ETHNICITY AND RACE STUDIES

Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race: 420 Hamilton; 212-854-0510

Program Co-Directors: Professors Mae Ngai (mn53@columbia.edu) and Prof. Deborah Paredez, 425 Hamilton | Karl Jacoby kj2305@columbia.edu - ON LEAVE FOR AY21/22 | 425 Hamilton |

Director of Undergraduate Studies: Prof. Deborah Paredez, 425 Hamilton | 212-854-2564 | Office Hours Online Appointment Scheduling | d.paredez@columbia.edu

Associate Director: Josephine Caputo | 424 Hamilton Hall | 212-854-0510 | jc2768@columbia.edu

Founded in 1999, the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race (CSER) is an interdisciplinary intellectual space whose mission is to advance the most innovative teaching, research, and public discussion about race and ethnicity. To promote its mission, the Center organizes conferences, seminars, exhibits, film screenings, and lectures that bring together faculty, undergraduates, and graduate students with diverse interests and backgrounds. Moreover, CSER partners with departments, centers, and institutes at Columbia, as well as with colleagues and organizations on and off campus, in order to reach new audiences and facilitate an exchange of knowledge.

Programs of Study

Ethnicity and Race Studies major and concentration encompass a variety of fields and interdisciplinary approaches to the critical study of ethnicity and race. What makes CSER unique is its attention to the comparative study of racial and ethnic categories in the production of social identities, power relations, and forms of knowledge in a multiplicity of contexts including the arts, social sciences, natural sciences, and humanities. In addition to the major, CSER also offers a concentration in ethnicity and race studies.

In both the major and concentration, students have the opportunity to select from the following areas of specialization:

- Asian American studies
- Comparative ethnic studies
- Latino/a studies
- Native American/Indigenous studies
- Individualized courses of study

Faculty and students find this field exciting and important because it opens up new ways of thinking about two fundamental aspects of human social existence: race and ethnicity. Although various traditional disciplines such as history, sociology, anthropology, and literature, among others, offer valuable knowledge on race and ethnicity, ethnicity and race studies provide a flexible interdisciplinary and comparative space to bring the insights of various conceptual frameworks and disciplines together in critical dialogue.

Overall, this program introduces students to the study of ethnicity and race, and the deep implications of the subject matter for thinking about human bodies, identity, culture, social hierarchy, and the formation of political communities. The major encourages students to consider the repercussions of racial and ethnic identifications to local and global politics, and how race and ethnicity relates to gender, sexuality, and social class, among other forms of hierarchical difference.

Students majoring in ethnicity and race studies may focus their work on specific groups, such as Asian Americans, Latino/a, or Native Americans/Indigenous; or a comparative study of how race and ethnicity are formed and how conceptions of race and ethnicity transform and change over time and place. Students also have the option of designing an individualized course of study, which may encompass a wide variety of themes. Among the most studied are those involving the relationship between race, ethnicity and law; health; human rights; urban spaces; cultural production; visual culture; and the environment.

Due to its rigorous curriculum, which trains students in theory, history, and a wide range of modes of inquiry, the major enables students to follow multiple directions after graduation. According to our internal surveys, nearly half of CSER students continue to Ph.D. programs in history, anthropology, and ethnic studies, among other areas. A second significant number of students continue on to professions most notably related to law, public policy, medicine, human rights, community organizing, journalism, and the environment.

Study Abroad

Students are encouraged to participate in study abroad programs, as they represent an exciting opportunity to learn new languages and live in countries that are germane to their areas of study. In addition, traveling abroad can enrich every student’s intellectual experience by providing an opportunity to learn about other perspectives on ethnicity and race.

In summer 2017 CSER, together with Columbia’s Office of Global Programs (OGP) launched a pilot summer program in Mexico City in collaboration with the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Economicas–CIDE, a leading institution of higher education with a focus in the social sciences. The program consists of an intensive 5-week CSER core course, "Colonization-Decolonization," visits to various historical colonial sites and a field trip to Oaxaca. Professors Claudio Lomnitz and Manan Ahmed jointly taught the class. Eleven Columbia students participated in this exchange. For more information about the CSER 2018 Global Program in Mexico, please contact cser@columbia.edu

In the past, students have also participated in study abroad programs in Australia, Dominican Republic, Mexico, and South Africa. To ensure that study abroad complements the major and integrates effectively with the requirements of the major, students are encouraged to consult with CSER’s undergraduate adviser as early in their academic program as possible. The director of undergraduate studies can advise students on what may be exciting programs for their areas.

