

Southern Illinois University Carbondale
SOCIOLOGY 215-001: Race & Ethnic Relations in the U.S.
Course Syllabus*
Spring 2008

Instructor: Miss Kristie Lipford

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Office: Faner Hall 3427

Office Hours: 10-12pm Monday, Wednesday, & Friday

Sociology Office Phone: 618-453-7624

Meeting Times:

Lecture: MWF 9-950

Location: Lawson 221

Course Description: This course is designed to introduce and familiarize you with social thought and sociological theory & concepts concerning race & ethnic relations in America and abroad when appropriate. In this course we will take an interdisciplinary approach to examine race, ethnicity, & gender and the ideas that influence their evolving role in political and social institutions.

Course Objectives:

Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of such sociological concepts as assimilation, pluralism, ascribed and achieved status, prejudice and discrimination;
- Display basic knowledge of historical, socioeconomic, and political demographics of various racial/ethnic groups in the United States;
- Demonstrate critical thinking and understanding about different theories and perspectives pertaining to race, class, gender, and sexuality; and
- Apply sociological concepts for the analysis of race and ethnicity to personal and/or familial experiences.

Required Text:

Healy, Joseph. 2004. *Diversity and Society: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender*. Pine Forge Press.

Healy, Joseph. 2004. *Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Selected Readings*. Pine Forge Press.

The textbook and reader are typically sold as a packet. The text is a fairly simple read that clearly outlines key terms. The reader is an excellent and diverse compilation of past and contemporary writings on public debates, Supreme Court cases, and a number of other issues concerning race, ethnicity, and gender. Studying from these two books should yield very interesting thoughts and class discussions. So, be sure to read! In addition to the text and its accompanying reader, I will potentially assign additional readings which will be accessible via the internet or available in JPG files on Blackboard. If I do so, I will let you know in advance.

General Policies:

1. Attendance - Regular class attendance is expected. Students should refer to their student handbook for university attendance policies and respond accordingly.
2. Participation – Participation in this course is valuable. Please come to class prepared and ready to discuss the material. Engaging in class dialogue is one technique to enhance your learning. It will help you as a student to hone your critical thinking skills and help you to better articulate what you've learned. Therefore, you should read and reflect on readings before each relevant class to ensure your ability to offer something significant to the class discussion.

Reasonable Accommodations:

Students requiring special accommodations should alert me in a timely fashion. In addition, I highly suggest that you contact SIUC's Disability Support Services (DSS) in order to take advantage of the programs they offer (DSS Office: 618-453-5738).

Emergency Procedures:

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on the BERT'S website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Public Safety's website www.ds.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and in the Emergency Response Guidelines pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

Dealing with Controversial Issues:

The complexity of our society today requires that college graduates have well developed critical thinking skills which require considered thought and sensitivity to a wide range of views on important issues. These skills will be fostered in this course as we explore several controversial issues. Many of the issues we will confront have no "right" or "wrong" answers, but more or less "considered" opinions. You are expected to prepare yourself for discussion, questioning and informed debate on these issues. You are expected to be respectful of other students' opinions even when they are directly opposed to your own views. I will not offer my views on these controversial issues so as to maintain an atmosphere of open, unbiased consideration.

* Adopted from Ethel K. Cantu, Behavioral Sciences Department, University of Texas.

Course Requirements:**Exams**

There will be 4 exams worth 25 points each and will consist of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, or essay questions. The test format will be up to my discretion.

Current Events

This assignment will allow us to stay abreast with current events around the world. On your assigned week, you are to locate a news event concerning race, gender, ethnicity, and/or culture and discuss its sociological significance to race & ethnic relations. You can be creative as possible, as long as it is correlates with the course objectives and you present it in a manner where I can identify its significance to the relevant topic of the week or past weeks. Your review of the event should be a 1-2 page, double-spaced, typed document that includes the source (date, author, etc.), a summary, the article itself, and a brief analysis. Show me that you are critically thinking as you report the event; ask yourself, why is this important or significant to race, ethnic, or gender relations? What are some questions and key concepts/ideas that emerge? How does it reveal or how could it be a race/ethnic/gender issue? Is it relative to a specific historical period? What about it's relativity to a specific country, region, or community?

Academic Paper

Throughout the semester we will examine the histories and contemporary statuses of various racial and ethnic groups. Our class discussions, readings, and lectures will illustrate that race is indeed significant in many aspects of American society. This assignment will help me to assess your critical thinking and writing skills, as well as offer you the opportunity to use your sociological imagination by explaining the different methods, if any, you would apply in raising and educating a child in a racialized and diverse society. You will be required to write a short academic paper worth 50 points on the topic of transracial/transcultural adoption. In your paper you will respond to the following question:

If you were to adopt a child that was of a different race and/or ethnicity than you, what race or ethnicity would the child be and would you socialize the child any differently based on their race/ethnicity than you would if the child was of the same race/ethnicity as you or your other children?

