Ethnic and Racial Studies Department (ERS)

College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities
224 Wimberly Hall; 608.785.8223
Department Chair: Sara Docan-Morgan
4229 Centennial Hall; 608.785.6711
Email: sdocan-morgan@uwlax.edu

www.uwlax.edu/ethnic-and-racial-studies

The Department of Ethnic and Racial Studies (ERS) is designed to provide students with exposure to the primary American ethnic and racial groups. Courses offered in the program relate to African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos/as, Arabs, Muslims, and American Indians. Courses in the ERS Department examine the history and experiences of these minorities in the United States. The primary objective of the Department of Ethnic and Racial Studies is to develop and foster knowledge and appreciation of the multiracial and multicultural reality of the American society.

The ethnic and racial studies minor complements the academic majors and career aspirations of students in a wide range of disciplines including communication studies; psychology; sociology; criminal justice; women, gender and sexuality studies; political science; public administration; history; health education; health promotion; health professions; economics; management; marketing; exercise and sport science; recreation management; therapeutic recreation; geography and earth science; biology; microbiology; and chemistry.

Program Features

The ethnic and racial studies minor is open to students in all schools and colleges within the university. The minor utilizes an interdisciplinary approach, integrating various concepts to provide a comprehensive perspective on the historic treatment and the contemporary experience of racial and ethnic minorities in the United States. Those students seeking a minor in ethnic and racial studies must complete a minimum of eighteen credits; twelve required from the Department of Ethnic and Racial Studies and six elective credits from either the ERS Department or other participating departments.

2019-20 Faculty/Staff

The following is the department's faculty and staff as of the publication date of this catalog. This list will not be updated again until the next catalog is published in June.

Professor
Timothy Gongaware

Associate Professor
Richard Breaux
Sarah Shillinger

Lecturer
Diana Moran-Thundercloud

Associate Lecturer
Shuma Iwai
Justin Odulana

Minor

- Ethnic and racial studies minor (http://catalog.uwlax.edu/undergraduate/ethnicandracialstudies/minor)

Certificate

- Hmong and Hmong-American studies certificate (http://catalog.uwlax.edu/undergraduate/ethnicandracialstudies/hmong-studies-certificate)

+ next to a course number indicates a general education course

Courses

+ERS 100 Cr.3
Introduction to Ethnic and Racial Studies
An examination of the persistence of minority and ethnic problems in the United States and consideration of the contributions, parallels, similarities, and differences between and among ethnic and minority groups. Offered Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer.

+ENG/ERS 207 Cr.3
Multicultural Literature of the United States
This course examines cultural themes in American literature in an effort to enhance student awareness of the multi-ethnic nature of American culture. Students engage in close reading, discussion, analysis, and interpretation of texts written by individuals from a variety of American ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Content varies with instructors. Prerequisite: ENG 110 or ENG 112 or concurrent enrollment in ENG 112. (Cross-listed with ENG/ERS; may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer.

+ENG/ERS 210 Cr.3
Literature of Black America
Survey and exploration of Black American prose and poetry from their eighteenth century beginnings to the end of the Harlem Renaissance and the depression years. Prerequisite: ENG 110 or ENG 112 or concurrent enrollment in ENG 112. (Cross-listed with ENG/ERS; may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Fall.

+ENG/ERS 215 Cr.3
African American Authors
A study of the principal post-depression (1940 to present) African American authors, critics, and scholars which clarifies the relationship between these writers and the general field of American literature and which illustrates their unique contributions as representatives of African American culture. Prerequisite: ENG 110 or ENG 112 or concurrent enrollment in ENG 112. (Cross-listed with ENG/ERS; may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Spring.
ERS 220 Cr.3
Introduction to Ethnic and Racial Stereotypes in the Media
This course will trace how popular entertainment mediums such as film, television, books, comics, “wild west shows,” music and cartoons have impacted perceptions of ethnic and racial groups from the early seventeenth century to the present. Besides analyzing the persuasive power of these types of mediums, it will examine why such representations were created and why they still persist. The mythopoeic image that surrounds American Indians, African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics, and other minority groups will be juxtaposed against the historical reality that these groups have faced and the contemporary inequalities that we still must confront. Prerequisite: ERS 100. Offered Fall, Spring.