Departmental Honors

CSER majors may choose to write and/or produce an honors project. The senior thesis gives undergraduate majors the opportunity to engage in rigorous, independent, and original research on a specific topic of their choosing. If a monograph, the honors thesis is expected to be 35-50 pages in length. Honors projects can also take other forms, such as video or websites. These projects also require a written component, but of a shorter length than the traditional thesis. During their senior year, honors students perform research as part of CSER UN3990 Senior Project Seminar. Senior projects are due in early April. The Honors Thesis is an excellent option for any student interested in pursuing a Master’s degree or Ph.D. Students should consult with their director of undergraduate studies no later than the beginning of the first term of their senior year if they wish to be considered for departmental honors. Students who are
awarded departmental honors are notified by their department in mid-May.

In order to qualify for departmental honors, students must satisfy all the requirements for the major, maintain a GPA of at least 3.6 in the major, and complete a high quality honors project. In addition, each student is expected to meet periodically with his or her supervising project adviser and preceptor. Although the senior thesis is a prerequisite for consideration for departmental honors, all Ethnicity and Race studies majors are strongly encouraged to consider undertaking thesis work even if they do not wish to be considered for departmental honors.

**Core Faculty and Executive Committee**

Sayantani DasGupta (CSER, Professional Studies)
Jennifer Lee (Sociology)
Catherine Fennel (Anthropology)
Karl Jacoby Co-Director (History) - ON LEAVE AY21-22
Claudio Lomnitz (Anthropology)
Frances Negrón-Muntaner (English and Comparative Literature) -ON LEAVE FALL 2021
Mae Ngai CSER Co-Director (History)
Ana Maria Ochoa (Ethnomusicology)
Audra Simpson (Anthropology)
Mariana Souto-Manning (TC Professor of Education)
Kevin Fellezs (Ethnomusicology and IRAAS)

**Affiliated Faculty**

Rachel Adams
Associate Professor, Department of English and Comparative Literature
View Profile

Carlos Alonso
Morris A. & Alma Schapiro Professor in the Humanities, Department of Spanish and Portuguese
View Profile

Vanessa Agard-Jones
Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology
View Profile

Christina Duffy-Ponsa
Associate Professor of Law, Columbia Law School
View Profile

Nadia Abu El-Haj
Professor of Anthropology

Kevin Fellezs
Assistant Professor, Dance Department/Institute for Research in African American Studies
View Profile

Kaiama L. Glover
Associate Professor, French Department/African Studies Program, Barnard College
View Profile

Steven Gregory
Associate Professor of Anthropology and African-American Studies, Department of Anthropology and Institute for Research in African-American Studies
View Profile

Frank Guridy
Associate Professor of History
View Profile

Kim Hall
Professor, Department of English, Barnard College
View Profile

Jill Hill
Assistant Professor of Psychology and Education, Department of Counseling & Clinical Psychology, Teachers College
View Profile

Marianne Hirsch
Professor, Department of English and Comparative Literature
View Profile

Jean Howard
George Delacorte Professor in the Humanities, Department of English and Comparative Literature
View Profile

Theodore Hughes
Professor of Korean Studies

Elizabeth Hutchinson
Associate Professor of Art History, Barnard
View Profile

George Lewis
Edwin H. Case Professor of Music, Department of Music
View Profile

Ana Paulina Lee
Assistant Professor of Luso-Brazilian Studies, Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures
View Profile

Natasha Lightfoot
Associate Professor of History

Celia Naylor
Associate Professor, Department of History and Africana Studies, Barnard College
View Profile

Pablo Piccato
Professor, Department of History; Director, Institute of Latin American Studies
View Profile

Caterina Pizzigoni
Assistant Professor, Department of History
View Profile

Elizabeth A. Povinelli
Professor, Department of Anthropology
View Profile

Samuel Roberts
Associate Professor, Department of History
Major in Ethnicity and Race Studies

The requirements for this program were modified on March 2022. Students who declared this program before this date should contact the director of undergraduate studies for the department in order to confirm their correct course of study.

