

THEO 650 “Race: America’s True Religion”

Tuesdays, 6:30-9:30 p.m.
Aug 11, 2025 - Dec 10, 2025

Instructor

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Office hours by appointment (F2F or Zoom)

“The conquest of the earth, which mostly means taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much.” Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, 1902.

“Racist ideas make people of color think less of themselves, which makes them more vulnerable to racist ideas. Racist ideas make White people think more of themselves, which further attracts them to racist ideas.” Ibram X. Kendi, *How to Be an Antiracist*, 6.

“But race is the child of racism, not the father. And the process of naming ‘the people’ has never been a matter of genealogy and physiognomy so much as one of hierarchy.” (Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*, p. 7).

A Note on Course Modality and the Syllabus

This course will be offered in a blended synchronous modality. You may take the course either in-person or synchronously online. However, if you appear online for any class sessions the course will be counted as ‘online.’ Microsoft Teams will be the platform used so please make sure you have access to it and familiarize yourself with it. For definitions and conditions of this and other modalities see:

https://mygets.garrett.edu/ICS/Courses_and_Syllabi/Course_Schedule/

Please be certain to familiarize yourself **thoroughly** with the syllabus. All the information you need is here. Prior to contacting the instructors about the course, check the syllabus to see if the information you want is already in it.

While we will do our best to follow the syllabus as written, the changing nature of any given semester may mean that we may make some modifications to the course along the way. In this case, the changes will be made on Moodle and we will send emails to alert you to these changes. Please track your garrett.edu email accounts regularly for emails from us about the course.

Technology Notes

Given the use of information technology to deliver this course, you will need to be certain you have sufficient technological ability to access and participate in this course. It is the student’s responsibility to have sufficient technology to access and participate in the course. The instructors will assume this and are not obligated to consider technological difficulties when assessing the student’s work.

Minimum technological requirements

- Web Browser – You will need the latest version of the web browser you are using (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, Google Chrome, etc.). Note that not all browsers work

equally well with Moodle, so you may need to experiment with them if you have difficulty using all the functions on the site. (I use Firefox and have never had issues.)

- Operating System – In order to use the latest browser, you will need to have an operating system (Windows, Mac OS, etc.) that is up-to-date enough to handle it. Please be certain you have such an operating system.
- Internet Connection – You will need a high-speed internet connection that is sufficient to run streaming video with no difficulty. Usually, cable and DSL connections can do this. Dial up cannot. If your home internet connection is not sufficient to provide this kind of connection, you will need to find access to a computer that does have this connection.
- Hardware – Bear in mind that you will need sufficient computing power in terms of memory, speed, audio, and video for the various aspects of this course to work well. Make certain that you have all of these in place so that you can run the necessary software and fully participate on-line.
- MicroSoft Teams- Please make certain you have a stable enough connection to sustain Teams and familiarize yourself with it.

Moodle

In addition to the weekly lecture this course will be delivered through the Moodle software Garrett-Evangelical uses. Please be certain you can log on to Moodle before the course begins. Once it is available, the course name will appear on your Moodle list. Most of the course material can be found here.

When you click on the course name, you will see a screen with the title of the course and our contact information. As you scroll down, you will see that the content of the course is contained in several large boxes, each with the title of the topic of the week. The course is organized around a series of activities that are in each of these boxes. Within each box you will find a series of hyperlinks. These links will connect you to readings that are available online or a variety of assignments you need to complete. You will have to click each of these to access the documents and assignments that are required in the course. This syllabus will explain the organization of the course and the activities that students are expected to accomplish in each section.

Course Requirements

Objectives

The main purpose of this class is to equip students to engage in the work of “antiracism.” To accomplish this, students should learn the following:

1. Articulate their social location and how that influences their attitudes toward racial constructs;
2. Learn the history of racialization, critical race theory, and globalized racism;
3. Critique white privilege;
4. Understand what it means to engage in the work of antiracism;
5. Engage in informed, critical, and constructive conversation regarding race that results in action;
6. See the implications of racialization for gender, class, religion, criminal justice, and reparations.

Readings

- Gómez, Laura E. *Inventing Latinos: A New Story of American Racism*. New York: The New Press, 2022. ISBN: 978-1620977613, \$17.99. Also available as an audio book.
- Gossett, Thomas F. *Race: The History of an Idea in America*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. ISBN: 1684227909, \$19.95.
- Gordon-Reed, Annette. *Racism in America: A Reader*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2020. (3) ASIN- B08FK3GKVC. Chapters will be assigned. This may be downloaded for free at: <https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674251687>
- Harvey, Jennifer. *Dear White Christians: for Those Still Longing for Racial Reconciliation*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014. ISBN: 0802872077, \$13.55.
- Tisby, Jemar. *The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2019. ISBN: 0310597269, \$12.76.

Consult Moodle for additional reading material, a select bibliography, and a proposed class schedule.

Required Assignments

1. Class Participation

Participation and discussion will be crucial to this class. There will be assignments made as preparation for group discussion periodically. The best way hold each other accountable for this is to assign a 'class participation' grade, which will be 15%.

2. Your Identity and Social Location

On the first day of class you will be asked to share the following five social location identifiers as they apply to you: 1. "Gender" (and preferred pronouns), 2. "Race," 3. Economic class, 4. Religion/denomination, 5. City of origin. Then, you will be asked to respond to the following: Which of these do you think about most often? Which of these do you think about least often? Which of these would like to learn more about? How can we make class agreements to honor each other's identities? (10% of final grade)

(Dupree-Dominguez, Molleen N. "Social Location Project." *Teaching Theology & Religion* 22, no. 1 (2019): 53–53.) This will be a part of the class participation grade.

3. Land Acknowledgement

Using the resources provided on Moodle write a land acknowledgement for a location that is important to you. It could be where you live, where you were born, or where you go to church. See Moodle for guidelines in writing a land acknowledgement. (10% of final grade)

4. Presentation on a topic to be determined with the instructor.

This may be a paper (1200 words, +-10%), a slide (PowerPoint) or multimedia presentation (12-15 minutes long, and 20% of final grade) taken from the following, and presented on a date TBD:

1. White evangelical racism.
2. Globalized racialization.
3. Racialized immigration.

4. Economic disparities.
5. Racialization, redlining, and housing.
6. Racialized differences in health care.
7. Racialized differences in education.
8. The prison industrial complex.
9. Palestine as a matter of race and settler colonialism.
10. A theological critique of *Project 2025*.

5. Final Paper

Masters students are expected to write one paper 2,500 words in length (+- 10%) on a topic of the student's choosing in consultation with the instructors (45% of final grade).

Paper submission guidelines:

- a. Written assignments are to be submitted to "Turnitin" on Moodle.
- b. They must be submitted in a Microsoft Word or a compatible format.
- c. Assignments must conform to Turabian (see, "Styles and Manual Guides" at <http://www.garrett.edu/library/citation.htm> or, <http://www.eturabian.com/turabian/index.html>).
- d. **All file names for papers MUST EXACTLY be named using the following format:**
StudentLastName_FirstInitial_THEO650_F25_Final
For example, Bryant_B_THEO650_F25_Final

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