

CRITICAL SOCIAL THOUGHT

Overview and Contact Information

The Program in Critical Social Thought is designed for students who want to interrogate cultural and social phenomena outside the confines of traditional disciplinary boundaries with the goal of analyzing relations of power embedded in knowledge production and social life. Students apply critical thought from a wide array of intellectual traditions, including critical ethnic studies, performance studies, disability studies, the history of science, psychoanalysis, Marxism, the Frankfurt School, critical race studies, queer theory, feminist theory, and postcolonial theory. Critical Social Thought puts less emphasis on the social, cultural, or scientific objects under study than on its distinctive, interdisciplinary methodology in which student-driven inquiry and research combines theoretical and social critique with a concern for addressing pressing social issues.

The Critical Social Thought major and minor are available only to students who entered the College before fall 2023. Students entering fall 2023 or later should instead refer to Critical Race and Political Economy (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/critical-race-political-economy/>) (CRPE) for its Critical Social Thought pathway. Students who entered before fall 2023 and who will graduate in May 2024 or later are eligible to choose either the Critical Social Thought major or the Critical Social Thought pathway within the CRPE major, after consulting with the chair of the CRPE department.

See Also

- Critical Race and Political Economy (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/critical-race-political-economy/>)

Contact Information

David Hernández, Co-chair

Vanessa Rosa, Co-chair

Bridget Barrett, Academic Department Coordinator

Learning Goals

The learning goals of Critical Social Thought are:

- Interrogate pressing social and cultural issues outside of traditional disciplinary boundaries.
- Analyze the relations of power in knowledge production and social life.
- Apply interdisciplinary methodology informed by an array of critical traditions.
- Conduct independent research on a self-designed course of study.

Faculty

This area of study is administered by the Department of Critical Race and Political Economy:

Kristie Ford, Professor of Sociology and Critical Race and Political Economy

Lucas Wilson, Professor of Economics and Critical Race and Political Economy on the Ford Foundation

David Hernández, Associate Professor of Latinx Studies and Critical Race and Political Economy

Ren-yo Hwang, Associate Professor of Gender Studies and Critical Race and Political Economy

Vanessa Rosa, Associate Professor of Latinx Studies and Critical Race and Political Economy, On Leave 2024-2025

Maria Abello Hurtado, Assistant Professor of Africana Studies and Critical Race and Political Economy

Pilar Eguez Guevara, Visiting Assistant Professor in Critical Race and Political Economy

Alexis Holloway, Mount Holyoke Fellow and Visiting Instructor in Critical Race and Political Economy

Requirements for the Major

A minimum of 40 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
CRPE-205	Foundations in Critical Social Thought	4
Two courses at the 200 level from the approved course list for Critical Social Thought		8
Two courses at the 300 level from the approved course list for Critical Social Thought		8
One capstone seminar to complete a senior capstone project ¹		4
Two electives at the 300 level across two departments/programs from the approved course list for Critical Social Thought		8
Two additional electives at any level from the approved course list for Critical Social Thought		8
Total Credits		40

¹ Students enroll in CRPE-392/GNDST-392 to fulfill this requirement. In the event that there are insufficient numbers of graduating seniors to fill this class, students will complete their capstone projects through independent study or in another 300 level seminar. The capstone project is a thesis, research paper, performance, or multimedia project that serves as a culminating intellectual experience of a self-designed course of study. Normally this project will be completed in the capstone seminar.

Other Requirements

- Declaring the major. Students who wish to major in critical social thought will meet with the program chair to discuss their major interest and to select two advisors from the program faculty.
- Proposal. Submitted after completion of CRPE-205 and prior to declaring the major. Students must submit a 2-3 page proposal that identifies the focus of their course of study, explains its genesis and significance, and includes an annotated list of the courses they have and intend to take for credit in their major. Students will submit the proposal to their two advisors for approval before submitting it to the chair.

Additional Specifications

- The Critical Social Thought major and minor are available only to students who entered the College before fall 2023. Students entering fall 2023 or later should instead refer to Critical Race and Political Economy (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/critical-race-political-economy/>) (CRPE).

- No more than a total of 8 credits of independent study (CRPE-295 or 395, or before fall 2023 CST-295 or 395) may be counted toward the major in addition to 8 credits of CRPE-395 senior thesis work.
- Students who declare a critical social thought major automatically fulfill the College's "outside the major" requirement.

