

ETHN 20: RACE AND CRITICAL THINKING

In Workflow

1. ETHN Committee Chair (clarence.george@csus.edu)
2. ETHN Chair (baker@csus.edu)
3. SSIS College Committee Chair (lo@csus.edu; mummawh@skymail.csus.edu)
4. SSIS Dean (wickelgr@csus.edu)
5. Academic Services (catalog@csus.edu)
6. Senate Curriculum Subcommittee Chair (curriculum@csus.edu)
7. GE Crs Rev Subcommittee Chair (julian.fulton@csus.edu)
8. Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate (Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate@csus.edu)
9. Catalog Editor (catalog@csus.edu)
10. Registrar's Office (k.mcfarland@csus.edu)
11. PeopleSoft (PeopleSoft@csus.edu)

Approval Path

1. 2026-03-19T20:38:08Z
Clarence George Iii (clarence.george): Approved for ETHN Committee Chair
2. 2026-03-24T20:23:44Z
Brian Baker (baker): Approved for ETHN Chair
3. 2026-04-20T16:01:41Z
Bao Lo (lo): Approved for SSIS College Committee Chair
4. 2026-04-20T21:34:33Z
Emily Wickelgren (wickelgr): Approved for SSIS Dean

New Course Proposal

Date Submitted: 2026-02-28T01:16:03Z

Viewing: ETHN 20 : Race and Critical Thinking

Last edit: 2026-08-28T20:52:00Z

Changes proposed by: Bao Lo (102091858)

Contact(s):

Name (First Last)	Email	Phone 999-999-9999
Bao Lo	lo@csus.edu	(916) 278-6646

Catalog Title:

Race and Critical Thinking

Class Schedule Title:

Race and Critical Thinking

Academic Group: (College)

SSIS - Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Studies

Academic Organization: (Department)

Ethnic Studies; African Studies

Will this course be offered through the College of Continuing Education (CCE)?

No

Catalog Year Effective:

Spring 2027 (2026/2027 Catalog)

Subject Area: (prefix)

ETHN - Ethnic Studies

Catalog Number: (course number)

20

Course ID: (For administrative use only.)

TBD

Units:

3

Is the ONLY purpose of this change to update the term typically offered or the enforcement of existing requisites at registration?

No

In what term(s) will this course typically be offered?

Fall, Spring

Does this course require a room for its final exam?

No, final exam does not require a room

Does this course replace an existing experimental course?

No

This course complies with the credit hour policy:

Yes

Justification for course proposal:

This course fills a need in our curriculum by adding a lower division Area 1B requirement in GE, which our curriculum currently does not offer. Additionally, students can achieve the goals of Area 1B, critical thinking, through the foundational concepts and perspectives of our discipline.

Students will develop critical thinking skills through an examination of contemporary forms of race and racism, which are particularly important topics for students given the ongoing racial divides and climate of our country. Through a critical and interdisciplinary approach grounded in Ethnic Studies, students analyze the ways in which race and racism have been produced through discourse and social institutions.

Course Description: (Not to exceed 90 words and language should conform to catalog copy.)

Explores the concept of race as it has developed and evolved in the U.S. Students will develop critical thinking skills by examining race in relation to multiple forms of power and identifying how race has been constructed through discourse and social institutions. Through the evaluation of claims, reasoning, and evidence, students will critically analyze contemporary forms of race and racism.

Are one or more field trips required with this course?

No

Fee Course?

No

Is this course designated as Service Learning?

No

Is this course designated as Curricular Community Engaged Learning?

No

Does this course require safety training?

No

Does this course require personal protective equipment (PPE)?

No

Does this course have prerequisites?

No

Does this course have corequisites?

No

Graded:

Letter

Approval required for enrollment?

No Approval Required

Course Component(s) and Classification(s):

Lecture

Lecture Classification

CS#02 - Lecture/Discussion (K-factor=1WTU per unit)

Lecture Units

3

Is this a paired course?

No

Is this course crosslisted?

No

Can this course be repeated for credit?

No

Can the course be taken for credit more than once during the same term?

No

Description of the Expected Learning Outcomes and Assessment Strategies:

List the Expected Learning Outcomes and their accompanying Assessment Strategies (e.g., portfolios, examinations, performances, pre-and post-tests, conferences with students, student papers). Click the plus sign to add a new row.

