

PHIL 32277/BLST 31171 PHILOSOPHY OF RACE
Spring 2018
MW 11:00am-12:15pm NAC 6/213
Professor Jennifer M. Morton

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Office Hours: MW 9:30am-10:30am, Via Skype (professormorton) by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Race plays a prominent role in how we define a diverse society and how individuals therein identify themselves. In this course, we approach questions of race from a philosophical perspective. The topic of race broaches questions in metaphysics, moral philosophy, political philosophy, and applied ethics. We will consider questions such as: What is race? What is racism? Is Latinx a race? How should race be taken into account in the political sphere? How should we deal with racial inequalities in education? Is racial profiling inherently wrong? We will read works by Anthony Appiah, Linda Alcoff, James Baldwin, W.E.B. Dubois, Adrian Piper, among others.

READING: All primary readings will be available through the course Blackboard Page.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

5 Reading Responses [RR] (1-2 pages)	10 pts each = 50 pts
Paper (5 pages)	25 pts
Exam	15 pts
Attendance & Participation	5 pts
Presentation	5 pts

GRADES:

A+	98-100 points	C+	77-79 points
A	94-97 points	C	74-76 points
A-	90-93 points	C-	70-73 points
B+	87-89 points	D	60-69 points
B	84-86 points	F	0-59 points
B-	80-83 points		

READING RESPONSES: Questions for reading responses will be posted by Wednesday of the week before they are due. 10 questions will be posted in total, you only need to **complete 5** during the term. Reading responses that are turned in **on time**, show that you have read the material, and demonstrate an honest attempt at answering the question posed will be given full credit (10 points). Reading responses that are late, that demonstrated have not read the material carefully, or that do not answer the question will receive **no credit** (0 points). You will need to turn in reading responses via Blackboard **and** via paper copy in class.

PRESENTATION: You will be required to make one 5-8 minute presentation to the class during the term.

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY: **NO LATE Reading responses** will be accepted (no exceptions!). Late papers will only be accepted in cases of emergency AND arrangements must be made with me at least **48 hours in advance**. No exams will be issued after the exam date, except for in extreme medical circumstances with a doctor's note.

ATTENDANCE: Students who are persistently absent are more likely to do poorly in class and drop-out. **I strongly recommend that you make attending class a priority.** However, I understand that life happens, so you will be granted up to **3 absences** throughout the term. Any absences above that number will result in **you losing all 5** attendance points. If you arrive **late to class**, you must contribute to the class discussion in order to count as having attended the class. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late, you will be marked as absent.

PROFESSOR AVAILABILITY: I will be available at my office during office hours (MW 9.45am-10.45am) and via e-mail during regular business hours (M-F 9am-5pm). If you e-mail me outside of those hours, you will not receive a response until the following business day. If you cannot attend my office hours, please make an arrangement with me via e-mail to chat on the phone or via skype.

COMMUNICATION: It is extremely important to your success in this course that you communicate with me whenever you are confused, need help, or have questions. Please be **professional** and courteous in your communications with me. I will do the same in my communications with you. E-mails should start out with "Dear Professor Morton..." and be sent during regular office hours.

ELECTRONICS: Research shows that the use of electronics decreases your capacity to understand, remember, and learn. Consequently, the

use of electronics will be no be allowed until the last 5 minutes of class when you will be allowed to take out your computer (if you need to do so) to write review notes. Cellphone use during class is not allowed at any time and your cellphone will be confiscated until the end of class if I see you using it.

DISCUSSION: In this class we will touch on sensitive topics. Our aim is to have an open, thoughtful, and critical dialogue around those topics. If you are to be a part of this class, you **must** be proactive in doing your part to create an inclusive, intellectually rigorous, and safe classroom environment for everyone. That means that you need to think carefully before you speak about how what you say might be interpreted by others in the class, but it also means that you will give those who contribute to class the benefit of the doubt. Remember that we are engaging, analyzing, and critiquing **ideas, not people**.

