Fall ’16 PHILOSOPHY 318: RACE AND RACISM

Prof. Larry Blum

W-5-045

**Office hours:**

Tuesday 3:30-4:30

 Thursday 12:45-1:45

or by arranged appointment

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**Course readings:**

The one required text for the course is Lawrence Blum, *“I’m Not a Racist, But…”: The Moral Quandary of Race* (2002). In paperback at the University Bookstore (including rental), and at Reserve Desk at Healey Library

All other readings are on my website: [www.lawrenceblum.net/courses.html](http://www.lawrenceblum.net/courses.html) (or [www.lawrenceblum.net](http://www.lawrenceblum.net) and click on “Courses”)

The readings on the site are grouped under the general topic on the syllabus (e.g. “Latinos and Race”) rather than by the date of the class they are due. Look for the author and title under the topic, on the syllabus. The date a reading is due is as stated on the syllabus.

# GOALS OF COURSE

1. To become better informed about the history, development, and current understanding of the idea of "race," and of contemporary philosophical approaches to issues related to racism.

2. To learn to have productive and mutually beneficial conversations with fellow students about the highly-charged areas of race and racism; to respect and learn from other students in these conversations even if they do not agree with you.

3. To learn to be self-critical about issues of race and racism, and to consider seriously points of view other than those which you yourself bring to the class.

4. To learn to write and think clearly and analytically about emotionally-charged issues of race and racism. (This does *not* mean that these issues stop being emotional ones!)

# COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES, with %s of your final grade

**1**. **2 take-home exams**, due October 6 (**20%)** and November 15 (**20%).** Papers can always be rewritten in light of my comments and grade. A re-written paper will receive as a final grade a grade that is 2/3 of the way from your original grade to the grade you would have received on the rewrite had you turned that paper in as your original.

**2**. **Final exam** (in-class or take-home or possibly both): **30%.** Oroption of writing final research paper of 10-12 pages instead; if you wish to do final paper, you must speak to me and work out a topic and a research plan **by** **November 1**.

**3**. **10 “one-pagers”:** These are 300-350 word short reading summaries of the reading due on a particular day. (There are 18 assignments; you have to do 10 of them.) **20%** **altogether**.

The one-pager is due at the very latest by the beginning of class but I would very much prefer that you turn them into me electronically by 6PM the night before, so I can use them to help me plan the class on that reading. **You must include a word count!**

The one-pagers must include a summary of the main overall point(s) of a given reading. (Sometimes more than one reading is due on a given day and you must do the one-pager on all of the readings, except where otherwise indicated.) It must also include a question that the reading raises for you, a point that seems important but which you feel you do not understand, a question that you would ideally like to have answered, *or* a criticism you have of the reading. *You will be graded on how many of these you turn in that meets a minimum standard to get credit.* *But otherwise, each one is* not *given a specific grade.* The purposes of the one-pagers are (1) to give you feedback on how well you are understanding the reading prior to discussing it in class; (2) giving me feedback on the same thing.

**4**. You are expected to come to every class, and to come to class **having done the reading** and being prepared to probe, question, criticize, and otherwise discuss it in class. Attendance, preparation, and constructive class participation will count for **10%.** Attendance will be taken every class; after 2 unexcused absences, .4 [on the UMass 4.0 scale] will automatically be deducted from the attendance portion of your attendance/preparation grade. For an absence to be excused, you will have to produce appropriate documentation.

**Disability accommodations**: If you have a disability and will need accommodations in order to complete course requirements, please contact the Ross Center for Disability Services (Campus Center, UL, room 211): 617.287.7430 or ross.center@umb.edu. Once you have an accommodation letter, please meet with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations.

**Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:**

An institution of higher learning such as the University of Massachusetts can function properly only if its members conduct their academic life in an entirely honest manner, with complete integrity. The university spells out in detail what kinds of conduct violate this requirement of academic integrity (under the “Code of Student Conduct”) in the catalog, in the student handbook, and on the university website, summarized at <https://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/policies/community/code>. See sections 11-14.

Violations of this policy are subject to a range of punishments, from a failing course grade, a failing grade on the assignment in which plagiarism or other dishonesty has taken place, to expulsion from the university. The penalties, and the procedures to be taken by the instructor, the student, and the university, in a case of suspected plagiarism or other dishonesty are spelled out in the document just mentioned. [The instructor’s rules for appropriate citation of sources will be provided with the first essay assignment.] I see academic honesty as a matter both of individual morality and institutional morality.

**Electronic devices**, such as computers, cell phones, and the like may *not* be used in this class. They divert your attention from what is going on in the class.

