

Race Matters: We need to talk about Race in and for International Social and Public Policy

Proposal by Sunil Kumar (SK) and Vanessa Hughes (VH)

Updated October 2020



Image source: <https://pixabay.com/photos/chess-chess-game-chess-pieces-king-1145557/>

We propose to organise three spaces for students and staff to talk about 'race' and its role and implications for understanding decolonised International Social and Public Policy. These are:

1. **Film showings and discussion:** This builds on the film showing initiative by VH in 2019-20.
 - a. **Format:** 1-2 films pr term. Co-organised with students.
 - b. **Time commitment** @ max of 1.5 hour of discussion per showing (3 hours per term). Students will watch films in their own time remotely.
 - c. **Audience:** All students and staff in Social Policy with a floating membership
 - d. **Race Matters:** Link to different subject matter raised in Social Policy courses
2. **Reading group:** Material in the form of literary text, poetry, op-eds, blogs and podcasts.
 - a. **Format:** 1-2 meetings per term.
 - b. **Time commitment:** @ 1.5 hours per session (3 hours per term).
 - c. **Participants:** All students who have done the reading (those who have not are welcome as 'listeners'). PhD students welcome to host or co-host.
 - d. **Participant Rotation:** Participants will change for each reading group
 - e. **Audience:** UG, PG and PhD students welcome to participate as 'listeners'.
 - f. **Race Matters:** The reading group will deal with: (i) distinct self-contained material relating to race in/and ISPP; and (ii) focus on a decolonised learning experience.
3. **Experiential Lived-Experience Group:** To provide safe spaces to discuss anti-racism and anti-discrimination of racial social groupings from around the world (such as, Dalits, indigenous and first nation peoples).
 - a. **Format:** 1-2 closed group meetings per term.
 - b. **Participants:** Composed of six to nine students each, one for students who identify as ethnic minority and one for those who identify as white.
 - c. **Time commitment:** @ 1.5 hour per meeting X 2 = 3 hours per term per term.
 - d. **Race Matters:** To enable participants to reflect on their lived experience and those of others close to them and to make connections with a decolonised ISPP. The racial groups to be discussed to be decided by the students in the experiential lived-experience group.

This proposal is not stand alone and will be linked to the student engagement role that Sunil is assigned. We also aim to link these activities to the idea of not only a decolonised curriculum but to a decolonialised education experience in general, and other related activities in the department.

Social Policy Department: potential actions

1. Encourage staff and students to adopt and run *Race Matters* spaces 2 and 3 above.
2. Make *Race Matters* a standing agenda item and link it to the EDI standing item. Use this opportunity to assess continuity of Department actions, especially for PG students who are here for a year. Build mechanisms for *Race Matters* continuity for UG and PhD students.
3. Allocate one Social Policy staff-student seminar slot to *Race Matters*. Presentations could be sought from academics, students, other LSE staff or outside speakers.
4. Develop opportunities for developing course-level peer group research in to *Race Matters*
5. Encourage blog-posts on *Race Matters* from students and staff.
6. Consider organising an end of year conference and/or exhibition on *Race Matters*.

Sunil Kumar and Vanessa Hughes

London, 17 June 2020.

Updated 1 October 2020.