

UMBC DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

invites you to a talk by

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Wednesday September 28th, 2016

LIBRARY GALLERY

4:00 pm

“THE CASE FOR RACIAL PLURALISM”

Abstract:

Metaphysicians of race have produced several theories about the nature and reality of race as ‘race’ is used in current, ordinary American English. However, despite creating over a dozen US race theories, philosophers have yet to produce a race theory that accurately predicts all of the diverse ways that American people use ‘race’ and race terms. For instance, Haslanger’s race theory does not predict the racial self-reporting patterns for 63% of Hispanic Americans and 97% of Arab Americans on college applications, job applications, and other official forms. Glasgow’s and Taylor’s race theories inaccurately predict that Americans will not recognize visibly indistinguishable races like Mexicans and Pacific Islanders. And the list continues. In this talk, I will locate the underlying problem for US race theories as being a metametaphysical commitment to *racial monism*—the view that there is a single nature and reality for race. In response, I will argue for racial pluralism as the correct metametaphysical stance in the US race debate; *racial pluralism* states that there are multiple natures and realities for race. In the process, I will sketch a partial, pluralist race theory for the US context. Finally, I will discuss important implications of racial pluralism for moral and political work in the philosophy of race.

*co-sponsored by the Department of Africana Studies, the Department of Biology,
the Department of Sociology & Anthropology, and the Department of Economics*