Requirements for the Minor

A minimum of 20 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
CRPE-205	Foundations in Critical Social Thought	4
One course at the 200 level from the approved course list for Critical Social Thought		4
One course at the 300 level from the approved course list for Critical Social Thought		4
One elective at the 200 or 300 level from the approved course list for Critical Social Thought		4
One elective at the 300 level from the approved course list for Critical Social Thought		4
Total Credits		20

Other Requirements

- Declaring the minor. Students who wish to minor in critical social thought shall meet with the program chair to discuss their minor interest and to select an advisor from the program faculty.
- Proposal. Submitted after completion of CRPE-205 and prior to declaring the minor. To declare the minor, students must submit a 2-3 page proposal that identifies the focus of their course of study, explains its genesis and significance, and includes an annotated list of the courses they have and intend to take for credit in their minor. Students will submit the proposal to their advisor for approval before submitting it to the chair.

Additional Specifications

- The Critical Social Thought major and minor are available only to students who entered the College before fall 2023. Students entering fall 2023 or later should instead refer to Critical Race and Political Economy (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/critical-race-political-economy/>) (CRPE).
- No more than a total of 4 credits of independent study (CRPE-295 or 395, or before fall 2023 CST-295 or 395) may be counted toward the minor.

Courses Meeting Requirements for Critical Social Thought

Code	Title	Credits
Anthropology		
ANTHR-216WC	Special Topics in Anthropology: 'Writing Capitalism's Ruins'	4
ANTHR-342	Science as Culture	4
ANTHR-352	Digital Cultures	4
Art Studio		
ARTST-380TX	Advanced Topics in Art Studio: 'Abolition and Radical Textiles'	4
Critical Race & Political Econ		
CRPE-205	Foundations in Critical Social Thought	4

CRPE-208	Introduction to Twentieth-Century Critical Race Theory	4
CRPE-228	Visualizing Immigrant Narratives: Migration in Film	4
CRPE-239	Latinx Urbanism	4
CRPE-240FD	Intermediate Topics: 'U.S. Latinx Foodways'	4
CRPE-244	The Historical-Grammar of Black Feminist Thought Across the Caribbean and the Americas	4
CRPE-254	Nueva York	4
CRPE-256	Trap Doors and Glittering Closets: Queer/Trans* of Color Politics of Recognition, Legibility, Visibility and Aesthetics	4
CRPE-257	Transforming Justice and Practicing Truth to Power: Critical Methodologies and Methods in Community Participatory Action Research and Accountability	4
CRPE-261	Race, Racism, and Power	4
CRPE-308	Luminous Darkness: African American Social Thought After DuBois	4
CRPE-323	Latina Feminism(s)	4
CRPE-339	Abolitionist Dreams And Everyday Resistance: Freedom Memoirs, Struggles, and Decolonizing Justice	4
CRPE-352	Latina/o/x Studies in Action	4
CRPE-356	Latinas/os/x and Housing: Mi Casa Is Not Su Casa	4
CRPE-364	Critical Refugee Studies	4
CRPE-366	Disposable People: A History of Deportation	4
CRPE-371	Free Them All: Abolition Feminism and Anticarceral Action Research	4
CRPE-372	Transforming Harm and Mutual Aid: A Transformative Justice Lab	4
CRPE-373	Abolition and Radical Textiles	4
CRPE-374	Latinx Immigration	4
CRPE-392	Senior Seminar	4
Economics		
ECON-210	Marxian Economic Theory	4
ECON-306	Political Economy of Inequality	4
ECON-349EC	Advanced Topics in Economics: 'Analysis of Empire of Cotton'	4
English		
ENGL-257	Survey of African American Literature	4
ENGL-274	Introduction to Asian American Literature	4
ENGL-280	Literary and Cultural Theory	4
ENGL-325	Victorian Literature and Visual Culture	4
ENGL-334BG	Asian American Film and Visual Culture: 'Beyond Geishas and Kung Fu Masters'	4
ENGL-338	Aesthetics of Racial Capitalism	4
ENGL-350AB	Topics in African American Literature: 'Abolition and Climate Change'	4
ENGL-350AT	Topics in African American Literature: 'Race and the Aesthetics of Taste'	4
ENGL-368	Shapeshifting Through the Nineteenth Century and Beyond	4
ENGL-382AN	Advanced Topics in English: 'American Animality'	4
ENGL-382MX	Advanced Topics in English: 'I Would Prefer Not To: Marxism and Early American Literature'	4

