

Race Relations

01:920:306:04

Tuesdays and Fridays/10:55 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Douglass Campus, CDL 109

Course website: sakai.rutgers.edu

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Office Hours: Thursdays 12:30 to 2 p.m. and by appointment

Douglass Campus, Davison Hall, room 041

Overview

You may be familiar with the idea that “race is a social construction,” but how do racial constructions affect our lives? In this course, we’ll discuss how race and ethnicity in the United States have very real consequences in everyday life. The categorization, classification and identification of people by distinct racial and ethnic groups highlights differences in power, equality and mobility, while also affirming stereotypes—all themes we’ll explore throughout the semester. Questions we’ll consider are: Why have some racial groups “successfully” assimilated and others haven’t? Given immigration and diversification patterns, what is the future of whiteness in America? Does the nation’s first Black president signal a major shift in race relations? How do the media shape perceptions of race?

We’ll also explore theories about the color line in the United States, intersectionality, racial identity, diversity and immigration. Along with examining these theories, we consider their relevance to the experiences of different racial groups as well as take into consideration recent demographic shifts, trends in interracial marriage, the development of “multiracial” identities, and health, education, workforce and crime outcomes.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to clearly articulate the following:

- How race and ethnicity are socially constructed
- Apply sociological concepts about race to everyday life
- How race and ethnicity shape different life chances (including health , workforce, class and educational outcomes)
- Contemporary theories of race relations in the United States
- Specific forms of racial inequality and ways to address these inequalities

Materials

All assigned readings will be available on the course website, through the “resources” tab in the “Readings” folder.

Please keep in mind that many of the readings in this course have been selected for you to think critically about contemporary racial issues. You will encounter a range of writing from news stories to blog posts to academic publications.

Academic Integrity

The short version of this policy is to do your own work. We will uphold the university's policies regarding academic integrity, which can be found at <http://ctaar.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html>. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism or related topics please ask.

Classroom Expectations

This class explores issues that might invoke strong emotions. Therefore, you are expected to think openly and critically. You do not have to agree with the readings or others in the class, however you need to approach them with a critical and an open mind. You will find that not everyone will agree with you on principles that are important to you, and thus, listening to and engaging with others' points of view will be a valuable learning experience. Interesting and valuable discussions are best in an environment where everyone is comfortable to openly discuss and question their ideas and thoughts.

Even though this is not a small class, group work and participation will be essential to learning the material. Therefore, you are expected to read the assigned material before class in order to meaningfully participate in class discussions, group work and debates. This is a class for students who are committed to learning and applying the sociological imagination to their daily lives and the texts, and who are willing to challenge themselves. I understand that some people might be hesitant to openly discuss issues of race and racism in society; however, in this class, we are all responsible for creating a safe environment for intellectual discussion and learning. It is required that you are respectful to others and that you use sociological analyses in your discussions.

The Department of Sociology encourages the free exchange of ideas in a safe, supportive, and productive classroom environment. To facilitate such an environment, students and faculty must act with mutual respect and common courtesy. Thus, behavior that distracts students and faculty is not acceptable. Such behavior includes cell phone use, surfing the internet, checking email, text messaging, listening to music, reading newspapers, leaving and returning, leaving early without permission, discourteous remarks, and other behaviors specified by individual instructors. Courteous and lawful expression of disagreement with the ideas of the instructor or fellow students is, of course, permitted.

If a student engages in disruptive behavior, the instructor, following the University Code of Student Conduct, may direct the student to leave class for the remainder of the class period. Serious verbal assaults, harassment, or defamation of the instructor or other students can lead to university disciplinary proceedings. The University Code of Student Conduct is at <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/judaff/ucsc.shtml>.

Seek Help Early! If you are having difficulties keeping up with the class, please come see me as soon as possible. I can help you to read more effectively, take better class notes, and comprehend the materials more fully. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to come talk to me.

Email

I don't want to delete your e-mails by accident so please make sure to include a meaningful subject line (e.g., "question about second assignment") and your name somewhere in the email. I will do our best to respond within 24-48 hours if not sooner. Make sure to use cbedley@sociology.rutgers.edu when sending emails. If you have not received a response within 72 hours, please resend your email.

In addition, I will post regularly on Sakai. The default email address I have for you is your official Rutgers address.

It is your responsibility to update your address with the university should you wish to use a different email address. You are responsible for all information I announce via email and Sakai.

Diversity Statement

The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives among our faculty and students and seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue. We have **zero tolerance for violations of these principles and have instituted clear and respectful procedures for responding to such grievances.**

Special Accommodations

If you need accommodations please speak with me during the first week of class. Visit the disability services website at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/> for more information.