The major in ethnicity and race studies consists of a minimum of 27 points. All majors are required to take three core courses as listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Core Courses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction to Comparative Ethnic Studies (or)</td>
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<td>CSER UN3928</td>
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<td>Colonization/Decolonization</td>
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<td>CSER UN3942</td>
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<td>Race and Racisms</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>CSER UN3919</td>
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<td>Modes of Inquiry</td>
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Specialization

All majors will select one of the areas of specialization listed below from which to complete their remaining coursework:

- Asian American studies
- Comparative ethnic studies
- Latino/a studies
- Native American/Indigenous studies
- Individualized courses of study

Majors who elect NOT to follow the Honors track must complete at least five CSER elective courses, in consultation with their major adviser, within their area of specialization. At least one of these electives must be a writing-intensive seminar (3000 or above level courses must be chosen within the department). Majors who elect to follow the Honors track must complete at least four CSER elective courses, in consultation with their major adviser, within their area of specialization.

Honors

In lieu of a fifth elective, Honors majors are required to enroll in the following course in the spring semester of their senior year, during which they are required to write a thesis:

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<th>Points</th>
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<td>Senior Project Seminar</td>
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Honors majors are required to present their senior essays at the annual undergraduate symposium in April. Students may fulfill this option in one of the following two ways:

1. By matriculating in the Senior Thesis course and writing the thesis under the supervision of the course faculty.

2. By taking an additional 4-point seminar where a major paper is required and further developing the paper into a thesis length work (minimum of 30 pages) under the supervision of a CSER faculty member.

Language Courses

- One of the following is highly recommended, although not required for the major:
  - One course beyond the intermediate-level in language pertinent to the student’s focus
  - An introductory course in a language other than that used to fulfill the degree requirements, but that is pertinent to the student’s focus
  - A linguistics or other course that critically engages language
  - An outside language and study abroad programs that include an emphasis on language acquisition

Concentration in Ethnicity and Race Studies

The requirements for this program were modified on March 2022. Students who declared this program before this date should contact the director of undergraduate studies for the department in order to confirm their correct course of study.

The concentration in ethnicity and race studies requires a minimum of 19 points. All students who choose a concentration are required to take two core course as listed below:

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<td>CSER UN3942</td>
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<td>Race and Racisms</td>
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Specialization

Students must complete at least four courses, in consultation with their major adviser, in one of the following areas of specialization. At least one of the elective courses must be a seminar.

- Asian American studies
- Comparative ethnic studies
- Latino/a studies
- Native American/Indigenous studies
- Individualized courses of study
Fall 2021

Ethnicity and Race Studies

CSER UN1010 Introduction to Comparative Ethnic Studies. 4 points.
CC/GS/SEAS: Partial Fulfillment of Global Core Requirement
Students MUST register for a Discussion Section.

Introduction to the field of comparative ethnic studies.

Fall 2022: CSER UN1010

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<th>Times/Location</th>
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<td>T Th 1:10pm - 2:25pm</td>
<td>Shana Redmond</td>
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<td>CSER 1010</td>
<td>002/13667</td>
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<td>Bahia Munem</td>
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CSER UN1040 CRIT APPRO-STUDY OF ETH # RACE. 3.00 points.

This course provides an introduction to central approaches and concepts animating the investigation of race and ethnicity. We will not treat either of these categories of difference as a given, nor as separable from other axes of social difference. Rather, we will apply an interdisciplinary and intersectional framework to illuminate how these concepts have come to emerge and cohere within a number of familiar and less familiar socio-cultural and historical contexts. We will consider how racial and ethnic differentiation as fraught but powerful processes have bolstered global labor regimes and imperial expansion projects; parsed, managed, and regulated populations; governed sexed and gendered logics of subject and social formation; and finally, opened and constrained axes of self-understanding, political organization, and social belonging. Special attention will be given to broadening students understanding of racial and ethnic differentiation beyond examinations of identity. Taken together, theoretical and empirical readings, discussions, and outside film screenings will prepare students for further coursework in race and ethnic studies, as well as fields such as literary studies, women's studies, history, sociology, and anthropology.

Spring 2022: CSER UN1040

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<th>Course Number</th>
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<td>001/11395</td>
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<td>Shana Redmond</td>
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CSER UN1111 INTRO TO COMP ETHNIC STIDIES DS. 0.00 points.

CSER UN3490 Post 9/11 Immigration Policies. 4 points.
Enrollment limited to 22.