ENGL-382PH	Advanced Topics in English: 'Linguistic Ideology, Power, and Hope'	4
ENGL-389	Revolution and Change in the Age of Necropolitics	4
Environmental Studies		
ENVST-150DV	Introductory Topics in Environmental Studies: 'Introduction to the Histories and Theories of Development'	4
ENVST-210	Political Ecology	4
ENVST-321CP	Conference Courses in Environmental Studies: 'Political Economy of the Environment: Capitalism and Climate Change'	4
Film, Media, Theater		
FMT-330PA	Advanced Courses in History and Theory: 'Natural's Not in It: Pedro Almodóvar'	4
FMT-330RR	Advanced Courses in History and Theory: 'Anti-Fascism in Film: Reel Revolutions'	4
Geography		
GEOG-206	Political Geography	4
GEOG-331	Water, People, and Politics in the Anthropocene	4
Gender Studies		
GNDST-122	Who Makes Your Clothes? Gender and Labor in the Global Apparel Industry	4
GNDST-204TJ	Women and Gender in the Study of Culture: 'Transforming Justice and Practicing Truth to Power: Critical Methodologies and Methods in Community Participatory Action Research and Accountability'	4
GNDST-206BF	Women and Gender in History: 'The Historical-Grammar of Black Feminist Thought Across the Caribbean and the Americas'	4
GNDST-206US	Women and Gender in the Study of History: 'U.S. Women's History since 1890'	4
GNDST-210SL	Women and Gender in Philosophy and Religion: 'Women and Gender in Islam'	4
GNDST-241PH	Women and Gender in Science: 'Pharmocracy: Empire by Molecular Means'	4
GNDST-241RA	Women and Gender in Science: 'Rethinking Aids'	4
GNDST-333EC	Advanced Seminar: 'Gender and Economic Development in the Global South'	4
GNDST-333EM	Advanced Seminar: 'Flesh and Blood: Naturecultural Embodiments'	4
GNDST-333MS	Advanced Seminar: 'Multi-Species Justice? Entangled Lives and Human Power'	4
GNDST-333PA	Advanced Seminar: 'Natural's Not in It: Pedro Almodóvar'	4
GNDST-333TH	Advanced Seminar: 'Transforming Harm and Mutual Aid: A Transformative Justice Lab'	4
GNDST-333TX	Advanced Seminar: 'Abolition and Radical Textiles'	4
GNDST-392	Senior Seminar	4
German Studies		
GRMST-205	Decentering Europe: An Introduction to Critical European Studies	4
GRMST-231YN	Topics in German and European Studies In a Global Context: 'Yiddish Nation: Language as Homeland'	4
History		

HIST-141	Introduction to Modern African History	4
HIST-276	U.S. Women's History Since 1890	4
HIST-277	History of Energy	4
HIST-279	Modern Civil Rights Movement	4
HIST-357	History of British Capitalism	4
Jewish Studies		
JWST-269	Citizens and Subjects: Jews in the Modern World	4
Latin American Studies		
LATAM-287DE	Topics in Latin American Studies: 'Decolonizing Development'	4
LATAM-287FM	Topics in Latin American Studies: 'Frames of Mind: Tracking Power/Knowledge'	4
Politics		
POLIT-234	Black Metropolis: From MLK to Obama	4
POLIT-252	Urban Politics	4
POLIT-355	Race and Housing	4
POLIT-387PD	Advanced Topics in Politics: 'Other Political Dreams'	4
Psychology		
PSYCH-213	Psychology of Racism	4
Religion		
RELIG-181	Introduction to African Diaspora Religions	4
RELIG-207	Women and Gender in Islam	4
RELIG-209	Disability and Religion	4
RELIG-225NR	Topics in Religion: 'Reimagining American Religious History: Race, Gender, and Alterity'	4
RELIG-248	Islam in America: From Slavery to the "Muslim Ban"	4
RELIG-267	Buddhist Ethics	4
RELIG-269	Citizens and Subjects: Jews in the Modern World	4
RELIG-331AF	Advanced Topics in Religion: 'African American Spiritualities of Dissent'	4
RELIG-352	Body and Gender in Religious Traditions	4
Sociology		
SOCI-214	Race in America: Inequality, Immigration, and Other Issues	4
SOCI-316RM	Special Topics in Sociology: 'Consumer Culture: Race in the Marketplace'	4
Spanish		
SPAN-230HY	Identities & Intersections: An Introduction: 'Hybrid Identities of the Spanish-Speaking World'	4
SPAN-250AT	Concepts and Practices of Power: 'The Agency of Things: Material Culture of Latin America, Spain, and the U.S. Border'	4
SPAN-340PA	Advanced Studies in Visual Cultures: 'Natural's Not in It: Pedro Almodóvar'	4
SPAN-340RR	Advanced Studies in Visual Cultures: 'Anti-Fascism in Film: Reel Revolutions'	4