

Course Title: Demystifying Critical Race Theory

Course Code: SJS 05 W

Instructor Name and Bio: Dr. Samuel Maull

Samuel Maull has led courses at Stanford on the topics of race, ethnicity, and the criminal justice system for more than five years. He conducted three years of ethnography with incarcerated people and their families, and he has experience teaching in prisons and jails in California. Maull received a PhD from Stanford's anthropology department.

Class Sessions and Recording

Meeting days and times:

Live sessions will be on Tuesdays, 3-4pm PT

Meeting location: Zoom (details will be shared with registered students prior to first class meeting)

The class sessions will be recorded and available online from Tuesday evening. Students are not required to attend live sessions but will need to watch those sessions to keep up with the course content and earn Credit (see below).

Course Features

- Live session:
 - Lecture, discussions, and Q&A
- Assignments & Coursework:
 - Assignments and course materials posted in Canvas
 - Required discussions in Canvas
- Instructor will hold office hours:
 - Times TBD
 - Individual conferences available by request

Course Summary

This course is designed as an introduction for students with little knowledge of critical race theory. The most important thing to bring is an open mind. Critical race theory is based on a profound rethinking of the nature of American society and can be quite disorientating. It is, as much as it is any one thing, a *gestalt* (a worldview, a perspective). Some disorientation is necessary before reorientation, so please bear with it.

The nature of the course content is necessarily personal. No one in the class will be called upon to share their experiences or defend their position unless they want to. However, the things we will learn and discuss touch on everyone's lives, both our day-to-day lives and our lives' broader social and historical contexts. We all have some

relationship to race. There is no objective position from which to view this topic. We are all thinking and acting in an already racialized world. Reckoning with our own relationship to race can be jarring, upsetting, confusing. In a word, disorientating. Please prepare yourself for some degree of introspection. Please take the time and space you need during the course to work through those feelings.

**Please see course page for full description and additional details.*

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to...

1. Recognize what CRT is and is not (separate myth from reality)
 1. Describe the core tenets of CRT
 2. Explain its influence and impact
 3. Define its goals
2. Place CRT in historical and political context
 1. Recognize the historical events and movements, in both US and world history, which have preceded and produced CRT (in broad strokes)
 2. Define CRT with reference to other movements, noting what it shares, and where it differs
 3. Examine the broader political climate which has made CRT so controversial in this moment
3. Engage with CRT on a personal level, in their own lives and histories
 1. Recognize how CRT theories and concepts apply to their personal lives
 2. Evaluate the goals of CRT with reference to their lives
 3. Make personal reflections on how they stand with reference to those goals
4. Feel empowered to have conversations with others about CRT and race issues
 1. Feel confident in having fundamental knowledge of CRT
 2. Recognize common debates, fallacies, and talking points around CRT
 3. Apply CRT concepts and theories to make deeper insights around race issues

Grade Options and Requirements

- No Grade Requested (NGR)
 - This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)

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continuingstudies@stanford.edu
650-725-2650

- Students must attend and/or watch (at least) 5 class sessions, post in (at least) 5 weekly discussions, and submit a final project composed of a collection of (at least 5 of) the reflection elements of each week's discussion prompt.

**Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.*

Textbooks/Required Materials

There are no required materials or textbooks.

First Assignment

What's in a Name?

The first assignment for this course is a short reflection on your name (first and last). This assignment is for your own thinking, it will not be shared with other students.

Think about:

- where it comes from,
- why you have it,
- who else has it,
- where (if anywhere) it's a common name or (if it's not common) why it isn't,
- what's the history of the name,
- why we find the name in the places we find it,
- what else you might have been named

And most importantly, how you feel about your name. Aim for 2-3 paragraphs - 500 word maximum.

This assignment is **intended to be completed before attending the first lecture of the class.**

Tentative Weekly Outline

Week 1 - What is Critical Race Theory?

1. Definitions - What CRT is
1. What CRT is not

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1. Outline - of the coming weeks.
 - . This is more than a preview, it's laying out a super-structure or scaffolding in which to put the ideas that are coming
2. History
 1. Projects - First discussion of the projects

Week 2 - Social Construction and the Surprising Inconsistency of Whiteness

1. Key Concept: Social Construction
 - a. Secondary concepts: essentialism, othering, embodiment
 - b. Discuss these through case studies and personal experiences
2. History - contrasting historical views on race
3. Case study - The surprising inconsistency of Whiteness
4. Projects - Your personal, family, institutional, or local histories

Week 3 - Ideas in Action: The CRT Family Tree

5. CRT's
6. Ideas in context
 - a. Discussion of how ideas can be judged both on their rationality and on their usefulness/the uses they've been put to
7. Projects -
 - a. Applying ideas to your projects - how are they useful *to you*

Week 4 - Intersectionality or, Why You Don't Have to Agree

1. Key concept: Intersectionality
 - a. Secondary Concepts: Systems of disadvantage/oppression, privilege, marginalization, standpoint theory, **othering**
2. Race in Medicine
 - a. Case studies of various ethical issues in medicine around the overlap of race, disability, gender, and SES
3. Projects - Your unique standpoint

Week 5 - Prejudice and Systemic Racism, or Racism Without (Overt) Racists

1. Key Concept - Prejudice
 - a. Secondary concepts: Implicit Bias, microaggression, stereotype (threat)
 - b. Secondary concepts: institutional racism, systemic racism, colorblind racism
2. Race in Criminal justice
 - a. Case studies of the less well defined kinds of racially charged experiences we all have every day
3. Projects - Our everyday lives, relationships, and interactions with others
4. Our environments and the institutions which frame our lives

Week 6 - Race in Tech: The New Jim Code

1. Where are we now? - Current affairs/contemporary issues
2. Race in Tech
 - a. Case studies of the many ways race comes into the supposedly colorblind world of tech
3. Recap - what we've learned and how it fits together
4. Project - Summary