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will be subject to penalties in conformity with the College's policy on Academic Integrity. I am obligated under the college's policy to report any and all cases of plagiarism **no exceptions**.
(http://www1.cuny.cuny.edu/facultystaff/provost/policies_integrity.cfm)

LEARNING COURSE OBJECTIVES: By the end of this course you should: (1) Be able to identify and debate central issues in the philosophy of race (2) Draw connections between issues in other areas of philosophy and philosophy of race (3) Apply your knowledge of philosophical issues concerning race to real world cases (4) Defend a philosophical position concerning an issue covered in the course in an academic paper.

Skills	Date	Topics	Reading	Assignment	
Reading Philosophy Critically	M	1/29	Introduction		
	W	1/31	Why philosophy of race?	James Baldwin, "A Talk to Teachers"	
	M	2/5	What is Race?	Mallon, Ron, "Race: Normative, Not Metaphysical or Semantic"	RR #1
	W	2/7	What is the idea of racialism?	Appiah, Anthony K., "Race, Culture, and Identity" (pp. 53-101)	
	M	2/12	NO CLASS—Lincoln's Birthday		
	W	2/14	Should race be eliminated?	Appiah, Anthony K., "Race, Culture, and Identity" (pp. 102-136)	
	M	2/19	NO CLASS—President's Day		
	T	2/20	What's wrong with race-blindness?	Haslanger, Sally, "Gender and race: (What) are they?(What) do we want them to be?"	RR #2
	W	2/21	Are Latinos a race?	Alcoff, Linda, "Is Latino a Racial Identity?"	
	M	2/26	What can psychology teach us about the concept of race?	D. Kelly, E. Machery, and R. Mallon, "Race and Racial Recognition"	RR #3
	W	2/28	What is double consciousness?	W.E.B. Dubois, "The Strivings of the Negro People"	
	M	3/5	What can we learn about race from passing?	Adrian Piper, "Passing for White, Passing for Black"	RR #4
	W	3/7	What is cultural appropriation?	Erich Hatala Matthes, "Cultural Appropriation without Cultural Essentialism?"	
	M	3/12	What does it mean to be a 'model minority'?	David Haekwon Kim, "Shame and Self-Revision in Asian American Assimilation"	RR #5
	W	3/14	Can code-switchers have it both ways?	Jennifer Morton, "Cultural Code-Switching"	
M	3/19	Who gets to be a knower?	Miranda Fricker, Discussion of <u>Epistemic Injustice</u> on Philosophy Bites Podcast	RR #6	
Defending an Argument	W	3/21	How does race affect what we can know?	Mills, Charles W. "White Ignorance"	
	M	3/26	Exam Review		
	W	3/28	Exam		
	4/2-4/5		NO CLASS-Spring Break		
	M	4/9	MOMA Trip—Meet at 10.50am at the MOMA Education and Research Building, 4 West 54 Street.		RR #7
	W	4/11	What is Racism?	Jorge Garcia, "The heart of racism"	
	M	4/16	Is Racism in the heart?	Charles Mills, "'Heart' Attack: A Critique of Jorge Garcia's Volitional Conception of Racism."	RR #8
	W	4/18	How much progress have we made?	Ta-Nehesi Coates, "Donald Trump is The First White President"	
Developing and Responding to Objections	M	4/23	Do we need hope?	Melvin Rogers, "Keeping the Faith"	RR #9
	W	4/25	When does the law cease to apply?	Shelby, Tommie, "Justice, deviance, and the dark ghetto"	
	M	4/30	What is the foundation of racial solidarity?	Shelby, Tommie, "Foundations of Black Solidarity: Collective Identity or Common Oppression?"	RR #10
	W	5/2	Paper Writing Workshop	Jim Pryor's Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper	Paper Draft
	M	5/7	Class Presentations [Attendance Required]		
	W	5/9	Class Presentations [Attendance Required]		
	M	5/14	Class Canceled [Watch "Get Out" on your own time.]		
W	5/16	"Get Out" Discussion and Class Wrap-Up Party			

* **BB** denotes available on Blackboard.