Comparative Ethnic Studies
Latinx Studies
Asian American Studies
Indigenous/Native American Studies
Individualized Courses of Study
About CSER

Founded in 1999, the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race (CSER) is a vibrant teaching, research and public engagement space. The Center’s mission is to support and promote the most innovative thinking about race, ethnicity, indigeneity and other categories of difference to better understand their role and impact in modern societies. What makes CSER unique is its attention to the comparative study of racial and ethnic categories in the production of social identities, power relations, and forms of knowledge in a multiplicity of contexts, including the arts, social sciences, natural sciences, and humanities.

To promote its mission, the Center organizes conferences, seminars, exhibits, film screenings, and lectures that bring together faculty, as well as undergraduate and graduate students, with diverse interests and backgrounds. CSER partners with departments, centers, and institutes at Columbia and works with colleagues and organizations on campus and off campus in order to facilitate an exchange of knowledge.

At present, CSER is Columbia’s main interdisciplinary space for the study of ethnicity and race and their implications for thinking about culture, power, hierarchy, social identities, and political communities. The Center is also pursuing a wide range of public programming, including the biannual “Artist at the Center,” the Indigenous Forum and Latino speaker series, the Transnational Asian/American Studies speaker series, the CSER Symposium, and the “Media and Idea Lab Annual Lecture.”

Major/Concentration Requirements

The requirements for this program were modified on October 25, 2018. Students who declared this program before this date should contact the director of undergraduate studies for the department in order to confirm their correct course of study.

The major in ethnicity and race studies consists of a minimum of 27 points.

Core Courses

All majors are required to take 3 core courses, as listed below:

1. CSER UN1010: Introduction to Comparative Ethnic Studies (4 points)
   OR
   CSER UN1040: Critical Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Race (3 points)
2. CSER W3928 Colonization / Decolonization (4 points)
   OR
   CSER UN3942 Race and Racisms (4 points)
3. CSER UN3919 Modes of Inquiry (4 points)

Specialization

All majors will select one of the areas of specialization listed below from which to complete their remaining coursework:

- Asian American Studies
- Comparative Ethnic Studies
- Latino/a Studies
- Native American Studies/Indigenous Studies
- Individualized courses of study

Majors who elect NOT to follow the Honors track must complete at least five CSER elective courses, in consultation with their major adviser, within their area of specialization. At least one of these electives must be a writing-intensive seminar (3000- or above level courses).

Check CSER course offerings for semesterly electives.

Majors who elect to follow the Honors track must complete at least four CSER elective courses, in consultation with their major adviser, within their area of specialization.
Major/Concentration Requirements

Language Courses

One of the following is highly recommended, although not required for the major:

- One course beyond the intermediate-level in language pertinent to the students focus
- An introductory course in a language other than that used to fulfill the degree requirements, but that is pertinent to the student’s focus
- A linguistics or other course that critically engages language
- An outside language and study abroad program that includes an emphasis on language acquisition

For the Concentration

The requirements for this program were modified on October 2, 2018. Students who declared this program before this date should contact the director of undergraduate studies for the department in order to confirm their correct course of study.

The concentration in ethnicity and race studies requires a minimum of 19 points.

Core Courses:
All students are required to take two core courses as listed below.

1. CSER UN1010 Introduction to Comparative Ethnic Studies (4 points)
   OR
   CSER UN1040 Critical Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Race (3 points)
2. CSER UN3928 Colonization/Decolonization (4 Points)
   OR
   CSER UN3942 Race and Racisms (4 points)

Specialization

Students must complete at least four courses, in consultation with their major advisor, in one of the following tracks/areas of specialization. At least one of the elective courses must be a seminar:

- Asian American studies
- Comparative Ethnic Studies
- Latino/a Studies
- Native American/Indigenous Studies
- Individualized courses of study

Departmental Honors Program

Majors who elect to follow the Honors track must complete at least four CSER elective courses within their area of specialization, and maintain a 3.6 GPA in the major. In lieu of a fifth elective, Honors majors are required to enroll in the following course in the spring semester of their senior year, during which they are required to write a thesis:

CSER UN3990 Senior Project Seminar (4 points)

Honors majors are required to present their senior essays at the annual undergraduate symposium in April. Students may fulfill this option in one of the following two ways:

1. By matriculating in the Senior Thesis course and writing the thesis under the supervision of the course faculty.
2. By taking an additional 4-point seminar where a major paper is required and further developing the paper into a thesis length work (minimum of 30 pages) under the supervision of a CSER faculty member.

