

**DRAFT 1.5**  
**ETHN 6800**  
**Critical Race Theory**  
**Prof. Timothy Messer-Kruse**

**Course Description:**

The goal of this seminar is to explore the most influential ideas, authors, and critics of what is known as ‘Critical Race Theory’ (CRT). In particular, we will trace the intellectual origins of this (or these) ideas; how they interpret the meaning of American history, government, law, and society; what particular methodologies they produce or require; and how these ideas differ from, intersect with, or reinforce other explanations of American racism.

This course is structured to feature weekly discussions with prominent scholars who have contributed to the discourse around Critical Race Theory, whether as theorists, advocates, or critics. Students will focus their reading and research to prepare for each week’s discussion with these guest scholars and to then reflect on these conversations.

**Required Readings:**

All course readings will be available as pdf docs on the course Canvas site, except for the following:

Joe Feagin, *The White Racial Frame: Centuries of Racial Framing and Counter-Framing* (Routledge, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2020).

Elizabeth Hordge Freeman, *Second-Class Daughters: Black Brazilian Women and Informal Adoption as Modern Slavery* (Cambridge Univ. Press, forthcoming Mar. 2022).

**Course Requirements:**

All student participants in this seminar are required to attend all scheduled classes, to complete weekly writing assignments, and to write a summary essay that draws on the readings and discussions to address the fundamental question of the course: What is Critical Race Theory and what is it not?

Grades will be calculated on the following basis:

Class participation – 40%

Weekly assignments – 40%

Summary paper – 20%

There are no exams required for this class.

**Schedule of Classes and Guest Scholars:**

1. Jan. 12 - David Stovall
2. Jan. 19 - Randall Kennedy
3. Jan. 26 - Charles Gallagher
4. Feb. 2 - Robert S. Chang
5. Feb. 9 - Victor Ray
6. Feb. 16 - Robert A. Williams Jr.
7. Feb. 23 – Tanya Hernández
8. Mar. 2 - Mike Cole
9. Mar. 9 – spring break—no class
10. Mar. 16 - Joe Feagin
11. Mar. 23 - Amanda Lewis
12. Mar. 30 - Erin Pineda
13. Apr. 6 - Kendall Thomas
14. Apr. 13 - Elizabeth Hordge Freeman
15. Apr. 20 – Tommy Curry

**Class participation:**

This reading seminar requires the active participation of all students in class discussions. This entails reading all assigned material but not necessarily mastering it. The seminar is an opportunity to ask questions, probe interpretations, and experiment with ideas. You should keep lists of questions that you

have on each week's readings and notes on those points and passages that you found particularly enlightening, pithy, insightful, frustrating, or infuriating. By sharing these questions and insights with all seminar participants we will all benefit from a deeper exploration of these theories. A grade will be recorded for each participant's level of involvement and apparent preparation for each week's class, as judged subjectively by Professor Messer-Kruse.

### **Weekly Writing Assignments:**

Each week each seminar participant is to write a series of **two** questions they would like to pose to that week's featured author. Each question should be followed by a full narrative description of what prompted the question, what importance the question has, and how the question bears on the topic at hand. These descriptions should, where appropriate, note other scholars, interpretations, or arguments and these references should be properly cited. All papers should be double-spaced, twelve-point Times New Roman font, and cited according to the Chicago Style method of citation required of authors in the flagship journal in American Culture Studies, *American Quarterly*. You will find their style guide online.

Each week's questions are to be submitted to a class discussion board due by Monday at 5 pm. There will then be a period of 24 hours (until Tuesday at 5 pm) for each seminar participant to vote for their favorite questions. Students will be called to ask their questions of our distinguished guests in the rank order they are polled.

### **Final Paper**

All students are required to write a final reflection paper that attempts to answer the key question, "What is Critical Race Theory" and "What is it Not?" This reflection should be rich, deeply informed, and analytical. But, in keeping with some CRT methodologies, it may also incorporate the personal, though it is not required to do so. Papers should be between approximately 3,000 and 6,000 words. All papers should be double-spaced, twelve-point Times New Roman font, and cited according to the Chicago Style method of citation required of authors in the flagship journal in American Culture Studies, *American Quarterly*. You will find their style guides online. All papers must be submitted in a printed copy. Papers are due no later than **Friday, Apr. 29.**

All assignments and participation grades are given with plus and minus intermediate grades. The grading scale is as follows:

A+ = 100  
 A = 96  
 A- = 92  
 B+ = 90  
 B = 86  
 B- = 82  
 C+ = 80  
 C = 76  
 C- = 72

Final grades will be calculated according to the standard BGSU system of grades for graduate students (ABC), using the following point scale above for the cutoffs between A (95), B (85) and C (75).