Grading

Participation (weekly memos)	15%
In Class Assignments	5%
Exam I	25%
Exam II	25%
Final Presentation Outline	5%
Final Presentation	25%

Grading Scale:

A	90-100 %
B+	86-89%
B	80-85%
C+	76-79%
C	70-75%
D	60-69%
F	59% or below

Assignments

Weekly Memos (15%)

You must submit 15 memos on the weekly readings. Memos are to be one-half page to one page in length, double spaced. Memos can be brief syntheses of the weekly readings, but should focus on raising questions for further discussion. I will grade these on a pass/fail basis. **Memos must be posted onto Sakai the day on which the readings**

are assigned, before class begins. For example, a memo reflecting on the reading titled “The Importance of Collecting Data and Doing Scientific Research on Race” must be submitted no later than 10:55 am on Friday, September 4th. **I will not accept late memos.**

In Class Assignments (5%)

Some assignments will be completed in class. These assignments are designed to improve your critical thinking skills, allow you the opportunity to work in small groups and to discuss the topics covered in lecture in greater detail. A secondary purpose is to provide an incentive to attend class since these assignments will only be accepted during class. Please bring paper and pen/pencil to class with you daily in order to participate in these assignments.

Exams (2 exams, 25% each)

Exams will consist of 25 to 30 multiple choice questions (including fill in the blank and true/false) based on readings, videos and class lecture/discussions. Exams are not cumulative. There is no final exam for this course.

Final Presentation (25%)

The final presentation for this course will be a group presentation. Working in groups of 4 to 5 students, you will present on a class theme, extending prior discussion on the topic chosen. The format of the presentations should be a Microsoft Powerpoint (or comparable visual format, such as Prezi) and should be 20-25 minutes in length. More details about this presentation including the outline, how groups will be assigned, and how the presentation will be graded are to follow. An outline for the presentation will be submitted several weeks prior to your presentation. Following the presentation, you are required to write a one paragraph reflection piece about the group’s dynamics and your contribution to the group. Details to follow.

Class Outline

Week 1	Tuesday, September 1 st	Introduction to Course Overview of syllabus Classroom Expectations Videos: “A Conversation with White People about Race” (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/01/opinion/a-conversation-with-white-people-on-race.html) and <i>The Power of Illusion</i>
	September 4 th	Foundations in Race and Ethnicity Review of Basic Concepts in Race and Ethnicity Importance of Studying Race and Ethnicity Lessons from <i>The Power of Illusion</i> Readings Due: “The Importance of Collecting Data and Doing Scientific Research on Race”, Watch Adebayo’s “According to science there’s no such thing as race” (http://www.iflscience.com/environment/science-says-there-no-such-thing-race)
	September	No Class (Monday Class Schedule)

Week 2	8 th	
	September 11 th	Racial Theories Racial Formations The Color Line Ethnic Options <i>Readings Due:</i> Gallagher, Chapter 3, “Racial Formations” and Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only?
Week 3	September 15 th	Racial Theories (continued) Intersectionality Colorblindness Racial Hierarchy <i>Readings Due:</i> Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, “Racism without Racists”, John Blake “The New Threat: Racism without Racists”, Nathan Palmer “Life at the Intersectionality of Race, Class and Gender”, Gans’ “New Racial Hierarchy for the 21 st Century”
	September 18 th	Racism Prejudice Attitudes Implicit Bias <i>Readings Due:</i> Bobo “Laissez-Faire Racism”, Nathan Pyle “The Day I Started to Acknowledge Systemic Racism”, Shankar Vedantam “How to Fight Racial Bias When It’s Silent and Subtle”, Jaeun Park “The Pain of Casual Racism”
Week 4	September 22 nd	Racism (cont) Group positioning Forms of Racism Discrimination <i>Readings Due:</i> Herbert Blumer “Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position” AND Read one of the following: Lawrence Graham “I Taught My Black Kids that Their Elite Upbringing Would Protect Them from Discrimination. I was Wrong.”, Jeffries’ “Rachel Dolezal a lesson in how racism works”
	September 25 th	White Privilege Types of Privilege Blame/Guilt <i>Readings Due:</i> “Explaining White Privilege to a Broke White