CSER Senior Awards

CSER Award for Outstanding Thesis

- A CSER faculty committee will review all senior projects and will select one for the “Outstanding Thesis” award.
- As part of its deliberation process, the committee reviews recommendations made by CSER faculty, the “Modes of Inquiry” course instructor and the CSER preceptor. In order to receive this award, the student must keep a GPA of 3.6 or above in the major courses.

CSER Award for Academic Excellence

- CSER confers this award to a student who has consistently demonstrated her/his intellectual capacity in and outside the classroom. In order to receive this award, the student must keep a GPA of 3.6 or above in the major courses.
Travel Opportunities

Study Abroad

Students are highly encouraged to participate in study-abroad programs, as they represent an exciting opportunity to learn new languages and live in countries that are germane to their areas of study. In addition, travel abroad can enrich every student’s intellectual experience by providing an opportunity to learn about other perspectives on ethnicity and race.

In the past, students have participated in study-abroad programs in many parts of the world, including Australia, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and South Africa. To ensure that study abroad complements the major and integrates effectively with the major’s requirements, students are encouraged to consult with CSER’s undergraduate adviser as early in their academic program as possible. The director of undergraduate studies can advise students in what may be relevant programs for their areas.

CSER Summer Grant

Columbia Program in Mexico City: Colonization/Decolonization

The Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race provides Columbia University students partial to full tuition to participate in the Columbia Program in Mexico City: Colonization/Decolonization during the summer.

Eligibility:

- All Columbia College, Engineering and Applied Science: Undergraduate, General Studies, Global Programs, Graduate School of Arts and Science, School of the Arts, International and Public Affairs, Barnard.
- Priority will be given to CSER students.
- Provides partial to full tuition support (amount varies between $1,000 and $6,000). Average of five awards per summer.

For more information visit the CSER website: www.cser.columbia.edu/academics
**NEW CSER COURSE**
CSER GU4040
WHITENESS, SENTIMENT AND POLITICAL BELONGING
Prof. Catherine Fennell -- R 2:10PM-4PM | 420 Hamilton Hall
Throughout the history of the United States of America, whiteness has operated as an "unmarked" American identity. This implicit equation of the ideal American with a white American has had far ranging effects, influencing everything from the distribution of critical resources to the terms and processes through which "non-white" groups negotiate their qualified or contingent inclusion within the body politic. This course examines the ramifications of this implicit equation by focusing on several recent moments in which whiteness became explicit and critical to the dynamics of political belonging. Working through the lens of political feeling, we will read classic and contemporary works on sentiment, emotion, and racialization. These readings will be supplemented with artistic and documentary works. Through our engagements, we will contextualize discussions “white” paranoia, resentment, and sympathy and their political ramifications.

**NEW CSER COURSE**
CSER UN3041
THE ART & POLITICS OF MEMORY IN LATIN AMERICA:
TRUTH, JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION
Renzo Aroni -- TBA
How do societies that have gone through long-term political violence, civil war, and military dictatorship deal with human rights abuses in their aftermath? Through what mechanisms do they struggle to restore peace and democracy, pursue truth and justice, and advocate for memory and reconciliation? This seminar will tackle these questions to understand, assess, and critique the battles over memory that shaped Latin American countries following the brutal violence that took place since the mid-20th century up to the present. Examining the concept of “political struggles for memory,” in which diverse individuals and social groups compete to establish their meanings of the past events to structure the present, we focus on four case studies: Guatemala, Chile, Argentina, and Peru. The course will interest in students of humanities, social science, arts, human rights, politics, literature, and creative writing projects because of its interdisciplinary approach.
Since September 11, 2001, there has been an avalanche of immigration enforcement policies and initiatives proposed or implemented under the guise of national security. This course will analyze the domino effect of the Patriot Act, the Absconder Initiative, Special Registration, the Real I.D. Act, border security including the building of the 700 mile fence along the U.S./Mexico border, Secured Communities Act—that requires the cooperation of state and local authorities in immigration enforcement, the challenge to birthright citizenship, and now the congressional hearings on Islamic radicalization. Have these policies been effective in combating the war on terrorism and promoting national security? How have states joined the federal bandwagon of immigration enforcement or created solutions to an inflexible, broken immigration system?