ERS 253 Cr.3
Introduction to Wisconsin Indians
An introductory examination of Wisconsin Indians with specific reference to the Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Ojibwa, Oneida, Potawatomi, and the Stockbridge-Munsee communities. An interdisciplinary approach will be used to explore topics including sovereignty, land use and environmental issues, education, economic development, social issues and challenges, and tribal identity. The course also will explore federal and state American Indian policies, as well as each tribes’ response to them. The story of Wisconsin American Indian tribes is a story of struggle against prejudice and discrimination to survive. They continue not only to survive but to thrive as a modern tribal people. Their presence is felt in all areas of the state’s economy, yet they are often overlooked. Wisconsin American Indians work in the state’s health care fields, as educators, administrators, and as entrepreneurs. Many state residents are unaware of their presence in their day-to-day lives. This creates a unique opportunity for students to examine their relationship to racial minorities and their own ability to become more aware of the world around them, and to help in creating a more harmonious racial environment. Offered Fall, Spring.

ERS 300 Cr.1-3
Topics and Symposium in Minority Studies
Topics selected by the individual instructor or by the students and instructor together. Special interest of both the instructor and students such as Black drama or Native American art, or other areas of concern which are either not covered or briefly dealt with in formal course work may be the vehicles for this offering. Repeatable for credit - maximum six. Offered Occasionally.

ERS 309 Cr.3
Music of Black America
This course examines the history of recorded Black musical expression in the United States through music, lyrics, and texts. It explores the role of spirituals, blues, ragtime, jazz, calypso & mento, gospel, rhythm & blues, funk, reggae, house, and rap music from slavery through the Obama era as a conveyor of social, cultural, and political commentary on race, gender, class, sexual orientation and other intersecting identities with an emphasis on race. Literary criticism, music history, critical race theory will be used to understand the importance of music as an expression of power and relative powerlessness to the black experience in the US. Lect. 2, Lab 1. Offered Fall.

ERS 314 Cr.3
Race, Ethnicity, and Sport
Sport has long occupied a place at the heart of American culture and society. Organized athletics have also served as symbolic sites of protest, power, and inclusion for the nation’s racial minorities. This course will explore the terrain of American sport in the twentieth century as a way to understand the profound impact that the phenomenon of athletic competition has had in the development of American race relations. With particular attention to the experiences of African American athletes, but also encompassing Native American, Latino/a, and Asian American interactions with sport, and will delve into the events, icons, and cultural meanings of sports over the last century. Offered Occasionally.

ERS/PHL 321 Cr.3
American Indian Thought
Reflection on the Native American ways of thinking as manifest in the literature of various select tribes, on the essential characteristics of thinking commonly shared by Native Americans, and on the fundamental difference between the Native American ways of thinking and those of the dominant (white) culture. The "primal world" of Native American thought will be studied as an alternative to the western way of thinking. Prerequisite: ERS 100. (Cross-listed with ERS/PHL 321; may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Occasionally.

ERS 325 Cr.3
Exploring White Privilege
This inter-disciplinary course is an exploration of white privilege in contemporary American society. Considering whiteness as both race and power-based system, this course attempts deeper understanding of the persistence of racism and its impact on all segments of society. Questions of denial and resistance, collaboration in systems of privilege, and personal and intellectual responses to those explorations highlight how privilege influences human interaction. The distribution of privilege within American society at personal, institutional, and cultural levels, as well as how whiteness operates within social constructs of class and gender, will be analyzed. Students ultimately develop strategies for confronting racism. Prerequisite: ERS 100. Offered Occasionally.

ERS 330 Cr.3
Food and Race in the United States
This course is an interdisciplinary examination of the relationship between food and American identity and racial stratification in the United States. The study of food gives insight into immigration technology, religion, tradition and politics. Particular emphasis will be placed on understanding how various groups use food to maintain racial and ethnic boundaries. Offered Occasionally.

