

# PH260-15 Race and Philosophy

**22/23**

**Department**

Philosophy

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 2

**Module leader**

Eileen John

**Credit value**

15

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

The category of race poses deep philosophical challenges. There are unresolved debates about what 'race' means and whether this term refers to anything real. What kinds of evidence and methods are relevant to such debates? How should life experiences of racial categorization and racism be acknowledged? Questions of meaning, reality, evidence and method furthermore do not seem separable from ethical, existential and political questions about incorporating race into one's understanding of the world. Should we use a concept of race? As well as addressing these basic questions, the module will consider issues of race that arise within a range of philosophical fields, such as epistemology, biopolitics, aesthetics, philosophy of education, and the history of philosophy.

### Module aims

The module aims (1) to provide a focused introduction to philosophical study of race that will (2) help students reflect critically on the role of race in contemporary life.

### Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

This outline begins with three topics that will be central to the module, on the meaning and reality of race and assessment of theories of race. Further topics are indicative of issues that may be covered; the precise topics studied will vary and can respond to issues of contemporary interest.

1: What meanings have been assigned to the term 'race'?

2: Realism and anti-realism about race

3: Ethics, politics and values within the metaphysics of race

4: Race and knowledge (epistemic injustice; standpoint epistemology; life experience and wisdom; testimony and acknowledgement)

5: Race, gender and sexuality (intersecting forms of social construction; intersecting forms of oppression; norms and 'normalization'; race in biopolitics)

6: Race, racism and colonialism; race in postcolonial politics, culture and theory

7: Beyond 'black and white' (racial categorization and racism in a global context; 'mixed' identities; race and ethnicity)

8: Race and art (artistic representations of race; political and emancipatory functions of art; status and marginalization of artforms; creativity and imagination in philosophical thinking about race)

9: Race and education (can philosophical thinking about race inform pedagogy and promote progress against racism?)

10: Race and the practice of philosophy (re-thinking the history of philosophy; race and categories of philosophy - e.g., African philosophy, Western and non-Western philosophy; diversifying the curriculum; exclusion and inclusion in the classroom and the profession; philosophy, protest and activism)

## **Learning outcomes**

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- understand and distinguish central positions in philosophical discussions of race
- explain and assess the ideas, claims and reasoning presented in module materials
- develop, support and articulate their own views on the issues.

## **Indicative reading list**

Linda Martin Alcoff (2006). *Visible Identities: race, gender, and the self*. Oxford.

K. Anthony Appiah (1985). 'The Uncompleted Argument: Du Bois and the Illusion of Race', *Critical Inquiry* 12:1.

\_\_\_\_\_ (2015). 'Race, Culture, Identity: misunderstood connections', in *Color Conscious*, eds. K. Anthony Appiah and Amy Gutmann. Princeton.

Patricia Hill Collins (2000). *Black Feminist Thought: knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. Routledge.

\_\_\_\_\_ (2013). *On Intellectual Activism*. Temple.

Kristie Dotson (2012). 'HOW IS THIS PAPER PHILOSOPHY?', *Comparative Philosophy* 3:1.

\_\_\_\_\_ (2015). 'Inheriting Patricia Hill Collins's Black Feminist epistemology', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38:13.

Richard Dyer (1997). *White: essays on race and culture*. Routledge.

Katrin Flikschuh (2018). 'Philosophical Racism', *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume* 92:1.

Paul Gilroy (2004). *Between Camps : nations, cultures and the allure of race*.

Lewis Gordon (2000). *Existentialism Africana*. Routledge.

Michael O. Hardimon (2017). *Rethinking Race: the case for deflationary realism*. Harvard.

Charles Mills (2015). *Blackness Visible: essays on philosophy and race*. Cornell.

\_\_\_\_\_ (1997). *The Racial Contract*. Cornell.

Lucius Outlaw, Jr. (1996). *On Race and Philosophy*. New York: Routledge.

Jacqueline Scott (2008). "Situated Black Women's Voices in/on the Profession of Philosophy," *Hypatia* 23:2.

Ann Laura Stoler (1995). *Race and the Education of Desire : Foucault's History of Sexuality and the colonial order of things*. Duke.

Paul C. Taylor (2016). *Black Is Beautiful: a philosophy of black aesthetics*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Naomi Zack (2002). *Philosophy of Science and Race*. Routledge.

Edited collections:

*Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Race* (2017). Ed. Naomi Zack.

*Philosophers on Race : critical essays* (2002). Eds. Julie K. Ward and Tommy L. Lott. Blackwell.

*Race* (2001). Ed. Robert Bernasconi. Blackwell.

*Race and the Enlightenment: a reader* (1997). Ed. Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze.

*Race and Racism in Continental Philosophy* (2003). Eds. Robert Bernasconi and Sybol Cook. Indiana.

*Reframing the Practice of Philosophy: bodies of color, bodies of knowledge* (2012). Ed. George Yancy. SUNY.

Journal issues:

*Contemporary Aesthetics* 2 (2009) - Special issue on Aesthetics and Race.

*Ethics and Education* 13:1 (2018) - Special issue on Critical Philosophy of Race and Education.

*Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 18 (2004). Special issue on Identity and Ethnicity.

## **Research element**

Assessment includes an essay that will require research on a topic studied on the module.

## **Interdisciplinary**

While the module focuses on philosophical questions about race, many thinkers and materials relevant to the topics studied, and some core readings, come from a range of fields and domains, including sociology, history, politics, education, the history and theory of the arts and literature, and the creative arts, as well as memoir and biography. Students will be encouraged to seek out empirical and theoretical sources from other disciplines that engage with the module topics.

## **International**

The module will include study of race in relation to ideas and practices that have had a global impact. Considering the meaning and reality of race involves thinking about the legacies of practices such as slavery, colonialism and economic and political migration. Part of the complexity the module aims to highlight is that issues of race vary with the histories of peoples and nations around the world, as in specific relations between Africa and the Americas, between the UK, Caribbean and South Asian nations, and between indigenous and immigrant peoples within a given nation or region.

## **Subject specific skills**

Clear, accurate formulation of philosophical views and arguments concerning race

Ability to identify problems, strengths and unresolved questions in the views studied

Comparison and critical evaluation of different views

Application of theoretical views to examples, showing ability to work back and forth between general and more concrete or specific claims

Development of positions on the issues, showing reflection on alternatives and on potential limitations of positions taken

## **Transferable skills**

Reading and comprehension of theoretical works; skill in following extended arguments

Clear exposition of complex ideas and views, articulating key claims and reasoning in speech and writing

Critical thinking: evaluating claims and reasoning, raising well-focused questions and objections

Research skills: seeking out source materials (online, print, documents), assessing relevance and importance of materials, citing sources in a professional manner, organising and prioritising research tasks, drafting and revising written work, communicating research findings in clear, accessible terms

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## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	18 sessions of 1 hour (12%)
Seminars	8 sessions of 1 hour (5%)
Private study	124 hours (83%)
Total	150 hours

### Private study description

Reading and preparation for lectures and seminars; revising for take-home exam; research and writing for assessed essay

### Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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## Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

### Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time
Short response essay	10%	
Brief analysis and evaluation of a core reading		
2500-word Essay	80%	
Independent research on a topic addressed in the lectures.		
Short response essay	10%	
Reflective discussion of an issue raised on the module		

### Feedback on assessment

Assignments will be returned with written feedback on Tabula, in line with the Philosophy department's policies and guidance on giving feedback to students.

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# Availability

## Courses

This module is Optional for:

- UPHA-V700 Undergraduate Philosophy
  - Year 2 of V700 Philosophy
  - Year 2 of V700 Philosophy
  - Year 3 of V700 Philosophy
  - Year 3 of V700 Philosophy
- Year 4 of UPHA-V701 Undergraduate Philosophy (with Intercalated year)
- Year 4 of UPHA-V702 Undergraduate Philosophy (with Work Placement)

This module is Core option list A for:

- Year 3 of UMAA-GV19 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy with Specialism in Logic and Foundations

This module is Core option list B for:

- UMAA-GV17 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 2 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 2 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 2 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
- Year 2 of UMAA-GV19 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy with Specialism in Logic and Foundations

This module is Core option list C for:

- Year 4 of UMAA-GV19 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy with Specialism in Logic and Foundations

This module is Core option list F for:

- UMAA-GV18 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of GV18 Mathematics and Philosophy with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of GV18 Mathematics and Philosophy with Intercalated Year

This module is Option list A for:

- UPHA-VL78 BA in Philosophy with Psychology
  - Year 2 of VL78 Philosophy with Psychology
  - Year 3 of VL78 Philosophy with Psychology

This module is Option list B for:

- UPHA-VQ72 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature

- Year 2 of VQ72 Philosophy and Literature
- Year 3 of VQ72 Philosophy and Literature
- Year 4 of UPHA-VQ73 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature with Intercalated Year

This module is Option list D for:

- UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
  - Year 2 of V1V5 History and Philosophy
  - Year 3 of V1V5 History and Philosophy
- Year 4 of UHIA-V1V8 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with Year Abroad and a term in Venice)
- Year 4 of UHIA-V1V6 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with Year Abroad)
- UHIA-V1V7 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with a term in Venice)
  - Year 2 of V1V7 History and Philosophy (with a term in Venice)
  - Year 3 of V1V7 History and Philosophy (with a term in Venice)