

SOC 310-01 (SBS+): Racial and Ethnic Relations in the U.S.

Spring 2015

Tuesdays and Thursdays @ 11:30am-12:50pm

Location: Javits Lecture Center 101

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Course Overview: How did current U.S. racial and ethnic relations develop?

One of the ways humans have learned to navigate the social world and distinguish themselves from others is through the use of social constructions such as race, class, and gender among others. Relying on sociological texts and concepts, this course will focus on the particular social constructions of race and ethnicity, and how both influence social relations in the U.S. The class will trace the existence of race and ethnicity as social constructions using key events from U.S. history to show how: (1) various racial and ethnic groups were incorporated into the U.S. and (2) those various groups relate to each other in U.S. society. In this class, students will learn about racial and ethnic relations from a sociological perspective: one that is social, historical, (e.g. can change over time) and contextual (varies depending on place). The course is relevant to understanding contemporary U.S. racial and ethnic relations as they relate to immigration, ethnic and racial identity, discrimination, and race-based policies (e.g. residential restrictive codes, Jim Crow segregation). This class will help students develop a critical lens from which to observe and interpret the changing racial and ethnic demographics of the U.S. Students will also gain reading, writing, thinking, and analytic skills that will be beneficial beyond this course.

Learning Outcomes

This course is geared towards advanced students (SBS+). As such, students should plan to do about 3 hours of reading for each class. By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- (1) Understand the major concepts of race and ethnicity in the social sciences.
- (2) Explain the relationship between theories of race and ethnicity and contemporary racial/ethnic relations in the U.S.
- (3) Skillfully interpret and form educated opinions on the real-world applicability of race and ethnicity.

Instructional Methods and Classroom and Email Etiquette

This course will rely on lecture, discussion, and some activities since these are the best ways to make sure students are engaging with course material. Additionally, these various instruction methods will accommodate the diverse learning styles of students in the class. Relevant films will also be screened in-class so students can make connections to course material and see real world implications of what is being studied.

Although not required, **attendance for this course is strongly recommended and will be taken each class**. Please arrive to class on time and come prepared to discuss the readings and be an active participant. Should you have a borderline grade, your class attendance and participation will be considered in determining your final grade.

Since topics taught may facilitate controversial class discussions, guidelines will be established on the first day to ensure a safe and inclusive space for such discussions. The success of this class depends on everyone's ability to engage with the material and have respectful dialogues about these topics. To create a dynamic learning environment, please be sure to silence cell phones before class starts and refrain from

answering phone calls or texting during class. I also ask that you limit your laptop use to notetaking, as non-course related web-surfing during class may be distracting for your classmates and me. As Jamie Sommer and Vanessa Lindo are the TAs, they will help me manage the course this semester. Therefore, when contacting any of us via email, **please put “SOC310: [four word description of your request] in the subject line.”** For example, if you have a question about the midterm, your subject line should read: “SOC310: Midterm Content Question.” If you do not do this, we may not respond to the email as quickly.

Please send all course logistic related emails (e.g. attendance, Blackboard issues) to Vanessa. If you have specific questions about course material or grades, email Jamie or me. **If you are unsure of who to email, email Vanessa first. If she is unable to address the matter, she will forward the email to me, and I will address it.** We will try to respond to your email within 48 hours during weekdays. During weekends, please allow more time as we may not immediately respond to class-related emails.

Required Texts and Materials

All readings for the course are available on Blackboard. A list with full citations for course readings is listed on Blackboard. **You also must register for Top Hat**, an innovative online service that creates an interactive lecture and enhances student and teacher engagement in the classroom. With TopHat, you can use your cell phone, tablet, or laptop to check in for attendance and answers questions I pose during class. Registration is \$20 for the semester and you can register and find information about the service at <https://support.tophatmonocle.com/hc/en-us/categories/200000744-Student-Orientation>. The Top Hat URL for this class is: tophat.com/e/808043.

Assignments and Grading

Assignments are due on the dates indicated in the course schedule and should be submitted electronically through the Blackboard website unless other instructions are given. **Your assignment grade will be dropped one letter grade for each day late the assignment is. I will not accept late assignments beyond 3 days after the due date, an F grade will be given for that assignment.** Should you feel you will need an extension, **please ask me about this no more than one week before the assignment is due.** Depending on the reason, the extension may or may not be granted. If there are assignments due on a religious holiday, speak with me about this one week before the due date to make appropriate arrangements.

Reflection Papers: Since subject matter may be sensitive for students, I would like for you to write about your personal reactions to the readings, screenings, and class discussions in a reflection paper that will be due twice this semester. This will allow you to reflect on your own positionality in relation to the course material and how race and/or ethnicity have personally influenced your life or perception of U.S. society. **Your paper should be 3 full double-spaced pages.** These papers provide another way for me to assess your engagement with course material. When incorporating course material, please cite the name and year of the author(s)-e.g. “My perceptions of race and ethnicity relate to Omi and Winant’s (1994) theory of racial formations...” These papers will be collected, reviewed, graded, and returned to you by the following week. Your participation as evidenced by writing thoughtful and coherent papers, not the content, is being graded. You will receive a score ranging from 0 to 15 on each paper you submit during the semester. **The reflection papers will count for 30% of your final grade and are due on February 12 and April 9. They should be submitted to Blackboard under the “assignments” folder by 5pm on the due date.**

