This course is framed by a simple contradiction. Race is real, yet it is a myth. Racial categories are very real social and cultural phenomena. They are rooted in history and culturally constructed through laws, the media, and various institutions. These categories are reproduced, subverted, and sometimes changed by people through socialization, media consumption, interaction, dialogue, protest, and political participation.

Yet, what makes race real, animates it with so much power, and fosters its tenacious hold on much of the Western world’s collective psyche? It is the fact that people largely believe that race has something to do with nature, biology, or rational science. Ironically, it is biology and so-called natural sciences that provides the best evidence that there is no valid basis to organize people by racial categories.

In this course, we will focus on the discipline of anthropology and its role in shaping the cultural politics of race. We will explore both its historical construction and its contemporary manifestation as a crucial aspect of American culture and an integral component of people’s identity. At the conclusion of this course, you should be able to critique contemporary ideas of biological notions of race, explain how race is socially constructed through laws, media, and popular culture, and understand that patterns of human diversity do not fit neatly into categories of race. Finally, you will begin to understand why race remains a powerful force in contemporary society.

We will read original texts and contemporary analysis.

Required Text:

**Course Requirements:** You will be required to take three exams over the course of the semester. The exams will involve a take home essay and an in-class multiple choice/short answer tests.

90-100  A  
89-85   B+ 
84-80   B  

79-75  C+ 
74-70   C  
69-60   D  

No Credit: for less than 60 points

If you consistently come prepared and participate in class, you will get a bonus point (i.e. B+ to A-).

Notice: The only way you can get a letter grade increase is if you consistently come to class and participate.

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**Course Protocol**

**Attendance:** Students are advised not to miss class -- this is a personal responsibility. Roll will occasionally be taken to help me determine who earns a bonus point (I will tell you now, I usually take attendance on those days when not many people show up for class). Lecture materials are also covered in the exams.

**Reading Assignments:** Reading assignments are to be **completed and ready for discussion** the day of class. Please keep in mind that I have selected readings that build on each other. You and a partner will be responsible for presenting quick overview of the reading at the beginning of the class. Your notes should be updated to the course blog, before class.

**Discussions and Activities:** We will be discussing and exploring politically charged and highly emotional content. Volumes of grounded and empirical research have been produced on race, which will be the basis of much of our discussion. On the other hand, each member of the class will have personal experiences, family histories, and political commitments that have been formed by race and racism that need to be respected and embraced. Personal experience can inform but not drive the discussion—the plural of anecdote is not data. I *am* committed to insuring that our classroom space remains a safe learning environment where different perspectives are respected and challenged, embraced and critiqued.

**Community Standard**

Duke has a community standard, which I expect every student to adhere. Your writing must be your own prose, and your ideas and quotes must be properly cited. Talking about and editing each other’s essays is fine and encouraged. However, you must adhere to the community standard and do not collaborate or work together on the essays, unless explicitly stated in the essay prompt. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

**Writing Assignments**

This course requires a number of written assignments designed to develop critical reading and writing, as well as enhance one’s analytical skills. The evaluation of your essays will be based on critical analysis, close reading of the texts, and synthesis of information. I will be looking specifically at how you synthesize the films, lectures, and discussions in class as you creatively connect that material with the texts. In short, your essays should creatively bring it all together.

**Syllabus and Blackboard:** The reading assignments may change and the syllabus of record will always be posted on blackboard. Any changes will be announced in class and on the announcements in blackboard.
Tuesday, August 31: First day of class

The Myth of Race: Keeping it Real

Thursday, September 2:


Tuesday, September 7:

Chapter 1: How Biology Refutes Our Racial Myths


(Sorting Activity 1, bring your own laptop)

Thursday, September 9:


(Sorting Activity 2)

Tuesday, September 14:

Jonathan Marks (1997) Scientific and Folk Ideas about Heredity


Science 20 December 2002: Vol. 298. no. 5602, pp. 2381 - 2385
The Myth of Race: Sports vs. IQ