This course will take a transnational look at the strange ways that race and mass rumors have interacted. From the judicial and popular riots in the U.S. justified by recurrent rumors of African-American insurrection, to accusations that French Jews were players in the ‘white slave trade,’ to tales of white fat-stealing monsters among indigenous people of Bolivia and Peru, rumors play a key role in constructing, enforcing, and contesting regimes of racial identity and domination. In order to grasp rumor’s importance for race, we will need to understand how it works, so our readings will cover both instances of racialized rumor-telling, conspiracy theories and mass panics, and some key approaches to how rumors work as a social phenomenon.
CSER UN3923  
LATINX & ASIAN AMERICAN MEMOIR  
Prof. Nathalie Handal—M 2:10pm – 4:00pm  
In this class, we will explore Latino and Asian American memoir, focusing on themes of immigration and duality. How do we construct identity and homeland when we are ‘multiple’? How do we define ourselves and how do others define us? By reading some of the most challenging and exciting memoirs by Latino and Asian Americans, we will attempt to answer these questions and/or at least try to understand these transnational and multicultural experiences. This class combines the critical with the creative—students have to read and critic memoirs as well as write a final 10page nonfiction creative writing piece. *Students will also have the opportunity to speak to some Latino and Asian authors in class or via SKYPE. Students will be asked to prepare questions in advance for the author—whose work(s) we will have read and discussed. This usually arises interesting and thought-provoking conversations and debates. This ‘Dialogue Series’ within the class exposes students to a wide-range of voices and offers them a deeper understanding of the complexity of duality.

CSER UN3926  
LATIN MUSIC AND IDENTITY  
Prof. Edward Morales—T 4:10pm – 6:00pm  
Office Hours – email for appointment  
Latin music has had a historically strained relationship with mainstream music tastes, exploding in occasional ‘boom’ periods, and receding into invisibility in others. What if this were true because it is a space for hybrid construction of identity that directly reflects a mixture of traditions across racial lines in Latin America. This course will investigate Latin music’s transgression of binary views of race in Anglo-American society, even as it directly affects the development of pop music in America. From New Orleans jazz to Texas corridos, salsa, rock, and reggaeton, Latin music acts as both as a soundtrack and a structural blueprint for the 21st century’s multicultural experiment.
Fall Courses

CSER UN3928
COLONIZATION/DECOLONIZATION
*Major Requirement
Prof. Manan Ahmed, —W 10:00am – 12pm | 420 Hamilton Hall
Prerequisites: Open to CSER majors/concentrators only. Others may be allowed to register with the instructor’s permission. This course explores the centrality of colonialism in the making of the modern world, emphasizing cross-cultural and social contact, exchange, and relations of power; dynamics of conquest and resistance; and discourses of civilization, empire, freedom, nationalism, and human rights, from 1500 to 2000. Topics include pre-modern empires; European exploration, contact, and conquest in the new world; Atlantic-world slavery and emancipation; and European and Japanese colonialism in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

CSER GR5000
INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN STUDIES
Prof. Matthew Sandler —M 4:10-6:00pm
This course focuses on the interpretation of primary sources, and how to write about the different genres of American culture and history. “Methods in American Studies” focuses on the history of the American and Ethnic Studies as areas of academic inquiry. Here students address issues in their own practice as researchers in relation to the major debates in the field.

