

Department of Anthropology

ANTHRO 2278A-650 Anthropology of Race, Ethnicity, and Identity

BRIEF COURSE OUTLINE

Fall 2026

Date: June 15, 2026

Instructor and course information:

Instructor: Dr. Pamela Block

Method of delivery: online.

Credit value: 0.5

Antirequisites: the former Anthropology 2278F/G.

Prerequisites: None.

Please ensure you have the correct requisites by checking [the Academic Calendar](#).

Course Description:

What are these categories of race, ethnicity and identity? These hotly contested, constantly shifting, often politicized terms are used to justify structural violence and systematic injustice in Canada and across the globe. This course will introduce students to anthropological conceptions of race and ethnicity and how these have shaped human identity and experiences over the 19th through 21st centuries. Concepts to be discussed include: Eugenics; Degeneration theory; Anthropometry; Scientific Racism; Anti-Eugenics and Anti-Racism; the Culture of Poverty; Critiques of the Culture of Poverty; Regional differences in how race is conceptualized; Colonial/Post-colonial and Decolonizing Perspectives of Race, and; Critical Race Theory.

A full course schedule including a week-by-week breakdown of topics and assigned readings will be available on the course's OWL Brightspace site as weekly checklists before the first day of class.

Learning Outcomes:

- Trace how concepts of race and ethnicity have evolved historically over time and space primarily from the 19th through the 21st centuries
- Identify how human genetic variation evolved over time and recognize that race does not exist as a biological category.
- Demonstrate the role of culture and society in shaping specific ethnic and racial distinctions
- Analyze how race and ethnicity intersect with other processes of social differentiation, such as gender, sexuality, socio-economic class, and nation and to establish the difference between social and biological categories.
- Discuss the impacts of colonialism, globalization/migration on racialized identities

A full course schedule including a week-by-week breakdown of topics and assigned readings will be available on the course's OWL Brightspace site before the first day of class.

Course Materials:

Required textbook. [Graves and Goodman 2023 Racism Not Race: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions, University of Columbia Press](#). The [paperback](#) costs CAD\$29.09 at the bookstore but check for discount codes directly from the publisher. The [e-book](#) is available for free via Western Library. Those with an Audible account may also have access to the audio book.

Students need to purchase this edition. Second-hand or older editions will not be sufficient.

Evaluation:

Grades will be based on the following:

Basic Contributions For those wishing a grade between Passing to 80%:

- Two posters each connecting a material culture item from your personal life to content from the course. Topics must be pre-approved. 30% x 2
- Weekly Quiz 20% (no quizzes are dropped but there is a 3-day grace period after the due date each week)
- A Zero (0) will be placed in the "Enhanced Contributions" column in the Gradebook.

For those who want grades above 80% or who are in danger of failing and seeking an improved grade:

Enhanced Contributions — For those seeking a grade above 80% work with a TA to create a plan and a rubric for this assignment. (20%)

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