ERS/SOC 342 Cr.3
Latino/a Experiences in the U.S.
This course offers a sociological analysis of the experiences of Latino/a populations in the United States. Topics covered include legal status and citizenship; push and pull factors of immigration; political participation and social movements; assimilation and acculturation; health concerns and educational outcomes; and identity formation around issues of social class, sex and gender, and race/ethnicity. Emphasis is placed on understanding the complexities of the Latino/a experience in the United States as well as mastering sociological concepts related to processes of immigration and assimilation. This course will be useful for students planning to enter human services where they are likely to interact with this population. Prerequisite: SOC 110 or SOC 120 or ANT 101. (Cross-listed with ERS/SOC, may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Alternate Years.
ERS/SOC 343 Cr.3

**American Indian Contemporary Issues**

This course is an interdisciplinary examination of American Indian contemporary experience in the United States. It will introduce students to some of the critical issues in American Indian studies by examining the place of American Indians within the American imagination, politics and society. The course concentrates on issues of tribal sovereignty, economics, social class and structure, and the difficulties of maintaining a tribal identity in the 21st century. Prerequisite: one of the following: EFN 205, ERS 100, ERS 253, HIS 310, SOC 225, or WGS 130. (Cross-listed with ERS/SOC; may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Fall.

ERS 351 Cr.3

**Ethnic and Racial Relations**

An introductory course that examines leading theories of racial and ethnic relations in the United States and assesses their significance and relevance in explaining historic and contemporary relations between the white majority and the racial and ethnic minorities. It also analyzes and evaluates the impact of various laws, policies, and programs on racial and ethnic relations. Prerequisite: ERS 100. Offered Fall, Spring.

+ANT/ERS 362 Cr.3

**Hmong Americans**

This is an introductory course to Hmong American history, culture, and contemporary life. The course reviews Hmong history within the context of U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia from 1945 to 1975 and examines the sociocultural transformations that have been taking place in Hmong American communities across the U.S. since 1976. Prerequisite: (Cross-listed with ANT/ERS; may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Occasionally.

ERS/SOC 363 Cr.3

**American Indians and the Environment**

This course introduces students to American Indian environmental issues. Topics include treaty-based hunting, fishing and gathering rights, air and water quality regulatory authority, environmental racism, toxic and nuclear waste disposal on Indian lands, mining and hydroelectric dams, sacred sites, and Indian vs. Western perceptions of the environment. Special attention will be given to current environmental controversies in Wisconsin Indian country. Prerequisite: one of the following: EFN 205; ERS 100, ERS 253; ERS/SOC 343; SOC 225, SOC 328. (Cross-listed with ERS/SOC; may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Occasionally.

ERS 365 Cr.3

**Muslims in the United States**

What is the history of Islam in the United States? Who makes up the Muslim American community, past and present? What does it mean to be Muslim in the US? Using an interdisciplinary approach, this course explores the multiple racial, ethnic, cultural, and national groups that make-up this diverse community. The course begins by chronicling the introduction of Islam to the country, namely through travel, slavery, immigration and conversion. The course then investigates how the events of 9/11 and the subsequent “war on terror” impact Muslim Americans. Building upon this theoretical foundation, we examine key experiential themes, including media stereotyping, Islamophobia, gender, Muslim youth, cultural pluralism, and progressivism. Students ultimately relate theories of race and religion to the Muslim American experience. Prerequisite: ERS 100. Offered Occasionally.

ERS 369 Cr.3

**Multiracial and Multicultural Identities**

This interdisciplinary course explores the experiences and identities of multiracial and multicultural people in the United States. An increasing number of people identify as multiracial, including those coming of age at a time when more than one racial/ethnic identity may be checked on the census. Transracial adoptees are sharing stories of what it means to be raised by parents who do not “look like them.” Immigrants and their descendants are openly maintaining practices of ancestral cultures while simultaneously acculturating to “mainstream America.” Multiracial and multicultural Americans are gaining visibility in the 21st century like never before. Questions of interracial relationships, globalization and immigration dynamics, identity construction, transnationality, and belonging will be addressed. Students will ultimately engage contemporary discussions, debates, and narratives to analyze the past, present, and future spaces occupied by multiracial and multicultural identities in the US, and to locate self-identities within that discussion. Prerequisite: ERS 100. Offered Occasionally.

ERS 400/500 Cr.1-3

**Individual Study in Ethnic and Racial Studies**

Directed reading and research under the supervision of an instructor. Repeatable for credit - maximum six. This course is taught largely at an undergraduate level. Graduate students will have additional course requirements/expectation. Prerequisite: junior standing. Consent of instructor. Offered Fall, Spring.