CSER UN4360
AMERICAN DIVA: RACE, GENDER AND PERFORMANCE
Prof. Deborah Paredez—T 10:10pm-12pm | 420 Hamilton Hall
What makes a diva a diva? How have divas shaped and challenged our ideas about American culture, performance, race, space and capital during the last century? This seminar explored the central role of the diva—the celebrated, iconic, and supremely skilled female performer—in the fashioning and re-imagining of racial, gendered, sexual, national, temporal, and aesthetic categories of American culture.
**CSER UN3934 SEC 001**
BLACK/BROWN HISTORY OF ROCK & ROLL
Alex La Rotta – M 10:10pm - 12pm | 420 Hamilton Hall Seminar Room
This course is designed to get students to think more deeply about the ethno-racial roots—and routes—of rock and roll music as a national, historical phenomenon. In this class, we’ll conceive rock and roll broadly to include peripheral genres which are related to or derived from its origins, including rhythm and blues, jazz, soul, funk, boogaloo, salsa, disco, and hip-hop, to thread together and discuss the relationships between music, identity, and race in the United States. Latinxs and African Americans have played significant, if underrecognized, roles in shaping American popular music; the cultural connections and musical interactivity between these communities are lesser understood in popular narratives of postwar American music. To this end, this course will uncover a broad social, racial, national, and transnational history of rock and roll to understand how musicians of color innovated long-standing musical traditions in their communities; maintained cultural and political links within the diaspora; and navigated regional racial schemas in the United States and Latin America.

**CSER UN1011 SEC 001**
INTRO ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES
Prof. Glenn Magpantay – T 12:10pm - 2pm
This interdisciplinary course will examine major themes within the field of Asian American Studies. Through critical analysis of historical, scholarly, literary, and visual media, we will look at the intersecting histories and the social, economic and political contexts that have shaped and continue to shape the multifaceted understandings and experiences of Asian Americans in the U.S as well as Asian diasporic communities across the Americas. We will focus on the waves and patterns of Asian migration to the US beginning in the 19th century so as to address major themes and key contemporary issues such as the history of Asian exclusion and marginalization in the U.S.; multiethnic Asian American identity formation and racialization; affirmative action and production of the “model minority” myth; constructions of gender and sexuality; Islamophobia; activism and social movements and; multiracial solidarities and radical politics.

**CSER UN3701 Sec 001**
US-LATINO CULTURAL PRODUCTION
Prof. Edward Morales – T 4:10pm-6:00pm
The course will investigate the possibility that hybrid constructions of identity among Latinos in the U.S. are the principal driving force behind the cultural production of Latinos in literature and film. There will be readings on the linguistic implications of “Spanglish” and the construction of Latino racial identity, followed by examples of literature, film, music, and other cultural production that provide evidence for bilingual/bicultural identity as a form of adaptation to the U.S. Examples will be drawn from different Latino ethnicities from the Caribbean, Mexico, and the rest of Latin America.

**CSER UN3913 Sec 001**
VIDEO AS INQUIRY
Prof. Frances Negron-Muntaner – T 2:10pm-4:00pm - Location: 420 Hamilton Hall
The goal of this course is to familiarize students with visual production, particularly video production, as a mode of inquiry to explore questions related to race, ethnicity, indigeneity, and other forms of social hierarchy and difference. The class will include readings in visual production as a mode of inquiry and on the basic craft of video production in various genres (fiction, documentary, and experimental). As part of the course, students will produce a video short and complete it by semester’s end.

**CSER UN3940 Sec 001**
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CONSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES
Prof. Elizabeth OuYang – R 10:10am-12:00pm
This course will examine how the American legal system decided constitutional challenges affecting the empowerment of African, Latino, and Asian American communities from the 19th century to the present. Focus will be on the role that race, citizenship, capitalism/labor, property, and ownership played in the court decision in the context of the historical, social, and political conditions existing at the time. Topics include the denial of citizenship and naturalization to slaves and immigrants, government-sanctioned segregation, the struggle for reparations for descendants of slavery, and Japanese Americans during World War II.
In this class we will approach race and racism from a variety of disciplinary and intellectual perspectives, including: critical race theory/philosophy, anthropology, history and history of science and medicine. We will focus on the development and deployment of the race concept since the mid-19th century. Students will come to understand the many ways in which race has been conceptualized, substantiated, classified, managed and observed in the (social) sciences, medicine, and public health. We will also explore the practices and effects of race (and race-making) in familiar and less familiar social and political worlds. More specifically, we will address a series of questions, both historical and contemporary. How does the concept of race shift over time? With what consequences? What is the relationship between philological commitment to “a family of languages” and the development of a modern, biological concept of race? How has the relationship between “race” and “culture” been articulated in the history of anthropology in particular, and in racial theory more broadly? Can there be a concept of race without phenotype—a solely genotypic racial grouping?