Mid-Term Exam: The mid-term exam will include true/false and short essay questions to assess your understanding of course material. You will be asked to demonstrate your comprehension of race and ethnicity as social constructions by drawing connections between relevant historical and contemporary

dates/events and their impact on racial and ethnic relations in the U.S. **The mid-term exam will count for 30% of your final grade and take place in class on March 5.**

Final Group Presentation: The course will culminate in a final group presentation that relates to a topic on contemporary U.S. racial and ethnic relations. The presentation and paper can elaborate on material and themes already addressed in the course, or, can focus on a different topic from the media or broader U.S. society. Groups will be randomly decided and **there will be in-depth discussion of the group presentation in class on March 10.** So, be sure to attend class that day. **The final presentation will count for 40% of your final grade. Presentations will take place in class on April 28, April 30, May 5, and May 7.**

Grade Scale

95-100 = A	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+	67-69 = D+
94-90 = A-	83-86 = B	73-76 = C	61-66 = D
	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-	0-60 = F

Any final grade below a C- will result in a course failure.

Additional Information

Americans with Disabilities Act: If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC(Educational Communications Center) Building, Room 128, (631)632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

<https://web.stonybrook.edu/newfaculty/StudentResources/Pages/DisabilitySupportServices.aspx>.

Academic Integrity: Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty please refer to the academic judiciary website at

<http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/>.

Critical Incident Management: Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures.

This syllabus is subject to be changed. If modified, I will post an updated syllabus on Blackboard, let you know about this in class, and send an email notification.

CLASS SCHEDULE*

Date	Topic	Reading
Tues 1/27	CLASS CANCELLED DUE TO WEATHER	
Thurs 1/29	<i>Welcome to the Course</i>	In-Class Screening: "Race: The Power of an Illusion" Episode 1
Tues 2/3	<i>What is Race?</i>	Myers (2003): pp. 33-38 Omi and Winant (1994): Ch. 4 Haney Lopez (1998): Ch.1, pp. 1-19 Treitler (2014): Ch. 1
Thurs 2/5	<i>What is Ethnicity?</i>	Treitler (2014): Ch. 2; Nagel (1994)
Tues 2/10		Waters (1990):Intro,Ch.7; Espiritu(1992):Ch.1 In-Class Activity: 2010 U.S. Census
<u>Thurs 2/12</u>	<i>Defining Racial & Ethnic Relations</i> <u>REFLECTION PAPER 1 DUE BY 5PM</u>	Pincus and Ehrlich (1994); Wilson (2006)
Tues 2/17		Bonilla-Silva (1997); Myers (2003):pp. 45-58
Thurs 2/19	<i>Race, Ethnicity, & the Making of a Nation</i>	Takaki: Intro; Cobas et. al: Intro, pp. 1-8; Babb (1998): Ch 1
Tues 2/24		In-Class Screening: Race: The Power of an Illusion" Episode 2
Thurs 2/26	<i>Development of Whiteness & Exclusion</i>	Feagin (2000): pp. 9-45; Almaguer (1998)-Intro; McIntosh (1998)
Tues 3/3	<i>Exam Review</i>	Topics: Material from 1/27 to 2/19
Thurs 3/5	CLASS CANCELLED DUE TO WEATHER	
<u>Tues 3/10</u>	<u>MID-TERM EXAM</u>	Topics: Material from 1/27 to 2/19
Thurs 3/12	<i>Manifest Destiny & the Color Line in the 20th Century, Group Projects</i>	Almaguer (1998): Ch. 2, pp. 45-65, 73-74; Dubois (1903): Ch. 2; Martinez (2000)
Tues 3/17	NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK	
Thurs 3/19	NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK	
Tues 3/24	<i>Immigration- The Making of a Melting Pot?</i>	In-Class Screening: Race: Episode 3; Foner (2000): Ch. 1; Fitzgerald & Cook-Martín (2014): pp. 98-102
Thurs 3/26	<i>Immigration- The Making of a Melting Pot?</i>	Zhou (1997); Levitt and Jaworsky (2007)
Tues 3/31	<i>Discrimination</i>	Morris (1999); Oliver & Shapiro (1995): pp.1-18
Thurs 4/2		Massey & Denton (1993): Ch. 2; Pager & Shepherd (2006)
Tues 4/7	<i>Shifting Ethno-racial Boundaries in the 21st Century</i>	Lee & Bean (2007); Feagin (2000): Ch. 7
<u>Thurs 4/9</u>	<u>REFLECTION PAPER 2 DUE BY 5PM</u>	Prewitt (2005); Bonilla-Silva (2004)

* Bolded and underlined dates indicate when assignments are due.

Tues 4/14	<i>Racism and Racial Attitudes</i>	Bertrand & Mullainathan (2003) summary; Cobas & Feagin (2008); Kohatsu et al. (2011)
Thurs 4/16		Hutchings (2009); Bobo (2011) In-Class Screening: Barack Obama's Speech on Race (2008)
Tues 4/21	<i>Race Abroad</i>	Marx (1996); Ashikari (2005); Joseph (2015)
Thurs 4/23	<i>Final Presentation Logistics</i>	Group Work
<u>Tues 4/28</u>	<u>FINAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS</u>	Groups 1-4
<u>Thurs 4/30</u>	<u>FINAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS</u>	Groups 5-8
<u>Tues 5/5</u>	<u>FINAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS</u>	Groups 9-12
<u>Thurs 5/7</u>	<u>FINAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS, LAST CLASS</u>	Groups 13-15