Race Matters

Overview
This two-course, two-semester, interdisciplinary learning community for first-year students focuses on race, ethnicity, and related matters in the twenty-first century United States. Students take a special section of SOAN 121 ("Introduction to Sociology") and a special section of Writing 111. The thoroughly integrated curriculum of these sections bridges the humanities and the social sciences, offering students a deep and broad engagement with race and ethnicity in the contemporary world.

Overview of the Program
Race Matters is an interdisciplinary, integrated linked-course sequence on an enduring and dynamic topic of considerable interest to our students and society at large: the role of race in twenty-first-century American life. As the title of the learning community is meant to suggest, the subject is not merely "race" in its narrowest sense but a broader array of phenomena that could be called "race matters." Many of these "race matters" concern the intersection of race with one or more related axes of identity, such as religion, class, ethnicity, gender, or sexuality. For instance, Race Matters considers the experiences of Muslim Americans, South Asians, and Sikhs since 9/11; it examines the diverse communities, histories, and individual experiences grouped under broad labels such as "Asian American" and "Latinx"; it takes up the role of gender and sexuality within racial and ethnic communities, as well as within movements such as Black Lives Matter; it attends to shifting ideas about citizenship, immigrants, and refugees; it looks at the increasing visibility of self-identifying biracial and multiracial Americans; and it explores the role of geography, technology (such as social media and low cost DNA sequencing), changing demographics, and broader economic and political forces (such as globalization and nationalism) in shaping race matters in the present.

Intended Learning Outcomes for the Program

Admission to the Program
Students apply to Race Matters after they are admitted to the college. Each year about 19 first-year students are admitted to the program.

Course Equivalents for General Education Requirements
By successfully completing the Race Matters program, students fulfill the following GE requirements:

- First-Year Writing [FYW] (one course);
- Studies in Human Behavior and Society [HBS] (one course);
- Multicultural Studies -- Domestic [MCD] (one course)

Courses
SOAN 121 Introduction to Sociology (taken in the fall semester)
WRIT 111 First-Year Writing (taken in the spring semester)