

Race, Power, Privilege, Colonialism, and Consequences (RPPC) Course Tag Approval and Revision Rubric:

Since its inception, Bates has attempted to adhere to a principle of inclusion and has long recognized the morally complex and problematic history of structural systems of oppression that often maintain racism, white supremacy and (neo) colonialism. Graduates of Bates College are asked to engage the power of our differences, to take part in informed civic action, and to be leaders committed to responsible stewardship of the wider world. The college has long worked to adequately and concretely materialize these objectives within our educational practices. Our most recent efforts in 2021 have led to a curricular requirement addressing race, power, privilege, white supremacy, and colonialism (RPPC) in the United States and internationally. The courses addressing RPPC should promote student literacy in these matters and help students examine the role that institutions, cultures of practice, and the habits of mind play in maintaining the systems and structures of opportunity and oppression. This can include examination of our academic disciplines—how participation happens, who is able to participate, how knowledge is created, and what counts as knowledge within them—as well as the intersections of these systems with our existing general education curriculum.

Category	Tag Approval Criteria (proposals should address each category)
Coverage	<p>The course or modules distributed across more than one course must include course specific articulations of these three objectives (see below) that explicitly address race, power, privilege, colonialism, and their consequences.</p> <p>At least three of the five issues (Race, Power, Privilege, Colonialism, and Consequences) are addressed in the course or modules distributed across more than one course and the course gives substantial attention to these issues.</p> <p>An explanation is provided for whether the course or modules distributed across more than one course should have a designation of RPPC-US (US context) or RPPC-I (international context) or both.</p>
Course Objective 1: Understanding and Articulating Effects of RPPC	<p>Understand & Articulate</p> <p>A plan is in place to foreground RPPC topics, issues, and information (through a US and/or an international lens) in the course.</p> <p>A plan is in place to have students articulate the effects of RPPC through course activities and assignments.</p>
Course Objective 2: Relating Fundamental Concepts of RPPC to Discipline or Area of Inquiry	<p>Identify & Interpret</p> <p>A plan is in place to have students identify fundamental concepts, practices of scholarship, and/or structures of knowledge that relate to RPPC within a discipline, lens, or area of inquiry.</p> <p>A plan is in place to have students interpret ways in which RPPC has been perpetuated, challenged, or examined through various policies, actions, research, and/or scholarship within the discipline, lens, or area of inquiry.</p>
Course Objective 3: Build Capacity to Generate and Ask Real-World Questions about RPPC	<p>Evaluate & Create</p> <p>A plan is in place for students to evaluate the impact of historical and contemporary issues related to RPPC.</p> <p>A plan is in place for students to generate and engage with useful, real-world (contemporary or historical), and/or theoretical questions about RPPC.</p>

A brief narrative addressing how the coverage and three course objectives identified on the rubric will satisfy the requirement.

FAQs

What is “substantial attention”?

Articulating “substantial attention” with hard numbers or quotas is nearly impossible given the myriad ways in which such attention can be given among courses in a given unit and across all fields of study at the college, but the course or course modules should adequately address the course objectives. We also recognize that the underlying content necessary to engage issues of RPPC would be regarded as “substantial attention.” If the proposal is for the inclusion of modules distributed across more than one course, the accompanying syllabi for each course that will contain modules should also be included in the proposal.

What do we mean by “race”?

We recognize that some ancient and contemporary cultures may not use the term “race.” “Race” might be defined and understood differently in non-US contexts and different words might be used to indicate “race.” In such cases, we understand this word to also mean an equivalent or adjacent concept. We expect that each unit’s approach to broader questions of social justice will guide each faculty member in designing their syllabi and course objectives to align with the RPPC criteria. Because race is a central component of RPPC, we hope this explanation will help faculty contextualize it in their proposed courses.

What are the qualities of “coverage” that we are striving for, and what does it mean to “foreground” it?

We encourage an integrated, rather than additive approach to RPPC. We hope people will be able to employ theories and approaches that function as lenses rather than examples (although examples are welcome too)!

What are the expectations for “modules distributed across more than one course”?

The expectations are the same as for a course. The narrative should explicitly address how the course objectives will be met by the total of the modules, regardless of how many courses they are distributed across. Additionally, the plan should clearly address how it will ensure that students are required to sign up for multiple courses and how it will ensure that faculty teaching each course will coordinate and guarantee the stated coverage for each course.

Suggestions for Proposals

- Please aim for 1 to 3 double spaced pages.
- Explicitly address the coverage and each of the three course objectives, as well as whether you view your course as RPPC-US or RPPC-I or both.
- Throughout your narrative, please clearly indicate which of the course objectives you are addressing.

Anecdotal Experience

While practicing this with our own proposals, members of the RPPC committee each turned in something different looking. What was consistent across our proposals was the centering of the coverage and the three course objectives in whatever form that took. We think the goals of the proposal can be met through a longer narrative (using parentheticals or bold to indicate the objective addressed), a question/answer format where each of the objectives is addressed in turn, or even inserting responses and explanations within the “approval criteria” section of the rubric itself. Please do what makes sense for you. We’re happy to answer questions about submitting your proposal.