This course explores contemporary Arab American and the Arab Diaspora culture and history through literature and film produced by writers and filmmakers of these communities. As a starting historical point, the course explores the idea of Arabness, and examines the Arab migration globally, in particular to the U.S., focusing on three periods: 1875-1945, 1945-early 1960s, and late 1960s-present. By reading and viewing the most exciting and best-known literary works and films produced by these writers and filmmakers, students will attain an awareness of the richness and complexity of these societies. Additionally, students will read historical and critical works to help them have a deeper understanding of these creative works. Discussions revolve around styles and aesthetics as well as identity and cultural politics.

This course begins with the premise that racial justice is the bioethical imperative of our time. It will explore the space of science fiction as a methodology of imagining such just futures, embracing the work of Asian- and Afroturism, Cosmos Latinos and Indigenous Imaginaries. We will explore issues including Biocolonialism, Alien/nation, Transnational Labor and Reproduction, the Borderlands and Other Diasporic Spaces. This course will be seminar-style and will make central learner participation and presentation. The seminar will be inter-disciplinary, drawing from science and speculative fictions, cultural studies, gender studies, narrative medicine, disability studies, and bioethics.

Japanese filmmaker Andre Tarkovsky said that “the artist has no right to an idea in which he is not socially committed.” Argentine filmmaker Fernando Solanas and Spanish-born Octavio Getino postulated an alternative cinema that would spur spectators to political action. In this course we will ask the question: How do authoritarian governments influence the arts, and how do artists respond? We will study how socially committed filmmakers have subverted and redefined cinema aesthetics to challenge authoritarianism and repression. The focus is on contemporary filmmakers but will also include earlier classics of world cinema to provide historical perspective.
CSER GU4484 SEC 001
CULTURAL RIGHTS AS HUMAN RIGHTS
Prof. Elsa Stamatopoulou – T 4:10pm-6pm - Location: 420 Hamilton Hall
Cultural rights are included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other human rights instruments. While academic teachings in the human rights field have been focusing on civil and political rights and, increasingly, on economic and social rights, and while cultural studies have been thriving, this has not been the case for cultural human rights. The purpose of the seminar is to fill this gap.

CSER UN3924 Sec 001
LATIN AMERICAN & LATINO/A SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
Prof. Stuart Rockefeller – T 10:10am-12:00pm - Location: TBA
The class will survey the status of groups with compromised citizenship status internationally, including indigenous Bolivians, Indian immigrants to Dubai, and Arabs in France. Then we will look at several different kinds of subcitizenship in the United States, focusing on African Americans, Native Americans, “white trash,” and Chicanos. In the course of the term we will shift between looking at the administrative practices that render people subcitizens, experiences of marginalization, and how contestations such as the DREAM Act movement, the idea of “cultural citizenship” and newly powerful indigenous movements in South America are removing control of citizenship from states, and transforming citizenship for everyone.

AMST GR5001
METHODS IN AMERICAN STUDIES
Matthew Sandler – M 4:10pm - 6:00pm
Conceived in the 1920’s and 1930’s, American Studies sought to make a synoptic account of the “national character.” Since the 1960’s, the field has turned towards a focus on various forms of inequality as the dark side of American exceptionalism. This course surveys the development of the field’s current preoccupations, covering a range of periods, regions, groups, and cultural practices that present productive problems for generalizations about U.S. identity. We begin with the first academic movement in American Studies, the myth and symbol school—and think through its growth in the context of post-WWII funding for higher education. We then move on to a series of debates centered at intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. We’ll close by examining the historical background of protest movements built around the identitarian concerns about rape culture and mass incarceration.

