korea including but not limited to the performing arts, guest lectures from writers and cultural bearers, and visits to significant cultural and historical sites, this course ponders the production of a Korean indigeneity in critical contexts. Students consider how Indigenous practices recognized as "intangible cultural heritage" construct national identities, and how these traditions are deployed to reimagine and write Korean selves.

RACE 250: *Topical Seminar*

Students apply interdisciplinary theories and methods to selected topics in race and ethnic studies. The course employs a discussion format, focusing on critical reading and literary texts. Offered in alternate years. May be repeated if topic is different.

RACE 252: *Topical Seminar*

Students apply interdisciplinary theories and methods to selected topics in race and ethnic studies. The course employs a discussion format, focusing on critical reading and texts with a social science emphasis. Offered in alternate years. May be repeated if topic is different.

RACE 294: *Academic Internship*

RACE 394: *Academic Internship*

RACE 298: *Independent Study*

RACE 396: *Directed Undergraduate Research*

How is academic work in Race and Ethnic Studies enabled or transformed by an openness to creativity? And how is creative work--in fields such as film, music, literature, and visual art--enabled or transformed by research? In this seminar, students encounter foundational and contemporary work that addresses one or both of these questions. In the second half of the semester, students pursue individual projects (academic, creative, or both) that serve as their response. Offered annually in the spring semester.

Prerequisite: Enrollment by approval of instructor.

RACE 398: *Independent Research*

Approved Courses

AFAD 231 Africa and the Americas: The Diaspora Experience

ARTH 264 Race and Difference in Medieval Art

ASIAN 123 Asia in America

ASIAN 244 Language and Race in Japan and USA

ASIAN 255 Engaging Asia: San Francisco (study away)

DANCE 107 Topics in Rhythm in Dance (0.25)

DANCE 108 American Dance: Native and Immigrant Traditions (0.25)

DANCE 246 Dance in the United States

EDUC 170 Urban Schools and Communities (study away)

EDUC 295 Foundations of Education

EDUC 378 Multicultural Education in Hawaii: Seminar and Practicum (study away)

EDUC 379 Urban Education Practicum and Seminar (study away)

ENGL 108 The Hero and the Trickster in Post-Colonial Literature

ENGL 200 Topics in Cross-Cultural Literature

ENGL 202 Queer of Color Literature

ENGL 203 Asian American Literature

ENGL 205 American Racial and Multicultural Literatures

ENGL 207 Women of the African Diaspora

ENGL 209 Arab American Literature and Film

ENGL 220 Topics in Literary History (when taught with the topic: Literature of American Slavery)

ENGL 251 Major Chicano/a Authors

ENGL 280 Topics in Genre (when taught with the topic: Muslim Women Writers)

ENGL 340 Advanced Studies in Literary Eras: American (when taught with the topic: 21st Century Ethnic American Poetry)

ENGL 345 Topics in American Racial and Multicultural Literatures

ENGL 347 Topics in Post-Colonial Literatures

FREN 271 The Francophone World (when taught with the topic: Les Antilles/The Caribbean)

FREN 373 Genre Studies (when taught with the topic: French/ Francophone Film)

GSS 250 Intersectional Feminisms: Race, Gender, and Sexuality

HIST 151 Slavery in African History

HIST 165 Slavery in the Americas

HIST 181 Civil Rights and Revolution

HIST 199 American History Since 1865

HIST 256 Slavery in West Africa: Ghana (study abroad)

HIST 270 Major Seminar: American History

HIST 277 African American History

HIST 282 Topics in Native American History

HIST 288 America in the Civil War and Reconstruction Era

HIST 291 Introduction to African History

HIST 297 Topical Seminar (when taught with the topic: Race/Gender/ Sports in America)

HIST 320 Research Seminar: Modern European History (when taught with the topic: Holocaust and History)

HIST 370 Research Seminar: American History (when taught with the topic: Capitalism and Slavery)

HIST 395 Oral History Seminar (when the final research project focuses on race/ethnicity, director approval required)

MUSIC 231 History of Jazz

MUSIC 237 Local and Global Musicking

MUSIC 345 Advanced Study in Musicology (when taught with the topic: Music and Race)

MUSIC 345 Advanced Study in Musicology (when taught with the topic: Music of African Christianities)

NORW 224 Topics in Contemp Nordic Lit: Window on Society (Taught in English) (when taught with the topic: Scandinavian Multicultural Film and Literature)

NORW 244 The Sámi: Traditions in Transition (Taught in English)

PHIL 255 Race and Social Justice

PSCI 244 Race and American Politics

PSCI 258 World Politics

PSCI 350 Seminar: Immigration and Citizenship (when the final paper and RIN projects focus on race/ethnicity, director approval required)

PSYCH 346 Social Psychological Perspectives on Diversity

PSYCH 390 Issues in Psychology (when taught with the topic: Issues in Diversity)

REL 232 The Insurgent Multiculturalism of Beloved Community

REL 267 African American Religious Thought in the 20th Century

SWRK 221 Social Work and Social Welfare

SWRK 373 Just Practice

SOAN 128 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

SOAN 237 Forging a Latin American Culture

SOAN 247 Disasters

SOAN 261 Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective

SOAN 264 Race and Class in American Culture

SOAN 269 Urban Sociology

SOAN 299 Topics in Sociology/Anthropology (when taught with the topic: Sociology of Music)

SPAN 273 Cultures of the Latinx/a/o U.S.