SYLLABUS:

**RELIGION AND THE EARLY HISTORY OF RACE AND RACISM**

**Thursday, Sept 8:**

1. Frederickson, Chapter 1: Religion and the Invention of Racism, 15-47

NOTE: The Frederickson book is available in an “e” version at the Healey Library website

1. Blum, 109-111 [on Greeks]

**Tuesday, Sept 13:**

(1) Frederickson, Chapter 2, 51-61 (end of bottom whole paragraph) only

(2) Blum, chapter 6, 111-122 (not whole chapter)

**THE IDEA OF RACE. DO RACES EXIST?**

**Thursday, Sept 15:**

(1) Blum, chapter 5, 98-108 (not whole chapter)

(2) Blum, chapter 6, 122-130 (not whole chapter)

**Tuesday Sept 20:**

1. Blum, chapter 7, 131-146 (not whole chapter)
2. Dorothy Roberts, Chapter 3: “Redefining Race in Genetic Terms,” 57-80 from *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Create Race in the Twenty-First Century* [**website**: under The Idea of race; do races exist?]

[you may do a 1-pager on *either* of these readings; you don’t have to do both]

**Thursday, Sept 22:**

[no new reading]

##### ++++++1st paper handed out+++++++

**LATINOS AND RACE**

**Tuesday Sept 27:**

(1) Linda Martín Alcoff, “Is Latino/a Identity a Racial Identity?” 23-44, from *Hispanics/Latinos in the United States* (**website**: under Latinos and Race)

(2) handouts on slavery and race in the US and Latin America

**Thursday, Sept 29:**

(1) Blum, Chapter 8: 147-156

(2) “Implicit Racism:” go to [www.implicit.harvard.edu](http://www.implicit.harvard.edu). The page is “Project Implicit.” Log on as a Guest; hit “Go.” Next page is “preliminary information.” If you are OK with what they say on that page, hit “I wish to proceed.” This takes you to a list of “Implicit Attitude Tests”. Take at least the “Race” one, and any others you want to. Taking each test takes about 10 minutes.

**RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**

**Tuesday, Oct 4:**

M. Bertrand and S. Mullainathan, “Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination?” *American Economic Review*, Sept 2004: 991-1013 (**website**: under Racial Discrimination)

**Thursday, Oct 6:**

(1) D. Kelly, E. Machery, R. Mallon, “Race and Racial Cognition,” *The Moral Psychology Handbook* (2010), 452-461

 [**website** under Racial Discrimination]

**++++++1st paper due!!!++++++**

**Tuesday, October 11:**

Blum, chapter 4: “Racial Discrimination and Color Blindness,” 78-97

**POLICING AND POLICE KILLING**

**Thursday, Oct 13: TBD**

**Tuesday, Oct 18: TBD**

**WHITE SUPREMACY**

**Thursday, Oct 20:**

**Reading:** Charles Mills, “Revisionist Ontologies: Theorizing White Supremacy,” from *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race*, 97-118 (**website** under White Supremacy)

**Assignment:** 1-pager

**Tuesday, Oct 25**:

**Reading:** Christopher Lebron, “Shame and Method,” chapter 1 of *The Color of Our Shame*

(**website** under White Supremacy)

**Thursday, October 27:** no new reading

**THE LEGACY OF DISCRIMINATION**

**Tuesday**, **November 1**:

Melvin Oliver and Thomas Shapiro, *Black Wealth/White Wealth*, 11-45 (**website** under The Legacy of Discrimination)

##### ++++++2nd paper handed out+++++++

**ASIANS BETWEEN BLACK AND WHITE: OUTSIDERS AND THE “MODEL MINORITY STEREOTYPE”**

**Thursday, Nov 3:**

**Reading**: Frank Wu, “The Model Minority: Asian American ‘Success’ as a Race Relations Failure,” from *Yellow: Race in America Beyond Black and White*, 39-78 (**website**: Asians Between and White: Outsiders and the ‘Model Minority’ Stereotype)

**Tuesday, Nov 8**: “DISCIPLINING RACE” Conference at UMass (attendance required. Details to follow)

You may do a 1-pager as a response to the conference as one of your 10 1-pagers.

**Thursday, Nov 10**: Claire Jean Kim, “The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans,” *Politics and Society*, 1999 (**website**: Asians Between and White: Outsiders and the ‘Model Minority’ Stereotype)

**Tuesday, Nov 15:** (no new reading)

##### ++++++2nd paper due+++++++

**THE REPARATIONS CONTROVERSY**

**Thursday, Nov 17:**

**Reading**: Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations,” Atlantic Monthly, June 2014, (**website**: The Reparations Controversy)

(a 1-pager on this reading is worth 2 points)

**Tuesday, Nov 22:** (no new reading)

(**Thursday, Nov 24**: THANKSGIVING)

**Tuesday, Nov 29**

**Reading**: Thomas McCarthy, “Coming to Terms With Our Past, Part II: On the Morality and Politics of Reparations for Slavery,” from *Political Theory*, Dec. 2004: 750-772 (**website**: The Reparations Controversy)

**Thursday, Dec 1:** (no new reading)

**Tuesday, Dec 6:**

**Reading**: John Arthur, *Race, Equality, and the Burdens of History*, 210-227 (**website**: The Reparations Controversy)

**Thursday, Dec 8: (no new reading)**

**Thursday, Dec 13: (wrap-up)**

 *Recommended*: Frederickson, “Epilogue: Racism at the Dawn of the 21st Century,” from *Racism: A Short History*: 139-150