Also note that "A course taken for graduate credit in which a D, F, or WF was received may not be used to meet degree requirements nor to meet the minimum credit hour requirements for a graduate degree; however, the hours and grade are used to compute the cumulative grade point average. If a graduate student repeats a course, each grade received is counted in computing the cumulative grade point average. To compute GPA, the total number of points (on the 4.0 scale) are divided by the total number of hours undertaken for graduate credit, excluding courses in which the marks INC, IP, S, U, or W are recorded."

### **CANVAS:**

Please note that grades are posted on the CANVAS grade page as a convenience to students and may not be accurate for purposes of final grade calculation until after the last assignment is graded. This is due to the possibility that the CANVAS system may not count absent grades as zeros until the end of the course for the purposes of final grade calculation.

**Incompletes:** This course follows the BGSU Graduate College policies: "An INC (incomplete) may be given only when, for some justifiable reason, a student fails to take the final examination or to fulfill a specified requirement in a course. An INC may be removed and a grade substituted if the student completes

course requirements to the satisfaction of the instructor prior to the deadline established by the Graduate College.” All incomplete coursework must be completed before May 15, 2019.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism, is defined in the BGSU Academic Honesty Policy as “Representing as one’s own in any academic exercise the words or ideas of another, including but not limited to, quoting or paraphrasing without proper citation.” All instances of plagiarism will be referred to the Graduate College for discipline. For more information see (<http://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/catalog/academic-honesty/official-policy.pdf>)

### Schedule of Readings

1. Jan. 12 - David Stovall
  - a. David Stovall, *Born Out of Struggle: Critical Race Theory, School Creation, and the Politics of Interruption*. (State University of New York Press, Albany, 2016). <https://go.exlibris.link/FjSCYpk0>
  - b. “Introduction,” *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings that Formed the Movement*, Kimberle Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, Kendall Thomas, eds. (New York: The New Press, 1995)
2. Jan. 19 - Randall Kennedy
  - a. Randall Kennedy, "Racial Critiques of Legal Academia." *Harvard Law Review*, vol. 102, no. 8, 1989, pp. 1745-1819. <https://go.exlibris.link/5nn8P03M>
  - b. Alex M. Johnson, Jr. "'Racial Critiques of Legal Academia': A Reply in Favor of Context." *Stanford Law Review*, vol. 43, no. 1, 1990, pp. 137-165. <https://go.exlibris.link/Q2vgXd5>
  - c. Richard Delgado, "Mindset and Metaphor." *Harvard Law Review*, vol. 103, no. 8, 1990, pp. 1872-1877. <https://go.exlibris.link/k6Dr7gL>
  - d. Robin D. Barnes, "Race Consciousness: The Thematic Content of Racial Distinctiveness in Critical Race Scholarship." *Harvard Law Review*, vol. 103, no. 8, 1990, pp. 1864-1871. <https://go.exlibris.link/wf6q91L>
  - e. Leslie G. Espinoza, "Masks and Other Disguises: Exposing Legal Academia." *Harvard Law Review*, vol. 103, no. 8, 1990, pp. 1878-1886. <https://go.exlibris.link/kGGwIBxV>
3. Jan. 26 - Charles Gallagher
  - a. Charles A. Gallagher, “Color-Blind Privilege: The Social and Political Functions of Erasing the Color Line in Post Race America,” *Race, Gender & Class*, 2003, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 22-37. <https://go.exlibris.link/ZRY8Y9RC>
  - b. Charles A. Gallagher, “Institutional Racism Revisited: How Institutions Perpetuate and Promote Racism through Color Blindness in *Protecting Whiteness: Whitelash and the Rejection of Racial Equality*, Cameron D. Lippard, J. Scott Carter, David G. Embrick, eds. (University of Washington Press, 2020). <https://go.exlibris.link/zZ3GGHLq>
  - c. Charles A. Gallagher, "Miscounting Race: Explaining Whites' Misperceptions of Racial Group Size." *Sociological Perspectives*, vol. 46, no. 3, 2003, pp. 381-396. <https://go.exlibris.link/Znf9kmC6>
  - d. Charles A. Gallagher, “White Racial Formation: Into the Twenty-First Century,” in *Critical White Studies*, Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, eds. (Temple University Press, 1997). <https://go.exlibris.link/nLyrNkzn>
4. Feb. 2 - Robert S. Chang
  - a. Robert S. Chang, "Toward an Asian American legal scholarship: Critical race theory, post-structuralism, and narrative space." 81 *California Law Review* 1243 (1993). <https://go.exlibris.link/t6YVM9TM>
  - b. Robert S. Chang, "The Great White Hope: Social Control and the Psychological Wages of Whiteness." *Law, Culture and the Humanities*, vol. 16, no. 3, 2020, pp. 379-390. <https://go.exlibris.link/JGM12kNv>
  - c. Robert S. Chang, "The 14th Amendment and Me: How I Learned Not to Give Up on the 14th Amendment." *Howard Law Journal*, vol. 64, no. 1, 2020, pp. 53-81. <https://go.exlibris.link/MkvwX6Lp>
  - d. Cabrera, Nolan L., and Robert S. Chang. "Stats, Social Justice, and the Limits of Interest Convergence: The Story of Tucson Unified's Mexican American Studies Litigation." *Association of Mexican American Educators Journal*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2019, pp. 72. <https://go.exlibris.link/1DZNG181>
  - e. View the “26th Annual Derrick Bell Lecture on Race in American Society” (begins about min. 20): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7eJq1zUb4c>

