

GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING

IDIS 302 – "Race" and Racism



Course Instructor	Stephanie Simpson	Email: ss33@queensu.ca
Office	TBD Mackintosh-Corry Hall	
Contact Time	By appointment	
Format	One 3.0 hour lecture/week One 1.0 hour tutorial/week	
Class Assessment	Tutorial participation, in-class assignments/tests, written assignments	

COURSE OVERVIEW

Students will be introduced to the concept of “race” as a social construct that has no biological legitimacy but is one of the most powerful influences on human life. Issues of race continue to inform the ways in which individuals from different social locations experience the world and relate to each other. Although race is biologically irrelevant, its association with fixed biological characteristics that are based on relations of power can be seen in residential segregation, acts of racism, and economic inequities for racialized “Others.” Geography always informs the ways in which race is understood and lived, in the everyday and everywhere. Particular attention will be paid to the positioning of the Canadian nation state as a post-racial landscape and the influence of this narrative on popular conceptions of racism as well as the perpetuation of racial inequities. Whiteness as a “neutral” and invisible racial standpoint will be explored throughout the course. A discussion of whiteness is necessary to provide a mirror image of the ways in which the racialized “Other” is always measured in relation to this social norm.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Identify key concepts related to the construction of race.
- Examine the process of racialization.
- Articulate the principles of critical race theoretical and analytical frameworks.
- Describe the intersectional nature of social identities.
- Relate the concept of intersectionality to the process of social marginalization.
- Analyze how relations of power influence social norms, location, positionality, and privilege.
- Apply a critical race analytic perspective to historical and contemporary sociocultural issues.
- Consider personal and collective opportunities for social action and racial justice.

COURSE TOPICS

The construction of “race”, “common sense” understandings of “race”; racism; racial discourse; race and social systems in Canada; “whiteness”; intersectionality; racial geographies and social locations; multiculturalism; immigration; media and representation.

COURSE READINGS

Henry, F. & C. Tator. 2010. *The Colour of Democracy: Racism in Canadian Society*. 4th Ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson.