Ethnic and Racial Studies Department (ERS)

College of Liberal Studies
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www.uwlax.edu/ethnic-and-racial-studies

The Department of Ethnic and Racial Studies 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, Latino/as, and American Indians. Courses in the 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.

Program Features

The program (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 Institute for Ethnic and Racial Studies and six elective credits from participating departments.

2015-16 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
Sarah Shillinger

Assistant Professor
Richard Breaux

Senior Lecturer
Audry Mouser Elegbede

Associate Lecturer
Nicholas Villanueva

Minor

• Ethnic and racial studies minor (http://catalog.uwlax.edu/undergraduate/ethnicandracialstudies/minor)
  + 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, Spring.

+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 each tribe’s responses to both state and federal governments. 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/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/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 230. (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 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/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 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. 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. 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 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 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/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. Counseling strategies and skills relevant to providing effective multicultural counseling are investigated. Prerequisite: PSY 100, PSY 204. (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. Students will complete their ERS portfolios containing samples of all courses taken for the minor. In addition, students will be required to write a reflective essay that reviews the course materials in the portfolios. Students will also write a seminar research paper which analyzes some aspect of ethnic and racial experience in the United States. Prerequisite: ERS 100; 12 credits from core and elective courses. Offered Fall, Spring.