

CROSS CURRENTS: THINKING ABOUT RACE
STOKES S213, TUESDAYS 4:30 PM

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SEMINAR DESCRIPTION

The Cross Currents: Thinking about Race seminar explores the concept of race; the effects of race on individuals; the presentation and negotiation of race in society; and the role of race at Boston College. The topics covered in the course are not only important, but also complex and provocative. The seminar is an opportunity to have candid conversations with others who are also exploring race and its effects in society. The seminar will help develop your understanding of what these topics mean to you personally and intellectually through discussions with other students.

SEMINAR GOALS

1. To help students understand the complexity of race in society and at Boston College.
2. To increase students' comfort and competence with difficult conversations about race at Boston College.
3. To help students gauge and understand the role of race in their lives.
4. To help students contextualize their reading and research assignments on race.

SEMINAR LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. As a result of completing the Cross Currents Seminar on race, students will be able to define and discuss race.
2. Students enrolled in the Cross Currents Seminar on race will be able to give a twelve-minute group presentation on race.
3. Students enrolled in the Cross Currents Seminar on race will complete five reflection papers on race.
4. Students enrolled in the Cross Currents Seminar on race will lead one class discussion on race.
5. As a result of taking the Cross Currents Seminar on race, students will integrate their learning from the partner course.

6. Students enrolled in the Cross Currents Seminar on race, will attend three outside of class lectures on race.

SEMINAR REQUIREMENTS

Attendance:

Learning in this seminar is dependent on class discussion. Attendance is extremely important. You are expected to be prepared for the seminar and to arrive on time. If you must miss the seminar, please alert me as soon as possible. Excessive absences will affect your participation and your ability to pass the seminar.

Class Participation:

You are expected to contribute to the success of the seminar through discussion and seminar assignments. You are also expected to use the knowledge and understanding that you have gained through your other courses/experience to contribute to the learning of your classmates. You should also be aware of current events that center on race and be prepared to discuss these events in the seminar.

Definition of Race:

One of the goals of this seminar is to increase your comfort with and competence in discussions of race. In order to meet this goal, we need to first define race and determine what exactly we mean when we use the word race. Define "race," using three to four sentences, or more if needed.

Race Relations:

Each member of the Cross Currents: Thinking about Race seminar is responsible for sharing one article, book chapter, media story, etc. with the class. The member should send the article (or other item) to the instructor in advance of class, and be prepared to lead a discussion on the article (or other item) in class. The article, book chapter, media story, etc. should enhance the learning of the class and stimulate discussion and conversation. The item should be scholarly in nature and may come from any source that is deemed scholarly. Members should receive prior instructor approval before planning to share the item in class.

Reflection Papers:

You are expected to complete four (3) one-page reflection papers that examine your experiences with race in society at large, the media, or at Boston College. These reflection papers are required and completion of these papers will be used to determine whether you pass the seminar or not.

Questions for Friends:

In preparation for our session, “Thinking about Race with Friends,” develop five questions to be asked during the session. The questions can be about any topic we have covered, may inquire about perspectives we haven’t explored, or may be a lingering question you wish to ask. As you develop your questions, be mindful of the level of exposure to the topic of others. These questions will be used to shape the conversation with our friends and will only be asked of our guests, not members of the class.

The Race Project:

The Cross Currents: Thinking about Race seminar will be divided into project teams. Each project team will research a special topic that focuses on race and give a 12:30 minute presentation on that topic. The format, style, and approach to the presentation will be determined by the project team, in consultation with the instructor. Each project team will also be responsible for writing a three-to-five-page synopsis of the project. Great care should be given in the selection, creation, and development of the project and team members.

COURSE GRADING

You are expected to complete all seminar work on time. Late assignments will not be accepted. Zero points will be assessed to any assignment that is not completed or submitted.

Grades will be calculated as follows:

300 Points or greater = PASS
299 points or fewer = FAIL

Grades will be determined as follows:

Participation	50%
Reflection Papers	20%
The Race Project	20%
Race Relations Assignment	4%
Questions for Friends	4%
Definition Assignment	2%

Academic Integrity:

You are expected to abide by the university policy on academic integrity. Please review the standards and procedures published in the university catalog and on the web, at www.bc.edu/integrity (Links to an external site.). Violations will be reported to the Deans’ Office and reviewed by the committee on Academic Integrity. This could result in failure of this seminar or more severe penalties.

Disability Accommodations:

If you have a disability and will be requesting accommodations for this course, please register with either Connors Family Learning Center for ADHD or Learning disabilities) or with the Disability Services Office for medical, physical, or psychological disability. Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.

COURSE SCHEDULE

January 16, 2024 – Syllabus and Course Overview

Assignment: Define Race due next week (January 23, 2024)

January 23, 2024

Course Overview - Thinking About Race

Thinking About Race: Race Defined I

January 30, 2024

Thinking About Race: Race Defined II

February 6, 2024

History of Race in the U.S.

Assignment: Reflection Paper #1 due next week (February 13, 2024)

February 13, 2024

History of Race in the U.S II

February 20, 2024

First Messages of Racial Identity

Assignment: Reflection Paper #2 due next week (February 27, 2024)

February 27, 2024

("BLANK") Like Me! Race and Racial Solidarity

March 5, 2024

Spring Break. No class.

March 12, 2024

Critical Race Theory

March 19, 2024

Affirmative Action & Students For Fair Admission

Assignment: Reflection Paper #3 due next week (March 26, 2024)

March 26, 2024

Race and Relationships

Assignment: Questions for Friends due next week (April 2, 2024)

April 2, 2024

Cultural Appropriation

Assignment: Reflection Paper #4 due next week (April 9, 2024)

Assignment: Bring (2) friends to class next week

April 9, 2024

Race at BC | Thinking About Race with Friends

April 16, 2024

No Class | Substitute Monday Class Schedule

April 23, 2024

Final Presentations. The Race Project I

April 30, 2024

Final Presentations. The Race Project II.