COURSE DESCRIPTION

In 1903, W.E.B. DuBois presciently declared that “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line.” With the dawning of the twenty-first century and the election of the first black U.S. president, many Americans now believe that the color line is no longer a problem and that racial divides are a thing of the past. Social scientific research, however, shows that racial inequalities remain stark, that racial attitudes are still driving forces in American politics, and that continuing immigration stands to reshape the U.S. racial landscape. In this class, we will examine these claims and trends in order to understand what race is, why racial inequalities persist, and with what consequences.

The class is split into three sections. The first explores the major themes and concepts in the study of race and ethnicity. As we study the history of major U.S. racial categories, we will define and debate the meaning of terms like race, ethnicity, ideology, racialization, prejudice, racism, and discrimination. Examining categories like White, Black, Arab, Asian, Latino, and Native American, we will examine how these terms and groups came to be and what it means to identify as or be identified as each today.

The second course section is divided into three parts: poverty, wealth, and work; crime and criminal justice; and education. In each, we will examine different explanations for enduring racial inequality in the United States. Through our readings and class discussions we will debate social-psychological, cultural, structural, and political explanations for racial inequality. The third course section tackles new and emerging forms of racism, from colorblind ideology to coded racial appeals.

By the end of the course students should be able to:
* Explain what scholars mean when they say that race is a social construction
* Understand and articulate the histories of different racial groups in the U.S.
* Compare, contrast, and apply theories of racial inequality
* Articulate different stances on racialized political issues and support them with evidence
* Explain how historical racial inequalities manifest themselves today

ASSESSMENT

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Responses &amp; Homework</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section Papers (3)</td>
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IMPORTANT DATES

Thursday, January 15  Reading response required
Tuesday, February 10  First section paper due, 12:30pm via Sakai
Tuesday, February 17  Homework assignment due, 12:30pm via Sakai
Tuesday, April 7  Second section paper due, 12:30pm via Sakai
Thursday, May 7  Third section due, 9:00am via Sakai

GRADING SCALE (Grades will not be rounded up)

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<th>Grade</th>
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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation: This is a discussion-based class which requires your active participation. Being an active participant means you regularly share your thoughts, observations, and questions about the readings during our in-class conversations. General guidelines for good participation include:

- Come to class on time
- Do the readings and bring them (and your notes) with you
- Be engaged (NO texting, email, Facebook, sleeping, etc)
- Ask thoughtful questions during discussions
- Volunteer answers to others' questions
- Be respectful of others
- Question your own assumptions

Reading Responses: As a way to initiate class discussion and confirm that you’re doing the readings and thinking about them critically, you are required to prepare 16 typed reading responses over the course of the semester. You are required to submit a response for the first day of readings. After that, you will decide when to submit your remaining 15 responses. Responses should be one to two typed, double-spaced pages. Responses are due via Sakai at 11am the day of class. No exceptions will be made for late assignments. Responses will be graded plus, check, or minus. All 15 responses must be completed by the last day of class. Full details and suggestions are on Sakai.

Homework: There is one homework assignment for this course. It requires you to take an online implicit association test and reflect on the results. You may choose to do a reading response on the days these assignments are due or you may opt not to. The homework assignments are due at 11am the day of class via Sakai. Full details are on Sakai.

Section Papers: At the close of each course section, you will submit a 4-6 page paper reflecting on the section readings. I will provide a prompt for you to respond to (or, sometimes multiple prompts from which you can select). However, if you would like to write about something other than my prompt I am happy to discuss your ideas. For example, I might give you a quote to discuss and
analyze in the prompt, but you can decide instead to analyze music lyrics or a media controversy using our course readings. All topics must be vetted by me in advance. Full details and suggestions are on Sakai.

COURSE POLICIES

Discussion Guidelines: During this class we will have the opportunity to share our views on a range of issues as we illuminate sociological perspectives on race and ethnicity. Our readings and discussions may arouse strong feelings, opinions, values, and differences between us. We will recognize and acknowledge such differences as learning opportunities. However, at the same time, we will approach this complex topic systematically, meaning that anecdote and personal experiences while valuable do not, in and of themselves, constitute fact. No individual will be expected to represent a particular worldview or experience; neither will any individual experience be treated as representative. Our goal is to put our collective experiences into conversation with scholarly thought, so please come to class prepared to engage with others on those terms. You should not enroll in this course if you are uncomfortable discussing difficult topics with respect and tolerance. We will review these guidelines on the first day of class and work together to set class ground rules that will guide our discussions this term.

Attendance Policy & Missed Classes: I will not take attendance. Students are adults with various obligations that might require them to miss class from time to time. Also, students are people, and people sometimes get sick and need to stay home and get better. While repeated absences will affect the course participation grade, unless there is something going on in your life that will cause you to miss many classes, you do not need to get in touch with me when you are absent. If, however, you have something going on that will result in many absences, please let me know sooner rather than later. I do not share lecture notes or provide recaps of missed classes. If you want to know what was covered in class on a day you missed, you should (i) check Sakai for new resources and announcements, (ii) ask another student for notes and updates (you can use Sakai mail to contact others even if you don’t have any personal email addresses), and (iii) come to my office hours if you have questions after that.