I will distribute more information on the paper during week 4.

Class Discussion

Each of you will be responsible for presenting and co-leading at least one class discussion. Each of you will form a discussion team with 4-6 other students. To prepare, you should **read** required readings and any other relevant material, **reflect** on what you read, **summarize** key ideas, **critique** and **challenge** the author if you feel the need, **discuss** thoughts with your study group, and as a team **think** of eight questions that will stimulate dialogue and/or debate. You will email these questions (in WORD format) to me **no later than noon** prior to the day you will co-lead discussion.

*Please note that Class discussions are worth 100 points each; if you are ill-prepared, credit will be deducted from your class discussion grade.

Quizzes

There will be 10 quizzes throughout the semester. The quizzes will begin 2 minutes after the hour; if you arrive late you will not receive extra time to complete them or make them up. Quizzes will be drawn from the readings, discussions, and current events in the media. Quizzes have the potential to be unannounced ("pop").

Homework & Classwork

I will assign minor homework and classwork assignments throughout the semester. These assignments will be fairly simple and informal. The assignments will not only act as an assessment to see how well you are understanding the concepts and material discussed, but it will also give you the opportunity to reflect on the class and what you are learning.

Grading Distribution:

Grades will be determined by an accumulation of points, with a perfect score being a total of 400 points. As aforementioned, there will be four exams worth 25 points each; one current event review worth 50 points, an academic paper worth 50 points, one class discussion worth 100 points, 10 quizzes worth 5 points each, and a homework/classwork grade worth 50 points.

A= 360 and up

B= 320 - 359

C= 280 - 319

D= 240 - 279

F= 239 and below

Tentative Course Schedule:

Week One:

- Focus: Intro. to the Study of Race & Ethnicity
- Topics include: What is sociology? What is race/ethnicity? the emergence of race as a social construction, biological claims of race

Week Two:

- Focus: Dominant-Minority Group Relations
- Topics include: key concepts in race and ethnic studies
- Readings: Chapter 1

Week Three:

- Focus: Assimilation & Pluralism
- Topics include: early perspectives and theories on race and ethnic relations
- Readings: Chapter 2

Week Four:

- Focus: International Dominant-Minority Group Relations
- Topics include: language, religious, racial, & ethnic dominant-minority affairs
- Readings: Chapter 10

Week Five:

- Focus: How group membership shapes our cultural and ideological perspectives on race/ethnicity
- Topics include: *To Die in Jerusalem*
- Readings: see Blackboard

Week Six:

- Focus: Pre-industrial U.S. Dominant-Minority Group Relations
- Topics include: origins of American slavery, contact situation, Noel hypothesis,
- Readings: Chapter 3

Week Seven:

- Focus: Post-industrial U.S. Dominant-Minority Group Relations
- Topics include: post-slavery, Reconstruction, Jim Crow
- Readings: Chapter 4

Week Eight:

- Focus: African Americans
- Topics include: political & social movements of the 1960s and 70s, class differentiation, reparations, de facto segregation
- Readings: Chapter 5

Week Nine:

- Focus: Native Americans
- Topics include: reservations, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), coercive acculturation, Red Power Movement
- Readings: Chapter 6

Week Ten:

- Focus: Hispanic Americans
- Topics include: immigration/migration push & pull factors, ethnic differences, political movements of the 1940s-1970s, activism
- Readings: Chapter 7

Week Eleven:

- Focus: Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders
- Topics include: model minority?, Chinese Exclusion Act, anti-Japanese campaign, ethnic enclaves, internment camps
- Readings: Chapter 8

Week Twelve:

- Focus: White Ethnic Groups
- Topics include: Does white ethnicity still exist?, ethnic and religious discrimination, early immigration patterns, symbolic ethnicity
- Readings: Chapter 9

Week Thirteen:

- Focus: Future of Race & Ethnic Relations in the United States
- Topics include: minority group themes, patterns, diversity, etc.
- Readings: Chapter 11

Week Fourteen:

- Focus: Structured Inequality/Institutional Racism
- Readings: To be announced

Week Fifteen:

- Focus: Structured Inequality/Institutional Racism
- Readings: To be announced

Week Sixteen: May 5-9

- Focus: Final Examination Week

SPRING BREAK MARCH 8-16!!!!!!

*Please note that the instructor reserves the right to make any changes and amendments to the syllabus.