**Spring Courses**

**Graduate’s Corner**

**Masters Program in American Studies at CSER**

The M.A. program in American Studies at the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race offers an opportunity for students to continue their research at Columbia with the freedom to formulate interdisciplinary research projects. Students design their own curriculum from across Columbia’s course listings with the help of the program director. At the end of their matriculation, students write a thesis under the advisement of faculty specialists in their area of interest.

The M.A. provides an introduction to graduate work in American Studies and its related fields. It also works as professional development for secondary educators, public historians, or culture workers from a variety of backgrounds. The program is designed with three goals in mind: to orient students within American Studies as a field, to deepen their strengths in a related disciplinary practice, and to provide space for them to conceive an interdisciplinary research agenda.

The requirements are as follows:

- CSER 4000: Introduction to American Studies
- CSER 4001: Methods in American Studies
- 3 courses in a discipline traditionally associated with American Studies
- 3 courses centered on an interdisciplinary theme or idea
- CSER 4999: Supervised Individual Research (thesis)

Students complete a thesis project as the capstone of their course of study. Most theses take the form of traditional academic papers, but with the permission and consultation of their advisors, recent students have represented their research in documentary films and graphic comics. Thesis topics by recent graduates include:

- The Muslim Soldier Serving in the U.S. Military After 9/11: Islamophobia, Citizenship, and National Belonging
- Policing in Schools: The Progressive Criminalization of American Youth
- The Commercialization of College Athletics and its Impact on African American Male Basketball Players
- Antimodern Violence and Far Right Extremism in the American South
- The Circle in the Square: Legendary Cyphers, Hip Hop, and Educational Organizing in Union Square Park

If you have any questions, please contact the Program Director, Dr. Matt Sandler, mfs2001@columbia.edu
was a year rife with challenges for many, but it also presented numerous opportunities to learn and to grow as a community. As the new semester approaches, we at CSER would like to take a moment to reflect on the best of our events and developments in the past year.

NEW CSER CO-DIRECTORS

Telling Stories...
- Ed Morales released his latest book: Fantasy Island: Colonialism, Exploitation and the Betrayal of Puerto Rico. He was also shortlisted for the Nayef Al-Rodhan Prize for Global Cultural Understanding.
- Film & TV rights to Karl Jacoby’s prize-winning book, The Strange Career of William Ellis, were optioned by producer and indie filmmaker Phillip Rodriguez.

NEW CSER FELLOWS

...Addressing Timely Issues
- Elsa Stamatopoulou spoke on Indigenous issues at a recent Law School talk. Read more about her speech in a recent article published by the Columbia Spectator.
- Mae Ngai joined Barnard’s Forum on Migration to examine the idea of America as a land of hope and refuge for the persecuted and oppressed.

Changing Lives...
Frances Negrón-Muntaner received the 2019 LASA Latina/o Studies Frank Bonilla Public Intellectual Award for her project Valor y Cambio.

NAHM ZINE

Grounded Knowledge

Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race Presents:

The Rise and Fall of the Brown Buffalo
A film by Phillip Rodriguez

Nueva Yorkinos
A talk by Dijali Brown-Cepeda
on marginalized histories and alternative archive-building

Crime and Punishment
Romanticising Eastern European Crime

Ed Lin

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2019
6 PM, 8 PM
CSER in 420 Hamilton Hall

Naomi Hirahara

Yuki Monden

Steven Kilbourn

Organized by Miguel Angel Jiménez and Jocelyn Rivas Díaz
CSER would like to congratulate the following students on their outstanding honors thesis defense presentations.

Molly Boord
Dena Cheng
Carla Mendoza
Amanda Ong
Diviya Rajesh
Lael Tate
Mia DeLuis Zayas
Faculty

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Kevin Fellezs
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Kaiama L. Glover
Associate Professor, French Department/African Studies Program, Barnard College

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George Delacorte Professor in the Humanities, Department of English and Comparative Literature

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Natasha Lightfoot
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