	Expected Learning Outcome	Assessment Strategies
1	Identify how race has been used to explain inequalities and differences between racial groups over time.	In-Class Assignments Essay Exams Critical Reading Annotations Positionality Statement Final Essay
2	Evaluate common perceptions and misperceptions about race and racism as it relates to multiple relations of power.	In-Class Assignments Essay Exams Critical Reading Annotations Positionality Statement Final Essay
3	Analyze contemporary and historical forms of race and racism through the critical and interdisciplinary perspective of Ethnic Studies.	In-Class Assignments Essay Exams Critical Reading Annotations Final Essay

Attach a list of the required/recommended course readings and activities:

ETHN 20, Race and Critical Thinking.pdf

For whom is this course being developed?

Majors in the Dept
Minors in the Dept
General Education

Is this course required in a degree program (major, minor, graduate degree, certificate?)

Yes

Has a corresponding Program Change been submitted to Workflow?

Yes

Identify the program(s) in which this course is required:

Programs:

Minor in Asian American Studies
 BA in Ethnic Studies (General)
 Minor in Ethnic Studies

Does the proposed change or addition cause a significant increase in the use of College or University resources (lab room, computer)?

No

Will there be any departments affected by this proposed course?

No

I/we as the author(s) of this course proposal agree to provide a new or updated accessibility checklist to the Dean's office prior to the semester when this course is taught utilizing the changes proposed here.

I/we agree

University Learning Goals

Undergraduate Learning Goals:

Competence in the disciplines
 Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world
 Intellectual and practical skills
 Personal and social responsibility
 Integrative learning

Is this course required as part of a teaching credential program, a single subject, or multiple subject waiver program (e.g., Liberal Studies, Biology) or other school personnel preparation program (e.g., School of Nursing)?

No

GE Course and GE Goal(s)

Is this a General Education (GE) course or is it being considered for GE?

Yes

In which GE area(s) does this apply?

1B. Critical Thinking and Composition

Which GE objective(s) does this course satisfy?

Construct a non-fallacious verbal argument, recognize fallacious arguments, and follow the verbal arguments of others.
 Possess a significant and useful understanding of peoples from a diversity of cultures and backgrounds, including women and ethnic and other minority groups who have been the objects of prejudice and adverse discrimination within our society.

Attach Course Syllabus with Detailed Outline of Weekly Topics:

ETHN 20, Race and Critical Thinking.pdf

Syllabi must include: GE area outcomes listed verbatim; catalog description of the course; prerequisites, if any; student learning objectives; assignments; texts; reading lists; materials; grading system; exams and other methods of evaluation.

Will more than one section of this course be offered?

Yes

Provide a description of what would be considered common to all sections and what might typically vary between sections:

If multiple sections of the course are offered, the course structure, content, and learning objectives would be similar, with readings that could vary between sections. The attached syllabus serves as a template.

Please write a statement indicating the means and methods for evaluating the extent to which the objectives of the GE Area(s) and any writing requirements are met for all course sections:

The In-Class Assignments, exams, critical reading annotations, positionality statement, and final essay will assess for student learning and the objectives of Area 1B.

What steps does the department plan to take to ensure that instructors comply with the respective category criteria and who is responsible?

The Department provides each instructor with the template syllabus. Each semester, the syllabus for each section of the course are collected by the Department. The Program Directors will review and ensure that all syllabi comply with the category criteria and the fulfill the student learning outcomes of the GE area.

General Education - Area 1B: Critical Thinking and Composition

Section 1.

Indicate in written statements how the course meets the following criteria for Area 1B. Relate the statements to the course syllabus and outline. Be as succinct as possible.

Students study about and consciously develop skills in critical thinking.

This learning outcome is achieved through the course learning outcomes, content, readings, and assignments. Students develop critical thinking skills by examining race in relation to multiple forms of power and identifying how race has been constructed through discourse and social institutions. Using theoretical concepts and frameworks of Ethnic Studies, students examine race as it relates to multiple forms of power including gender, sexuality, land, place, and sovereignty. Through the evaluation of claims, reasoning, and evidence, students will critically analyze contemporary forms of race and racism.

Knowledge through logical analysis and argument construction is pursued throughout the course.

Student will apply logical reasoning to explain how race has been used to explain inequalities and differences between racial groups. In Units 1-3, students will learn and apply logical reasoning through theoretical concepts and frameworks of Ethnic Studies to explain how inequalities have been explained by race-based fallacies and biases. In Unit 1, students learn the theoretical perspectives and approaches of Ethnic Studies to understanding race. In Unit 2, students learn how the concept of race has been applied to explain racial inequalities and categories over time. In Unit 3, students apply these theoretical perspectives and approaches to contemporary forms of race and racism to develop logical analysis and argument construction about race.

