Course Description
Contrary to the notion that the U.S. has become a “post-racial society,” racism continues to be an important problem. While racial discrimination has been illegal for half a century, race still makes a difference when it comes to education, employment, housing, healthcare, and criminal justice. And despite many scientists’ attempts to prove that race is not a biological reality, its significance as a social identity is undeniable. Critical race theory is an interdisciplinary field of inquiry into such questions as: What is racism, and how can we stop it? What exactly is the meaning of race? Is race real or is it an illusion? Is it a biological fact or a social construction? Should we eliminate racial categories from our thinking, or are there good reasons to preserve racial identity? Is racial color-blindness the solution to discrimination, or is it just another form of racism? In this course, we will focus primarily on recent attempts by philosophers to answer such questions, in dialogue with various other disciplines.

Objectives
There are two main goals for this course: 1) to gain a deeper understanding of race and some of the philosophical problems surrounding it, and 2) to develop a set of conceptual tools for dealing with racism. By the end of the course, you should be able to give thoughtful answers to the questions above and defend your views.

To accomplish these goals, it is important for you to read all assignments before class, write every week in response to what you read, and make regular, thoughtful contributions to class discussion. I strongly encourage you to prepare for class by taking notes while you read and writing down questions or critical objections to raise in class.

Texts
Linda Martín Alcoff, *The Future of Whiteness* 978-0745685458
Robert Bernasconi and Tommy Lott, eds., *The Idea of Race* 978-0872204584
Blum, “I’m Not a Racist, but…”: *The Moral Quandary of Race* 978-0801488153
Paul Taylor, *Race: A Philosophical Introduction* 978-0745649665

Assignments
For this class you will write four short essays of 4-6 pages (1000-1500 words) in length, in response to prompts that I will post on Moodle (https://moodle1617.beloit.edu/) one week before the deadline. If you write all four essays, your lowest grade will be dropped. You will also write a final essay of 8-10 pages (2000-2500 words) in length, based on research you will do during the final weeks of the semester. Your research should examine a question of personal interest that has been a topic of debate in the field of your major or minor. While your research is in progress, you will coordinate with a small group to teach the rest of the class about your topic in the form of a workshop, which will be graded according to a rubric.

Once a week, you should write a reading response of at least 250 words to one of the assigned readings. You may also write about issues that come up in class or elsewhere, as long as you also engage with the text we are about to discuss. For full credit, reading responses must be posted on Moodle by noon on the day that the text will be discussed. Please bring a hard copy of each of your responses to class, as I will use them to facilitate discussion. Reading responses will be graded credit/no credit.

Finally, 10% of your grade will be determined by the quality of your contributions to discussion. You will have opportunities every class to ask questions, raise objections, and test your understanding of the material and your own views with your classmates. Since this is a discussion-based class, everyone should participate in discussion on a regular basis.
Grading
Short essays 45% (15% each)
Workshop 15%
Final essay 20%
Reading responses 10%
Contributions to discussion 10%

Deadline Policy
All essays should be posted to Moodle by 5 pm on the day they are due. Essays turned in late will be reduced by one letter grade for each 24 hours past the deadline. If an essay is more than 72 hours late, you will receive a zero for the assignment.

Attendance and Conduct
Attendance is mandatory. When you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out about the material that was covered and any assignments that were made or changed. I will excuse up to five absences with no questions asked, but each absence over four will reduce your final grade by one-third of a letter (that is, by a + or -. Eight or more absences will result in failing the course. If you arrive late to class, every three times will count as an absence. I will also penalize distracting behavior in class such as texting, talking, or sleeping. Disrupting class in these ways or others will lower your final grade according to my discretion. No laptops or other electronic devices may be used in class without prior permission.

Academic Honesty
Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s words or ideas as your own in a piece of writing. Any written work that is plagiarized will receive a zero and the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students in accordance with Beloit’s academic honesty policy (www.beloit.edu/studentaffairs/policiesandhandbooks/). To avoid bibliographic reference for any source that you use, whether print or online (with the exception of Five Dialogues or First Philosophy, for which you may use in-text citations). The Writing Center website (www.beloit.edu/writingcenter/) has lots of good advice about writing with sources. If you have any questions about using and citing sources in your writing, feel free to ask me.

Interdisciplinary Studies
This course deals with issues of race and racism from the perspectives of several different disciplines, including history, anthropology, sociology, biology, gender and queer theory, and philosophy. By reading the work of scholars in these fields, you will have the opportunity to study race from various disciplinary perspectives and reflect on the differences between them. I encourage you to reflect on how the discipline of your major approaches the challenges of understanding race and racism. You should also think about how to use research in that discipline as the basis of your final paper.

Special Considerations
If you have a disability and need accommodations, contact the Learning Enrichment and Disability Services Office located on the 2nd floor of Pearsons (north side) by calling 363-2572 or emailing learning@beloit.edu. For accommodations in this class, please bring me an Access Letter from the Director of that office and then we will discuss how to meet your needs. Contact that office promptly; accommodations are not retroactive. Free peer tutoring is available for most classes. For a tutor, apply by going to Portal, clicking on the Student Life tab, and using the Tutoring Forms (on the left). If you do not seek accommodations but are concerned about your ability to do well in this course for any reason, just make an appointment with me and I’ll be glad to talk with you about it.