Since September 11, 2001, there has been an avalanche of immigration enforcement policies and initiatives proposed or implemented under the guise of national security. This course will analyze the domino effect of the Patriot Act, the Asbender Initiative, Special Registration, the Real I.D. Act, border security including the building of the 700-mile fence along the U.S./Mexico border, Secured Communities Act—that requires the cooperation of state and local authorities in immigration enforcement, the challenge to birthright citizenship, and now the congressional hearings on Islamic radicalization. Have these policies been effective in combating the war on terrorism and promoting national security? Who stands to benefit from these enforcement strategies? Do immigrant communities feel safer in the U.S.? Have states joined the federal bandwagon of immigration enforcement or created solutions to an inflexible, broken immigration system?

Fall 2022: CSER UN3490

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<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Section/Call Number</th>
<th>Times/Location</th>
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<td>CSER 3490</td>
<td>001/13672</td>
<td>Th 10:10am - 12:00pm</td>
<td>Elizabeth OuYang</td>
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CSER UN3919 Modes of Inquiry. 4 points.

Corequisites: CSER UN3921
This class, a combination of a seminar and a workshop, will prepare students to conduct, write up, and present original research. It has several aims and goals. First, the course introduces students to a variety of ways of thinking about knowledge as well as to specific ways of knowing and making arguments key to humanistic and social science fields. Second, this seminar asks students to think critically about the approaches they employ in pursuing their research. The course will culminate in a semester project, not a fully executed research project, but rather an 8-10 page proposal for research that will articulate a question, provide basic background on the context that this question is situated in, sketch preliminary directions and plot out a detailed methodological plan for answering this question. Students will be strongly encouraged to think of this proposal as related to their thesis or senior project. Over the course of the semester, students will also produce several short exercises to experiment with research techniques and genres of writing.

Fall 2022: CSER UN3919

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<th>Course Number</th>
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<td>Sayantani DasGupta</td>
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This seminar focuses on the critical analysis of Asian representation and participation in Hollywood by taking a look at how mainstream American cinema continues to essentialize the Asian and how Asian American filmmakers have responded to Hollywood Orientalist stereotypes. We will analyze various issues confronting the Asian American, including yellowface, white patriarchy, male and female stereotypes, the “model minority” myth, depictions of “Chinatowns,” panethnicity, the changing political interpretations of the term “Asian American” throughout American history, gender and sexuality, and cultural hegemonies and privileging within the Asian community.

CSER UN3926 Latin Music and Identity. 4 points.
CC/GS/SEAS: Partial Fulfillment of Global Core Requirement

Latin music has had a historically strained relationship with mainstream music tastes, exploding in occasional ‘boom’ periods, and receding into invisibility in others. What if this were true because it is a space for hybrid construction of identity that directly reflects a mixture of traditions across racial lines in Latin America? This course will investigate Latin music’s transgression of binary views of race in Anglo-American society, even as it directly affects the development of pop music in America. From New Orleans jazz to Texas corridos, salsa, rock, and reggaeton, Latin music acts as both a soundtrack and a structural blueprint for the 21st century’s multicultural experiment. There will be a strong focus on studying Latin music’s political economy, and investigating the story it tells about migration and globalization.

CSER UN3928 Colonization/Decolonization. 4 points.
CC/GS/SEAS: Partial Fulfillment of Global Core Requirement
Enrollment limited to 22.

Prerequisites: Open to CSER majors/concentrators only. Others may be allowed to register with the instructor’s permission. This course explores the centrality of colonialism in the making of the modern world, emphasizing cross-cultural and social contact, exchange, and relations of power; dynamics of conquest and resistance; and discourses of civilization, empire, freedom, nationalism, and human rights, from 1500 to 2000. Topics include pre-modern empires; European exploration, contact, and conquest in the new world; Atlantic-world slavery and emancipation; and European and Japanese colonialism in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The course ends with a section on decolonization and post-colonialism in the period after World War II. Intensive reading and discussion of primary documents.
CSER GU4360 American Diva: Gender and Performance. 4 points.
What makes a diva a diva? How have divas shaped and challenged our ideas about American culture, performance, race, space, and capital during the last century? This seminar explores the central role of the diva—the celebrated, iconic, and supremely skilled female performer—in the fashioning and re-imagining of racial, gendered, sexual, national, temporal, and aesthetic categories in American culture. Students in this course will theorize the cultural function and constitutive aspects of the diva and will analyze particular performances of a range of American divas from the 20th and 21st centuries and their respective roles in (re)defining American popular culture.