Instruction develops understanding of logical relationships between premises and conclusions.

The course learning outcomes #1 and #2 establishes logical relationships between premises and conclusions. In Unit 1, instruction emphasizes how Ethnic Studies premises how race is a concept that evolves over time and how race is social construction. Unit 2 discusses the premises the major paradigms of the social construction of race and the conclusions drawn from this. For instance, the module on the census and the law examines the premises behind racial categorization and the conclusions that inform racial identities. Students will complete critical reading annotations, essay exams, a positionality statement, and a final essay.

Instruction develops ability to recognize more common formal and informal fallacies.

Students will critique fallacies, biases, and errors in reasoning to explain racial inequalities. In Unit 2 (weeks 6-9), the course focuses on common perceptions and misperceptions of race and racism, including: how racial categories of the U.S. census can account solely for one's identity; how eugenics was used in science to justify racial inequalities and rationalize disparities between groups; how race continues to promote restrictive immigration policies; and how race reinforces stereotypes about groups through representation in mainstream media and popular culture. Students will be asked to question fallacies created through the use of race to differentiate between groups. Students will complete critical reading annotations, essay exams, a positionality statement, and a final essay.

Grading reflects emphasis on logical processes.

The instructor will create and distribute a rubric for the essay exams, positionality statement and the final essay. Rubric categories will include logical analysis and reasoning, argument construction, evidence, and logical premises and conclusions.

Develops basic skills, applicable to a variety of academic subjects and to the fulfillment of such roles as citizen, consumer, leader and moral agent.

- 1) Skill in evaluating the validity, strength and relevance of arguments.
- 2) A sense of logical structure of both inductive and deductive forms.
- 3) Awareness of uses and abuses of argument language, including connotation, ambiguity and definition.
- 4) Skill in handling a variety of arguments in variety of contexts.
- 5) Ability to argue fairly and to handle bias, emotion, and propaganda.

Students will also achieve this outcome through the assignments. The critical reading annotations will help students (1) identify the primary argument(s), (2) highlight key evidence used to support the arguments, and (3) identify any biases, assumptions, or fallacies in reasoning observed. With the essay exams, students will identify the arguments made in the readings and evaluate the use of facts and opinions to support the author's position. The positionality statement asks students to think critically about how their

social identities and lived experiences shape how they interpret information about race. They will also address how their positionality influences assumptions and identify at least one formal or informal fallacy that could affect their thinking. Students will then reflect on how the course materials have transformed their thinking on race. The final essay requires students to address the fallacies, biases, and errors in the author's reasoning and evaluate the construction of the argument from an Ethnic Studies perspective.

Includes a writing component described on course syllabus.

1) If course is lower division, formal and/or informal writing assignments encouraging students to think through course concepts using at least one of the following: periodic lab reports, exams which include essay questions, periodic formal writing assignments, periodic journals, reading logs, other. Writing in lower division courses need not be graded, but must, at a minimum, be evaluated for clarity and proper handling of terms, phrases, and concepts related to the course.

2) If course is upper division, a minimum of 1500 words of formal, graded writing. [Preferably there should be more than one formal writing assignment and each writing assignment (e.g. periodic lab reports, exams which include essay questions, a research/term paper etc.) should be due in stages throughout the semester to allow the writer to revise after receiving feedback from the instructor. Include an indication of how writing is to be evaluated and entered into course grade determination.]

Students will construct a concise positionality statement (500 words) that asks them to think critically about how their social identities and lived experiences shape how they interpret information about race. Students will be given 3 essay exams (500 words each) at the end of Units 1, 2, and 3. The essay exams will evaluate the student's ability to identify the arguments made in the readings and evaluate the use of facts and opinions to support the author's position. Students will complete a formal essay (1,000 words) for the final to critically analyze race and how it operates. The final essay requires students to address the fallacies, biases, and errors in the author's reasoning and evaluate the construction of the argument from an Ethnic Studies perspective.

Section 2.

If you would like, you may provide further information that might help the G.E. Course Review Committee understand how this course meets these criteria and/or the G.E. Program Objectives found on PP. 2-3 of the "Statement of Policies Pertaining to the G.E. Program" of August, 1991.

N/A

Key: 15525