Office Hours
My office hours are Mon/Fri 12-1 and Tues 12-2. If these times don’t work for you, please make an appointment. I hope you will use my office hours to ask questions about the material, talk with me about the essays, and share your ideas. I also invite you to come to me with any problems you’re having in this course so we can address them. I want everyone in the class to succeed, and discussions outside of class are often one of the keys to success.
## Calendar

| Week 1 | Mon. 1/16 | Introduction |
| Wed. 1/18 | “Race and Ethnicity in the 2010 Census” (Moodle) |
| Fri. 1/20 | “Is Racism on the Rise?” (Moodle) |

### Racism: Conceptual and Ethical Questions

| Week 2 | Mon. 1/23 | Anthony Appiah, “Racisms” (Moodle) |
| Wed. 1/25 | J. L. A. Garcia, “The Heart of Racism” (Moodle) |
| Fri. 1/27 | David Theo Goldberg, “Racist Exclusions” (Moodle) |

| Week 3 | Mon. 1/30 | Cornel West, “A Genealogy of Modern Racism” (Moodle) |
| Wed. 2/1 | Lawrence Blum, “I’m Not a Racist, But…”: The Moral Quandary of Race, Preface and Ch. 1, “Racism: Its Core Meaning” (xvii-32) |
| Fri. 2/3 | Blum, “I’m Not a Racist, But…” , Ch. 2, “Can Blacks Be Racist?” (33-52) |

| Week 4 | Mon. 2/6 | Blum, “I’m Not a Racist, But…”, Ch. 3, “Varieties of Racial Ills” (53-77) |
| Wed. 2/8 | Blum, “I’m Not a Racist, But…” , Ch. 4, “Racial Discrimination and Color Blindness” (78-97); **First short essay due (5 pm)** |
| Fri. 2/10 | Blum, “I’m Not a Racist, But…”, Ch. 5, “ ‘Race’: What We Mean and What We Think We Mean,” and Ch. 6, “ ‘Race’: A Brief History, with Moral Implications (98-130) |


| Week 6 | Mon. 2/20 | Taylor, *Race*, Ch. 6, “From Anchor Babies to Obama: Are We Post-Racial Yet?” (181-204) |

### The Problem of Whiteness

| Wed. 2/22 | Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” (Moodle) |
| Fri. 2/24 | Cheryl Harris, “Whiteness as Property” (Moodle); **Second short essay due (5 pm)** |

| Fri. 3/3 | Alcoff, *The Future of Whiteness*, Ch. 2, “White Exceptionalism” (91-135) |

**Midterm Break 3/4-3/12**

| Wed. 3/15 | Alcoff, *The Future of Whiteness*, Conclusion, “A Place in the Rainbow” (178-204); **Crom Lecture (7:30 pm)** |
| Fri. 3/17 | TBA |
### The Concept of Race: A Critical History

#### Week 9
- **Mon. 3/20**
- **Wed. 3/22**
  - Immanuel Kant, “Of the Different Human Races,” *The Idea of Race* (8-22);
  - *Third short essay due (5 pm)*
- **Fri. 3/24**
  - Advising Practicum – no class

#### Week 10
- **Mon. 3/27**
- **Wed. 3/29**
- **Fri. 3/31**
  - Joseph Graves, “Darwinism Revolutionizes Anthropology” (Moodle)

#### Week 11
- **Mon. 4/3**
  - Franz Boas, “Instability of Human Types” (*IR* 84-88) and Ruth Benedict, “What Race Is Not” (Moodle)
- **Wed. 4/5**
- **Fri. 4/7**
  - Ashley Montagu, “The Concept of Race in the Human Species in the Light of Genetics” (*IR* 89-107)

### The Reality (or Illusion) of Race

#### Week 12
- **Mon. 4/10**
- **Wed. 4/12**
  - Anthony Appiah, “The Uncompleted Argument: DuBois and the Illusion of Race” (*IR* 118-135)
- **Fri. 4/14**
  - Paul Taylor, “Appiah’s Uncompleted Argument: W.E.B. DuBois and the Reality of Race” (Moodle); *Fourth short essay due (5 pm)*

#### Week 13
- **Mon. 4/17**
- **Wed. 4/19**
  - Spring Day – no class
- **Fri. 4/21**
  - Sally Haslanger, “Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them to Be?” (Moodle)

#### Week 14
- **Mon. 4/24**
  - Workshop 1
- **Wed. 4/26**
  - Workshop 2
- **Fri. 4/28**
  - Workshop 3

#### Week 15
- **Mon. 5/1**
  - Workshop 4
- **Wed. 5/3**
  - Workshop 5

### Final
- **Mon. 5/8**
  - *Final essay due (12 noon)*