

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, COMMERCE AND EDUCATION  
INTRODUCTION TO RACE RELATIONS  
ANTHROPOLOGY 2910, FALL 2000

LIBRARY  
SEP 20 2000  
Grande Prairie  
Regional College

Instructor: Dr. Laurie Nock

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Prerequisite: a 3-credit course in a Social Science.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course arose in response to a perceived need to alert students of a new generation to the continued vitality of racism, although many Canadians would like to emphasize our historical or geographical distance from it.

We will discuss the biological basis of race, and the relationship between genetic differences and social or cultural characteristics. We will seek to understand the ideological foundations of racism, which are inherent in the need of all peoples to see themselves as the most truly human, if not as "the best". This ethnocentrism need not be a negative force, as differences (physical or cultural) need not be measured against each other. It becomes a negative force when correlated with differentials in power, be it exercised through economic, political or military domination. The combination of ethnocentrism with power makes it possible for those of one culture to exploit others for profit; to define them as inferior, in need of change and improvement (by force if necessary); to legislate their incapacity to manage their own destinies; to deny them access to education, employment and esteem (and thus fulfil the prophecy of inferiority); and, ultimately, to declare them inhuman, unworthy of life, resulting in intentional and unintentional genocide. A mythology of racism emerges to justify and to rationalize inequality, replete with intellectual, sexual and moral caricatures and stereotypes. We will study the complex interplay between identity, inheritance, culture, language, territory and religious and political ideologies. Within a society, racism interacts with other dimensions of inequality (e.g. economic, political and gender), to define privileged social sectors with more clarity. Between nations, racism is both a result and cause of colonialism, migration and under-development. The consequences of oppression and the denial of rights based on racial and ethnic origin have often been political mobilization, inter-group violence, warfare and atrocities.

In this anthropology course, the topic of race relations will be studied cross-culturally, but with frequent reference to our own nation. We will study patterns of race and ethnic relations in different societies, including the social and cultural conditions under which tolerance thrives and diversity is valued. Students will understand more clearly why, even if we no longer "believe" in it, racism continues to thrive.

## REQUIRED TEXT:

James, Carl E. (1999), Seeing ourselves: exploring race, ethnicity and culture.  
Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing.

Other required readings are specified in lecture outlines (many of them photocopied) and others will be assigned during the course.

## REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

There will be five take-home assignments. At total of at least three must be submitted. Each of these is worth 20% of the final course grade, and is likely to be five to ten pages (i.e. up to 2500 words) in length. The best three marks will be used in calculating the final course grade. Assignments must be handed in to the instructor by 3 p.m. on Friday of the week they are due.

There will also be oral presentations by students throughout the term, worth a total of 20% of the final course grade. There will be approximately two presentations each week, and the schedule will be worked out with students early in the term. Oral presentations must be given on the day allotted, or half of the credit will be forfeited.

All of the above assignments are marked out of 9.

In-class assignments (e.g. quizzes) held throughout the term will be worth 20%, and will be based on readings, discussions and lectures, or in-class activities. Many opportunities to earn points will be provided, so there will be no make-ups for these. For this portion of the course only, calculate your mark as a percentage of total marks obtainable.

70-100%	= 9
61-69%	= 8
55-60%	= 7
50-54%	= 6
45-49%	= 5

40-44%	= 4
35-39%	= 3
30-34%	= 2
10-29%	= 1
0-10%	= 0

## ORAL PRESENTATIONS: ETHNIC IDENTITY OR ETHNIC RELATIONS

**ETHNIC IDENTITY:** describe and analyze ethnic identity and belonging as expressed in any of a variety of ways. (See examples of topics below.) Include a description of the practice, its history, and its symbols. Clarify what it means to participants, and what they seek to communicate to others. This is not a cross-cultural comparison of cultural practices, but rather the expression of minority culture outside of its original context. The emphasis here is on cultural and community distinctiveness.

**ETHNIC RELATIONS:** There are many different contexts in which members of different cultures come together in the same activity to cooperate and/or compete. The emphasis is on similarities, but not necessarily on equality.

Submit an outline of your presentation and a bibliography to the instructor. Prior consultation on your topic and sources is a good idea!

### Examples of topics

art	war
literature	education
language	religion
music	political organization
ceremonies	humor
food	sports
celebrations	occupations
clothing	stereotypes