		Person”, Peggy McIntosh’s “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”, Cohen’s “Douchebag the White Racial Slur We’ve All Been Waiting For”, Watch “What do band-aids, bras, and Bilbo Baggins have to do with White privilege?” (http://www.mtv.com/news/2195115/things-white-people-take-for-granted-decoded/)
Exam Week 5	September 29 th	Review for Exam
	October 2 nd	Exam I
Week 6	October 6 th	Immigration Demographics Trends Citizenship Status <i>Readings Due:</i> Jose Vargas “My Life as an Undocumented Immigrant”, Eli Saslow “In a Crowded Immigration Court, Seven Minutes to Decide a Family’s Future” AND Read one of the following: “Native American Council Offers Amnesty”, Alison Vingiano “ ‘Orange is the New Black’ Actress Opens Up About Her Family’s Deportation”
	October 9 th	Multiracials Identity/Identification Interracial Marriage <i>Readings Due:</i> Lisa Funderberg “The Changing Face of America”, Omilaju Miranda “I’m Listening. What My Mixed Race Daughter is Teaching Me about Ethnicity”, “Blaxicans of L.A.: Capturing Two Cultures in One”
Week 7	October 13 th	Race and the Media Stereotypes Representation (or lack thereof) <i>Readings Due:</i> “Winnebagos, Cherokees, Apaches, and Dakotas: The Persistence of Stereotyping of American Indians in American Advertising and Brands”, Kelley Carter “Inside Hollywood’s Shocking Blackface Problem”, “7 Things About Asian-Americans You’ll Never Learn From the Mainstream Media”
	October 16 th	Race and the Media (cont) Race in News Reporting Racial Messages in Advertising

		<p>Readings Due: “Broadcast News Portrayal of Minorities: Accuracy in Reporting” and “When The Media Treats White Suspects And Killers Better Than Black Victims”, “Shooters of color are called terrorists and thugs. Why are white shooters called mentally ill?”</p>
Week 8	October 20 th	<p>Race and Work Employment Discrimination Racialized Industries</p> <p>Readings Due: Alanna Petroff “Bank of American Fined \$2 Million for Race Discrimination”, Carmen Nobel “The Case Against Racial Colorblindness in the Workplace”</p>
	October 23 rd	<p>Race and Education Racial Bias in Standardized Testing Educational Degrees by Race</p> <p>Video: A Tale of Two Schools</p> <p>Readings Due: “Want to Help Marginalized Students in Schools? Stop ‘Stop and Frisk’ and Other Punitive Practices, Too” and “New Evidence of Racial Bias on the SAT”, Utt’s “10 Ways Well Meaning White Teachers Bring Racism to Our Schools”</p>
Week 9	October 27 th	<p>Race and Crime Stop and Frisk and Racial Profiling Arrest and Incarceration Rates by Race</p> <p>Video: The Hunted and the Hated</p> <p>Readings Due: Lisa Wade “When Force is Hardest to Justify, Victims of Police Violence are Most Likely to be Black”, Victor Rios and The Youth Control Complex video (http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2010/11/10/victor-rios-on-the-youth-control-complex/)</p>
	October 30 th	<p>Race and Health Health Disparities by Racial Group How Race Shapes Risk Factors</p> <p>Video: Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?</p> <p>Readings Due: Genes Don’t Cause Racial Health Disparities, Society Does” and Sections B and C in “Unequal Health Outcomes in the United States”</p>

Week 10	November 3 rd	Socioeconomic Status and Race Income Disparities Wealth Disparities Exploring Mechanisms Perpetuating Income/Wealth Disparities Video: Race the House We Live In <i>Readings Due:</i> Gallagher Chapter 7 “Transformative Assets, the Racial Wealth Gap, and the American Dream”, “A Tax on Blackness” <i>Assignment Due:</i> Outline for Final Presentation
	November 6 th	Race and Gender Revisiting Intersectionality Double Bind <i>Readings Due:</i> Chapters 1 and 4 of “The Double Bind: The Price of Being a Minority Woman in Science”, “Capturing the Black Male Experience in America”
	November 10 th	Public Policy Race Based Policies Affirmative Action <i>Readings Due:</i> Allie Bidwell “Supreme Court: States Can Ban Affirmative Action”, “Florida Passes Plan for Racially Based Academic Goals”
Week 11	November 13 th	The Future of Race in the United States Combating Racial Inequality Review for Second Exam <i>Readings Due:</i> Charles Gallagher “Ten Things You Can Do to Improve Race Relations”
	November 17 th	EXAM II
Week 12	November 20 th	Final Presentations

	November 25 th	Final Presentations
Week 13	November 27 th	No Class, Thanksgiving Break
	December 1 st	Final Presentations
Week 14	December 4 th	Final Presentations
	December 8 th	Final Presentations