

# Course Information UP 160: 'Race', Social Justice, and Cities

## Course Overview

Students will explore the contingent and contested social meanings attached to the idea of 'race' and how these ideas are mobilized into racist political projects to govern the inequalities shaped by centuries of genocide, land theft, racial slavery, decades of legalized segregation and neoliberal economic exclusions. Our 8 week course proceeds in two roughly equal movements. Theoretically, we introduce our sociological and historical lens that a dominant system of ideas (ideology), the White Racial Frame (WRF) is foundational to everyday and institutionalized racial conflicts in North American cities. Practically, we map stories and timelines of present urban rebellions as case studies of the WRF and associated counter frames in operation. These case studies introduce a range of urban rebellions resulting from racialized policing, pogroms, and privatization of public health, municipal environmental and emergency services after disasters. The story map course project invites students to showcase the explanatory power of historically informed arguments and propose viable pathways toward antiracist and desegregated futures.

## Course Goals and Objectives

Ongoing and often violent urban conflicts suggest the need for a deeper debate on the complex relation between segregated urban places and racialized inequalities. This course suggests an iceberg model of simple and complex views of racism to distinguish between proximate and root causes of social problems and explain how spatial segregation underpins current everyday racialization practices, reproduces social inequalities and fuels social struggles for more dignified urban livelihoods.

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Explain the history of "race" as an ideology (system of ideas) created by racist social practices
- Differentiate between race, racism, racialization, and explain their relation to social inequalities
- Explain how racist spatial practices like exclusionary zoning reproduces racialized relations
- Identify the White Racial Frame as foundational to systemic and institutionalized racisms in North America
- Propose possible anti-racist strategies as pathways to desegregate urban spaces
- Create a story map of specific struggles against intersecting spatial and social inequalities

## Course Structure

This is a **3 credit hour** course. The course is **16 weeks long** and consists of **8 content modules**. You should dedicate approximately **6–8 hours per week** to working on the course itself, but

actual time commitments will vary depending on your input, needs, and personal study habits. You are required to log on to the course website a minimum of 4 days per week, but as discussions develop, you will probably need to do so more frequently. For additional information about student commitment, please see the policies page.

## **Required Texts**

You can order the required textbook from the Illini Union Bookstore (IUB) (217-333-2050). Be certain you select the correct term from the Search by Course dropdown list. Used books are often available and can be provided at a cost savings to you. Note that the cost and postage for all books must be prepaid. You can charge your order using VISA, Discover, or MasterCard. If you are ordering books elsewhere (e.g., Amazon.com), please be sure to order the correct edition and year of publication.

Feagin, J. (2014). [The White Racial Frame; Centuries of Racial Framing and Counter Framing](#) (2nd ed.). Routledge.

- ISBN-13: 978-0415635226
- ISBN-10: 9814411159

## **Recommended Texts**

- Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. (2016). [From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation](#). 1st ed. Haymarket Books.
- [FemTechNet Critical Race and Ethnic Studies Pedagogy Workbook](#).

## **Course Components**

This course will consist of the following components:

### **Module Overviews**

Each module will begin with the module overview, which will explain what the module is about, what learning goals you are expected to achieve, how long the module will take, and in what activities you will participate. Each module is designed with the same

structure and activities unless otherwise specified. The module activities are explained in greater detail below. You can find the due dates of specific assignments on each module's Overview page.

### **Readings and Lessons**

Each module will contain a list of lessons (recorded lectures) and assigned readings. In some cases, optional or supplemental readings may be listed for further study. Lessons cover major topics from the readings but do not necessarily include all important information from the readings.

### **Discussions**

The discussion forums are a ripe place to engage with one another as you wrestle with the content covered in the week. In Modules 1–6, a number of students will act as “presenters” by posting questions related to the module content to the rest of the class. The rest of the class will act as “responders” by responding to the questions for that week. As the discussions evolve, both presenters and responders will contribute their thoughts to the threads that interest them.

### **Discussion Journals**

For Modules 1–6, students will write journal entries to reflect on insights gleaned from participating in group discussions on questions that they and peers request for clarity. Graded activities include presenting and responding to questions and reflecting on the learning process during discussions.

### **Project**

Students will create and present a story map of five key sites of struggles against racism. As preparation for the project, students will write four 500-word project journals as steps towards creating a story map and timeline of past events and possible futures of a present urban rebellion in a city of your choice. Project journals will 1) propose a racialized conflict for further study; 2) identify different community and state archives of the conflict; 3) categorize different community and state acts of remembrance in terms of the WRF and CF; and 4) propose a manifesto for existing projects towards emerging anti-racist futures. All students will present and review peer projects before submitting final story map and 500 word manifesto of racial inequalities as per guidelines at <https://storymap.knightlab.com/> More detailed information about the project can be found on the **Course Project** page.

### **Accommodations**

To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students should contact both the instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services

(DRES) as soon as possible. You can contact DRES at 1207 S. Oak Street, Champaign, (217) 333-1970, or via email at [disability@illinois.edu](mailto:disability@illinois.edu).

## Topic Outline

1. Introductions and the threat of "race" for democracy in urban America
2. The White Racial Frame of every day and systemic racism
3. Counter-frames of the White Racial Frame
4. Racism, violent policing, and BLM movement: St. Louis, Chicago, Minneapolis
5. Memorializing race massacres and displacement: Tulsa and New Orleans
6. Forging anti-racist alliances and solidarities: Los Angeles and New York
7. Project Presentations
8. Project Peer Reviews

## Grading

### Grading Distribution

Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Module 6	Module 7	Module 8	Activity Total	
Orientation	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
Discussions	5	5	5	5	5	5	NA	NA	25
Discussion Journals	5	5	5	5	5	5	NA	NA	25
Project	NA	10	10	10	NA	NA	10	10	50
Module Total	10	20	20	20	10	10	10	10	100

You will only be graded on your top 5 discussion activities and discussion journals.

### Grading Scale

Percentage	Letter Grade
97-100	A+
94-96.5	A
90-93.5	A-
87-89.5	B+
84-86.5	B
80-83.5	B-

77-79.5	C+
74-76.5	C
70-73.5	C-
67-69.5	D+
64-66.5	D
60-63.5	D-
Below 59.5	F