SPAN 276 Spanish as a First and Second Language

SPAN 311 Language in Society

THEAT 180 Text and Performance

THEAT 379 Topics in Interpretation and Theater (when taught with the topic: Staging Faith: Religion and Spiritualism in Early 20th Century American Theater)

In addition, some sections of FYS 120 First-Year Seminar and WRIT 120 Writing and Rhetoric may count toward the race and ethnic studies major or concentration, depending on topic. Petition the director of race and ethnic studies for approval.

Plan of Study

Race and Ethnic Studies Major - Plan of Study

This is a sample plan that meets the prescribed requirements for the Race and Ethnic Studies major at St. Olaf. This tool is meant as a guide and does not replace working closely with the student's academic advisor.

An overview of general options for planning the major may be found here.

Course	Title	Credits
First Year		
Fall Semester		
FYS 120 or WRIT 120	First-Year Seminar (or Conversation Program) or Writing and Rhetoric	1.00
World Language		1.00
Credits		2
Spring Semester		
WRIT 120 or FYS 120	Writing and Rhetoric (or Conversation Program) or First-Year Seminar	1.00
RACE 121	Introduction to Race and Ethnic Studies	1.00
World Language		1.00
Credits		3
Sophomore Year		
Fall Semester		
Approved RACE Course		1.00
Credits		1
Spring Semester		
Approved RACE Course		1.00
Credits		1
Junior Year		
Fall Semester		
Approved RACE Course		1.00
Credits		1
Spring Semester		
Approved RACE Course		1.00
Credits		1
Senior Year		
Fall Semester		
Approved RACE Course		1.00
Credits		1

Spring Semester

RACE 396	Directed Undergraduate Research	1.00
Approved RACE Course		1.00
Credits		2
Total Credits		12

1

One of the six approved RACE courses may be an independent study or research, and one may be an off-campus internship or course approved by the program director.

Students must successfully complete the equivalent of 35 St. Olaf credits through a combination of full-credit and fractional-credit courses to earn the Bachelor of Arts.

Visit the Race and Ethnic Studies webpage for more information.

Faculty

Program Director , 2025-2026

Anthony Bateza

Associate Professor of Religion
Reformation studies

Ibtesam âl-Atiyat

Professor of Sociology/Anthropology
Arab society; gender; social movements; Islamic movements

Sidonia Alenuma

Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology/Anthropology

Joshua R. Anderson

Assistant Professor of Political Science
American politics; political philosophy; history of science

Jessica M. Benson

Associate Professor of Psychology

Emily Bowman

Visiting Associate Professor of Sociology and Anthropology

Maggie A. Broner (on sabbatical 2025-26)

National Endowment for the Humanities Professor of Romance
Language
Hispanic linguistics; culture; second language acquisition

Heather Campbell

Professor of Education; Education Director of Assessment 2025-26
reading; special education

Christopher (Chris) L. Chiappari

Associate Professor of Sociology/Anthropology
Guatemala; religion; immigration

Vivian Choi

Associate Professor of Sociology/Anthropology
South Asia; science and technology; disasters

Dana Horton

Associate Professor of English and Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and
Sexuality Studies
Black feminist theory, African American literature, hip hop studies,
Black Atlantic studies, postcolonial literature, multiethnic literature,
contemporary American literature, slave narratives, and visual rhetoric

Jennifer Kwon Dobbs

Professor of English and Race, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Associate
Dean of Interdisciplinary and General Studies
poetry and poetics; creative nonfiction; Asian American literature;
critical adoption studies

Kari Lie Dorer

Professor of Norwegian and Race, Ethnic, Gender and Sexuality
Studies, King Olav V Chair of Scandinavian-American Studies
Norwegian language and culture; applied linguistics; Sami studies;
Nordic film

Lau Malaver

Assistant Professor of Race, Ethnic, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Jonathan T. Naito

Associate Professor of English; Associate Dean of Humanities
20th- and 21st-century British and Irish literature; postcolonial studies;
black and Asian British literature; Samuel Beckett

León Narváez

Professor of Romance Languages - Spanish
Hispanic culture, language, and literature; migration and other
interdisciplinary studies

Soojin Pate

Visiting Assistant Professor of Race, Ethnic, Gender, and Sexuality
Studies

David C. Schalliol

Associate Professor of Sociology/Anthropology
social stratification; urban sociology; visual sociology; criminology;
education

Nancy M. Thompson

Professor of Art and Art History and Race, Ethnic, Gender and Sexuality
Studies
medieval art in Europe; medieval and early modern art in Italy;
women's and gender studies