ECology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology
EEEB GU4321 Human Nature: DNA, Race & Identity. 4 points.
The course focuses on human identity, beginning with the individual and progressing to communal and global viewpoints using a framework of perspectives from biology, genetics, medicine, psychiatry, religion and the law.

Spring 2022
EEEB GU4321
Course Number: 001/12626
Section/Call Number: 001/12540
Times/Location: W 2:10pm - 4:00pm, 309 Hamilton Hall
Instructor: Robert Pollack, Marya Pollack
Points: 4
Enrollment: 17/20

CSER UN1011 Introduction to Asian American Studies. 4 points.
This course provides an overview of Asian/Pacific American history from the late 18th Century until the present day. The course surveys significant and interrelated topics—including anti-Asian movements, immigration and exclusion, various forms of resistance, Orientalism, media representations, the model minority myth, the Asian American movement, identity, and racial, ethnic, and generational conflicts. Specifically it will explore historical and contemporary Asian American issues and rights.

Spring 2022
CSER UN1011
Course Number: 001/10721
Section/Call Number: 001/11571
Times/Location: W 2:10pm - 4:00pm, 420 Hamilton Hall
Instructor: Viola Lasmana
Points: 4
Enrollment: 23/22

CSER UN1601 Introduction to Latino/a Studies. 3 points.
Enrollment limited to 101.

This course provides an introductory, interdisciplinary discussion of the major issues surrounding this nation's Latino population. The focus is on social scientific perspectives utilized by scholars in the field of Latino Studies. Major demographic, social, economic, and political trends are discussed. Key topics covered in the course include: the evolution of Latino identity and ethnicity; the main Latino sub-populations in the United States; the formation of Latino communities in the United States; Latino immigration; issues of race and ethnicity within the Latino population; socioeconomic status and labor force participation of Latinos; Latino social movements; and the participation of Latinos in U.S. civil society.

Fall 2022
CSER UN1601
Course Number: 001/13873
Section/Call Number: 001/17911
Times/Location: Th 2:10pm - 4:00pm, 420 Hamilton Hall
Instructor: Frances Negron-Muntaner
Points: 3
Enrollment: 23/22

CSER UN3701 Latinx Racial Identity # Cultural Production. 4.00 points.
Enrollment limited to 22.

The course will investigate the impact of racial identity among Latinx in the U.S. on cultural production of Latinos in literature, media, politics and film. The seminar will consider the impact of bilingualism, shifting racial identification, and the viability of monolithic terms like Latinx. We will see how the construction of Latinx racial identity affects acculturation in the U.S., with particular attention to hybrid identities and the centering of black and indigenous cultures. Examples will be drawn from different Latinx ethnicities from the Caribbean, Mexico and the rest of Latin America.
CSER UN3905 Asian Americans and the Psychology of Race. 4 points.
This seminar provides an introduction to mental health issues for Asian Americans. In particular, it focuses on the psychology of Asian Americans as racial/ethnic minorities in the United States by exploring a number of key concepts: immigration, racialization, prejudice, family, identity, pathology, and loss. We will examine the development of identity in relation to self, family, college, and society. Quantitative investigation, qualitative research, psychology theories of multiculturalism, and Asian American literature will also be integrated into the course.

Spring 2022: CSER UN3905  
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<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Section/Call Number</th>
<th>Times/Location</th>
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<td>Shinhee Han</td>
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CSER UN3928 Colonization/Decolonization. 4 points.
CC/GS/SEAS: Partial Fulfillment of Global Core Requirement  
Enrollment limited to 22.
Prerequisites: Open to CSER majors/concentrators only. Others may be allowed to register with the instructor’s permission.
This course explores the centrality of colonialism in the making of the modern world, emphasizing cross-cultural and social contact, exchange, and relations of power; dynamics of conquest and resistance; and discourses of civilization, empire, freedom, nationalism, and human rights, from 1500 to 2000. Topics include pre-modern empires; European exploration, contact, and conquest in the new world; Atlantic-world slavery and emancipation; and European and Japanese colonialism in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The course ends with a section on decolonization and post-colonialism in the period after World War II. Intensive reading and discussion of primary documents.