Thursday, September 16:

JL Graves, *The Race Myth*
Chapter 6: Europeans, Not West Africans, Dominate the NBA


Tuesday, September 21:

Chapter 1: Breaking the Taboo on Race and Sports
Chapter 3: By the Numbers
Chapter 15: The ‘Scheming, Flashy, Trickiness’ of Jews

Thursday, September 23:

Chapter 6: Life History Theory


(Voice Thread Activity 1)

Tuesday, September 28:
EXAM #1
The Reality of Race: Capitalism + Democracy = Racism

Thursday, September 30:


Carol C. Mukhopadhyay, Rosemary Henze, and Yolanda T. Moses (2007) How Real is Race
Chapter 7: Race and Inequality: Race As a Social Invention to Achieve Certain Goals.

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Tuesday, October 5:

LD Baker (1998) From Savage to Negro
Chapter 1 History and Theory of a Racialized Worldview

Chapter 2: American Racism and the Uses of History § 2.8 The Dred Scot Case (39-44)

George Fredrickson (2002) A Short History of Racism
Chapter 2 The Rise of Modern Racism(s)


The Reality of Race: Social Darwinism and the Science of White Supremacy

Thursday, October 7:

LD Baker (1998) From Savage to Negro
Chapter 2: The Ascension of Anthropology as Social Darwinism


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Tuesday, October 12 (fall break)

Thursday, October 14:

Screening of In The White Man’s Image


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**Popular Culture, Entertainment, and Reproducing Stereotypes**

**Tuesday, October 19:**

Screening of *Ethnic Notions*


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**Thursday, October 21:**

Hurbert H. Bancroft (1894). The Book of the Fair: An Historical and Descriptive Presentation of the World's Science, Art, and Industry, as Viewed Through the Columbian Exposition. Chicago: Bancroft

Chapter 20: “Anthropology and Ethnology” (skim but view images).

Ida B. Wells (1893) "To Tole With Watermelons," *The Cleveland Gazette*, 22 July


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**Shifting a Paradigm, Shaping the Future**

**Tuesday, October 26:**

LD Baker (1998) From Savage to Negro

Chapter 4: Progressive-Era Reform

Chapter 5: Rethinking Race
Thursday, October 28:


Franz Boas (1895) Human Faculty As Determined by Race. Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science 43:301-327


Tuesday, November 2:
EXAM #2

Science, Law, and New Formations of Race

Thursday, November 4:
Screening of Race: The Power of an Illusion vol. 3

LD Baker (1998) From Savage to Negro
Chapter 6: The New Negro
Chapter 7: Looking behind the Veil

Zora Hurston (1929) Letter to Franz Boas. October 20
Franz Boas Professional Correspondence, American Philosophical Association

Tuesday, November 9:

LD Baker (1998) From Savage to Negro
Chapter 8: Unraveling the Boasian Discourse

TAKAO OZAWA v. U S, 260 U.S. 178 (1922)

U.S. v. BHAGAT SINGH THIND, 261 U.S. 204 (1923)

Chpt. 3: Ozawa and Thind
Thursday, November 11:

LD Baker (1998) *From Savage to Negro*
Chapter 9: Anthropology and the 14th Amendment


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**Law, Science, and the Conspiratorial Backlash**

Tuesday, November 16:


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**White Privilege and Challenges of a Post-Racial Society**

Thursday, November 18:

Exercise: *Where Race Lives, a history of two families*


Tuesday, November 23:


Chapter 3: Calling a Spade a Spade: Defining Discrimination

Devah Pager and Bruce Western (2005), Race at Work: Realities of Race and Criminal Record in NYC Job Market. Also check out the comments in AC 360 Blog about Pager’s Study

Thursday, November 25: (Thanksgiving Break)

Tuesday, November 30:


Thursday, December 2:
Review Session

Tuesday, December 7: EXAM #3

Thursday, December 9: (last day of class)

Class wrap-up and course evaluations (attendance is mandatory).