ERS/HIS 409 Cr.3

**20th Century Civil Rights Movement**

This course explores the modern civil rights movement in the US and the struggle for African Americans and other marginalized groups to gain equal rights in voting, education, employment, housing, and other facets of life in the US. It begins with the MOWM and examines the seemingly completing philosophies of civil rights organizations such as CORE, SNCC, SCLC, BPP, AIM, SDS and other civil rights leaders, and local people in shaping their own destinies. It highlights and interrogates major national and local political struggles and their reciprocal relationships with international political and anti-colonial movements from 1941 to the present. It concludes with exploring the link between convict leasing, prison reform movements, political prisoners, and the prison industrial complex as the New Jim Crow. Prerequisite: ERS 100. (Cross-listed with ERS/HIS; may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Fall.

ERS 410/510 Cr.3

**Contemporary Issues in Minority Cultures**

An introduction to ethnic minority groups in the United States today emphasizing the historical antecedents of contemporary issues with particular attention to the problems of ethnic groups and educational institutions. This course is taught largely at an undergraduate level. Graduate students will have additional course requirements/expectations. Prerequisite: junior standing. Offered Occasionally.
ERS/HIS 411 Cr.3

20th Century African American Urban History
This course will explore the interrelationships between race, class, and gender among blacks in the twentieth century American city. Throughout the semester we will interrogate the confluence and the divergence of the myths and the realities of the black urban political, social, and cultural experience in the United States. The course begins in the American South in 1900, where the majority of blacks continued to live, and follows the migration of over two million African Americans to the northern and western United States in the years between World War I and World War II. The course continues with the black community-building process and the black urban struggle for political, economic, and cultural self-determination. While blacks in the South played an enormous role in the Civil Rights Movement, this course will include focus on the Civil Rights and Black Power Movement in the Urban North and West, and conclude with examinations of the rise of the so-called second ghettos. Prerequisite: ERS 100. (Cross-listed with ERS/HIS; may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Fall.

ERS/PSY 415 Cr.3

Multicultural Counseling
This course focuses on the effects of culture on the nature and behavior of individuals, their adaptations to institutions and environments, and their relations within and outside their culture. Specifically, the impact of concepts such as ethnocentrism, stereotypes, racism and prejudice are explored in terms of their relevance to the counseling process. Strategies and skills relevant to providing effective multicultural counseling are investigated. Prerequisite: PSY 100, PSY 285. (Cross-listed with ERS/PSY; may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Annually.

ERS/PSY 442 Cr.3

Racism and Oppression
This course focuses on psychological theory and research regarding individual, group, historical, institutional, and societal causes of racism and oppression. The manifestations and consequences of racism and oppression are examined as are the challenges inherent in reducing racism and oppression. Both historical and contemporary racism and oppression in a global context are analyzed. Prerequisite: ERS 100 or PSY 241 or PSY 285 or SOC 330; junior standing. Students with credit in ERS/PSY 443 cannot earn credit in ERS/PSY 442. (Cross-listed with ERS/PSY; may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Occasionally.

ERS/PSY 443 Cr.3

Prejudice and Stigma
This course explores the psychological underpinnings of prejudice and stigma from an empirical, research-based perspective. In addition to covering well-recognized forms of prejudice such as racism, the course examines discrimination more broadly in terms of its impact on those who stigmatize and those who are stigmatized. Prerequisite: PSY 100; PSY 241 or SOC 330; PSY 321 or PSY 331. Students with credit in ERS/PSY 442 may not earn credit in ERS/PSY 443. (Cross-listed with ERS/PSY; may only earn credit in one department.) Offered Occasionally.

ERS 490 Cr.3

Ethnic and Racial Studies Seminar
This capstone course is designed as a culminating experience for students completing a minor in Ethnic and Racial Studies. Current events will be examined and connections to careers will be explored as the active application of an ERS minor is made the central focus for the course. Students will draw upon the skills and knowledge of both their ERS minor as well as their own majors and other programs of study to design and carry out a capstone project that will address and/or analyze some aspect of ethnic and racial experiences in the United States. Prerequisite: ERS 100; 12 credits from core and elective courses; declared ethnic and racial studies minor. Offered Spring.