5. Feb. 9 - Victor Ray
  - a. Victor Ray, "A Theory of Racialized Organizations," *American Sociological Review*, 2019, Vol. 84(1) 26-5.
  - b. Victor Ray, "Why So Many Organizations Stay White," HBR.ORG: The Big Idea, 2019.
  - c. Winant, Howard. 2015. "Race, Ethnicity and Social Science." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38:13 (2015), pp. 2176–2185.
  - d. Wimmer, Andreas. 2015. "Race-Centrism: A Critique and a Research Agenda." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38:13 (2015), pp. 2186–2205.
  - e. Winant, Howard. 2015. "Response to Andreas Wimmer." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38:13 (2015), pp. 2176–2185.
  - f. Victor Ray & Louise Seamster, "Rethinking Racial Progress: A Response to Wimmer," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 39:8, (2016), pp. 1361-1369.
  
6. Feb. 16 - Robert A. Williams Jr.
  - a. Robert A. Williams Jr., *The American Indian in Western Legal Thought: The Discourses of Conquest* (Oxford University Press, 1990). <https://go.exlibris.link/dn3M7zdW>
  
7. Feb. 23 – Tanya Hernández
  - a. Readings TBD
  
8. Mar. 2 - Mike Cole
  - a. Mike Cole, *New Developments in Critical Race Theory and Education: Revisiting Marxism in Austerity* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2017). <https://go.exlibris.link/hTf2V6wC>
  
9. Mar. 9 – spring break—no class
  
10. Mar. 16 - Joe Feagin
  - a. Joe Feagin, *The White Racial Frame: Centuries of Racial Framing and Counter-Framing* (Routledge, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2020) [not in BGSU library]
  
11. Mar. 23 - Amanda Lewis
  - a. Lewis, Amanda E. and John B. Diamond, *Despite the Best Intentions: How Racial Inequality Thrives in Good Schools* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015). <https://go.exlibris.link/yyYs35Lm>
  
12. Mar. 30 - Erin Pineda
  - a. Erin R. Pineda, *Seeing Like an Activist: Civil Disobedience and the Civil Rights Movement* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2021). <https://go.exlibris.link/4x3Xf0fc>
  
13. Apr. 6 - Kendall Thomas
  - a. Kendall Thomas, "Envisioning Abolition: Sex, Citizenship, and the Racial Imaginary of the Killing State," in *Sensible Politics: The Visual Culture of Nongovernmental Activism*, Meg McLagan and Yates McKee, eds., (New York: Zone Books, 2012).
  - b. Kendall Thomas, "Is Black Marriage Queer?" *Differences*, 29:2 (2018), 204-212.
  - c. Black, Charles L. "The Lawfulness of the Segregation Decisions." *The Yale Law Journal*, vol. 69, no. 3, 1960, pp. 421-430. <https://go.exlibris.link/s67KPyJy>
  - d. Thomas, Kendall. "Reading Charles Black Writing: "The Lawfulness of the Segregation Decisions" Revisited." *Columbia Journal of Race and Law*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2018. <https://go.exlibris.link/PczT3Xw>
  - e. Kendall Thomas, "Racial Justice: Moral or Political?" in *Looking Back at Law's Century*, Austin Sarat, Bryant Garth, and Robert A. Kagan, eds., (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 2002).
  
14. Apr. 13 - Elizabeth Hordge Freeman
  - a. Elizabeth Hordge Freeman, *Second-Class Daughters: Black Brazilian Women and Informal Adoption as Modern Slavery* (Cambridge Univ. Press, forthcoming Mar. 2022).
  
15. Apr. 20 – Tommy J. Curry
  - a. Tommy J. Curry, "He Never Mattered: Poor Black Males and the Dark Logic of Intersectional Invisibility," in *The Movement for Black Lives*, Brandon Hogan, Michael Cholbi, Alex Madva, and Benjamin S. Yost, eds. (Oxford University Press, 2021).
  - b. Tommy J. Curry, "Decolonizing the Intersection: Black Male Studies as a Critique of Intersectionality's Indebtedness to Subculture of Violence Theory," in *Critical Psychological Praxis: Psychosocial Non-Alignment to Modernity/Coloniality*, Robert K. Beshara, ed. (New

York: Routledge, 2021).

- c. Tommy J. Curry & Ebony A. Utley, "She Touched Me: Five Snapshots of Adult Sexual Violations of Black Boys," *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal*, 28:2 (2018).