Sakai Submissions: I ask you to submit your assignments on Sakai, but sometimes (especially in the middle of the night) Sakai shuts down for maintenance or fails to process submissions. Please try to submit your assignments via Sakai, but if you can’t or are concerned that your submission did not go through, you can always email me your assignment with the assignment name in the subject line.

Students with Learning Disabilities: If you have a disability that may require an accommodation for taking this course, please contact the Learning Assistance Center (758-5929) within the first two weeks of the semester. Please also notify me within the first two weeks of class if you require modified instructional procedures.

Cell phones should be turned OFF during class. Laptops should be used only for note-taking or in-class assignments.

Honor Code Violations: ANY suspected honor code violation will be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs.
Sick Policy: If you are sick, please do not come to class. Instead, visit Student Health. There you should ask for a document that excuses you from class for a specific period of time. This document is required to make up missed assignments or exams.

Late Assignments: You will be given ample notice of all deadlines for this class. Extensions will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. Late assignments (section papers and final assignments) will be penalized half a grade (five points) for each day they are late. Late homework assignments, reading responses, and short papers will not be accepted except in exceptional situations.

Grade Disputes: All grade disputes must be submitted in writing within one week of the day the assignment is returned to you. In your written response, you must explain – giving specific examples from your assignment and my comments – why you believe you received the wrong grade. I will re-grade the assignment, but your grade may go up or down with the re-grade.

Winter Weather Plan: In the event that the university closes due to snow or ice, read and study the required course materials on your own. The professor will contact you with explicit instructions on making up the missed class. In some cases, course materials (e.g. a narrated PowerPoint) may be made available online.

Disaster Plan: In the event that the university closes due to pandemic or other disaster, read and study the required course materials on your own. Reading quizzes (distributed over Sakai, if the internet is available, or by postal service if the internet is not available) must be completed to test your comprehension of the readings. Submit any other required assignments via Sakai or by postal mail to the professor. You will be mailed or emailed any relevant exams with explicit instructions. The return date will be specified in the mailings. If the internet is available, the professor will be available for office hours using Webex and Google messaging (brownhe).

REQUIRED BOOKS


*Students should also purchase the course reader.*
*Readers are available at the bookstore.*
COURSE READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, January 13 - Welcome and Introduction

Course introduction; class ground rules

Section 1: Race as a Social Construction

Thursday, January 15 - Conceptualizing Race and Racial Ideology


Reading Response: Required

Tuesday, January 20 – Constructing Blackness


Thursday, January 22 – No Class

We will not meet today. Use the extra time to get started on next week’s readings.

Tuesday, January 27 – Whiteness as Construct and Position


Thursday, January 29 – Asians: The Model Minority?


Tuesday, February 3 – Are Latinos a Race?


Thursday, February 5 – Constructing Native Americans


Tuesday, February 10 – FIRST PAPER DUE

No Class. Submit your papers by 12:30pm via Sakai.

Section 2: Explanations for Enduring Racial Inequality

Thursday, February 12 – Poverty, Work, and Wealth: Cultural Arguments


Tuesday, February 17 – Poverty, Work, and Wealth: Discrimination and Implicit Bias


Homework: After doing today’s readings, take an implicit association test like the ones discussed in the Gladwell chapter. Please follow the instructions on Sakai and submit your response there by 11am the day of class.
Thursday, February 19 – Poverty, Work, and Wealth: Economy, Segregation, and Social Capital


Tuesday, February 24 – Poverty, Work, and Wealth: Public Policy Arguments


Thursday, February 26 – Education: Cultural Arguments


Tuesday, March 3 – Education: Cultural Arguments


Thursday, March 5 – Education: Cultural Arguments


Tuesday, March 10 – Spring Break

No Class

Thursday, March 12 – Spring Break

No Class

Tuesday, March 17 – Education: Structural Arguments

Thursday, March 19 – Education: Structural Arguments

Tyson, Karolyn. 2011. Integration Interrupted: Tracking, Black Students, and Acting White after Brown. Oxford University Press, USA. (Read Chapter 3 and Conclusion, Skim Chapter 4)

Tuesday, March 24 – Crime, Law, and Criminal Justice: Racial Caste Systems


Thursday, March 26 – No Class

I’m away at a conference today so take the extra time to get started on the next reading!

Tuesday, March 31 - Crime, Law, and Criminal Justice: Racial Caste Systems


Thursday, April 2 – Crime, Law, and Criminal Justice: Racial Caste Systems


Tuesday, April 7 – Paper 2 Due

No Class. Submit your papers by 12:30pm via Sakai.

Section 3: The New Racism

Thursday, April 9 – Colorblindess


Tuesday, April 14 – Coded Racial Appeals


Thursday, April 16 – Coded Racial Appeals


Tuesday, April 21 – Coded Racial Appeals


Thursday, April 23 – Coded Racial Appeals


Tuesday, April 28 – Intersectionality


Third Section Assignments Due May 7 at 9am on Sakai.