Spring 2022: CSER UN3928  
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<th>Course Number</th>
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Fall 2022: CSER UN3928  
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<td>Karl Jacoby</td>
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<td>CSER 3928</td>
<td>002/11570</td>
<td>T 2:10pm - 4:00pm</td>
<td>Natasha Lightfoot</td>
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CSER UN3940 Comparative Study of Constitutional Challenges Affecting African, Latino, and Asian American Communities. 4 points.
This course will examine how the American legal system decided constitutional challenges affecting the empowerment of African, Latino, and Asian American communities from the 19th century to the present. Focus will be on the role that race, citizenship, capitalism/labor, property, and ownership played in the court decision in the context of the historical, social, and political conditions existing at the time. Topics include the denial of citizenship and naturalization to slaves and immigrants, government sanctioned segregation, the struggle for reparations for descendants of slavery, and Japanese Americans during World War II.

Spring 2022: CSER UN3940  
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CSER UN3942 Race and Racisms. 4 points.
In this class we will approach race and racism from a variety of disciplinary and intellectual perspectives, including: critical race theory/philosophy, anthropology, history and history of science and medicine. We will focus on the development and deployment of the race concept since the mid-19th century. Students will come to understand the many ways in which race has been conceptualized, substantiated, classified, managed and observed in the (social) sciences, medicine, and public health. We will also explore the practices and effects of race (and race-making) in familiar and less familiar social and political worlds. In addition to the course’s intellectual content, students will gain critical practice in the seminar format – that is, a collegial, discussion-driven exchange of ideas.

Spring 2022: CSER UN3942  
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Fall 2022: CSER UN3942  
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CSER UN3964 Maya Guatemala-Neoliberalism # Resistance. 4.00 points.
Guatemala’s recurrent history of Indigenous genocide is closely linked to U.S. interventions. Meanwhile, Maya organizing in Guatemala has helped spearhead Indigenous political visibility globally. This course examines socio-historical dynamics that have shaped Indigenous Guatemala to better understand current crises like migration and postwar violence. We study settler colonialism; Maya land dispossession and labor exploitation; U.S. corporate imperialism via banana republics; Maya autonomy efforts; Maya intellectuals, populist organizing, and the guerrilla revolutionary movement; racism and postwar multiculturalism; genocidal military counterinsurgency; sexual violence and femicide; the social impacts of Guatemalan and U.S. Catholicism and Evangelicalism; postwar neoliberal restructuring; and the rise of the narco-state and resource extraction on Indigenous territories. We will look at contemporary postwar issues of political disillusionment, militarized “war by other means,” conflicts between Indigenous communities and environmental conservationists, gender and the recovery of Indigenous law and anti-GMO organizing involving Native seed banks. We pay special attention to Indigenous political action as resistance to highly oppressive regimes of terror.

Fall 2022: CSER UN3964  
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**CSER UN3990 Senior Project Seminar. 4 points.**
The Senior Paper Colloquium will focus primarily on developing students’ ideas for their research projects and discussing their written work. The course is designed to develop and hone the skills necessary to complete the senior paper. Students will receive guidance in researching for and writing an advanced academic paper. Conducted as a seminar, the colloquium provides the students a forum in which to discuss their work with each other. The CSER preceptor, who facilitates the colloquium, will also provide students with additional academic support, supplementary to the advice they receive from their individual faculty sponsors. While most of the course will be devoted to the students’ work, during the first weeks of the term, students will read and discuss several ethnic studies-oriented texts to gain insight into the kinds of research projects done in the field.

**CSER 4350 CINEMA OF SUBVERSION. 4.00 points.**
Russian filmmaker Andre Tarkovsky said that “the artist has no right to an idea in which he is not socially committed.” Argentine filmmaker Fernando Solanas and Spanish-born Octavio Getino postulated an alternative cinema that would spur spectators to political action. In this course we will ask the question: How do authoritarian governments influence the arts, and how do artists respond? We will study how socially committed filmmakers have subverted and redefined cinema aesthetics to challenge authoritarianism and repression. In addition, we will look at how some filmmakers respond to institutional oppression, such as poverty and corruption, even within so-called “free” societies. The focus is on contemporary filmmakers but will also include earlier classics of world cinema to provide historical perspective. The course will discuss these topics, among others: What is authoritarianism, what is totalitarianism, and what are the tools of repression within authoritarian/totalitarian societies? What is Third Cinema, and how does it represent and challenge authoritarianism? How does film navigate the opposition of censorship, propaganda and truth? How do filmmakers respond to repressive laws concerning gender and sexual orientation? How do they deal with violence and trauma? How are memories of repressive regimes reflected in the psyche of modern cinema? And finally, what do we learn about authority, artistic vision, and about ourselves when we watch these films?