**Seminar: Race & Ethnicity**

**SOC 4201:001 CRN #17452**

Fall 2018

**Instructor:** Dr. Michelle R. Jacobs

**Office:** 2263 Faculty / Administration Building (FAB)

**Office Hours:** Thursdays, 2 – 4 pm, or by appointment

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*You are responsible for the information in this syllabus. Read it carefully & ask questions if necessary.*

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| ***Course*** | ***Days*** | ***Time*** | ***Location*** |
| 4201 | M, W | 2:30 – 3:45 pm | 0324 State Hall |

**Course Description & Learning Objectives**

Welcome!

In this course you will learn to apply a sociological eye to race and ethnicity.  We will investigate the historical roots and contemporary manifestations of racial and ethnic inequalities and interrogate the systems of privilege and oppression that create differential access to resources for different racial and ethnic groups.  Using theoretical and empirical works in the field, a number of topics critical to understanding the persistence of racial and ethnic inequalities will be covered, including racialization, colorblindness, racial and ethnic identities, immigration, criminalization, segregation, and race-based health disparities. Throughout the semester, individual and group level strategies for challenging and transforming racialized systems of inequality will be explored.

The primary objectives for this course are:

* To interrogate race and ethnicity and racial/ethnic relations from a sociological perspective.
* To better understand a variety of racial and ethnic experiences in the United States.
* To develop and hone critical thinking skills by participating in class discussions and completing writing assignments.
* To gain experience reading academic research by analyzing and grappling with sociological texts.
* To cultivate proficiency and expertise in the field of sociology by undertaking a final project that involves research and/or community-based service learning.

**Course Materials**

Course readings, which include PDFs and web links, are available on *Canvas*.

**Course Requirements**

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| --- | --- |
| **ASSIGNMENTS** | % |
| Participation | 15 |
| *Passage* assignments | 20 |
| Midterm essay exam | 25 |
| In-class assignments | 15 |
| Final project | 25 |
| **TOTAL** | 100 |

**Participation (15%):** Participation includes attending class, demonstrating you have completed the assigned readings, and engaging in class discussions, discussion groups, in-class writing, and other activities[[1]](#footnote-1). Class discussions are an integral part of this course, so you cannot make up a missed class by copying notes from a classmate. If you miss class, please talk to your classmates *first* and then follow up with me for clarification and/or more details. Finally, please be respectful of class time (e.g., arrive on time, pack up when we are *finished*, turn off cell phones and laptop computers, etc.). I will record attendance daily. Your participation grade will be reduced after 2 missed classes; you may be asked to withdraw if you miss 5 or more classes. Please communicate with me *immediately* if you will miss more than two classes in a row.

* *A note on our classroom environment:* I will occupy the role of a more informed and experienced co-learner with leadership responsibilities. Participants in this upper division course are expected to be active and engaged learners who: pursue questions of interest; contribute to class and group discussions; support and challenge each other in the learning process; welcome challenges as opportunities for reflection and growth; come to class each week, on time and prepared; and seek additional support outside class as needed. Although discussions of race sometimes bring strong emotions to the surface, professional behavior is expected at all times. Participants are expected to demonstrate respect for all people, including members of the class and the broader society.

***Passage* journaling assignments (20%):** Passage assignments require you to record excerpts (or “passages”) from the required readings, explore the excerpts in writing, and develop relevant discussion questions. This assignment is designed to foster active reading habits that will sharpen your thinking and inform classroom discussions. Passage assignments will also aid you in developing a collection of citations and ideas that you can use to study for your midterm essay exam. We may also use passage assignments in class in the following ways:

* 1. A student may be chosen to read their passage journal entry. Class discussion will follow.
  2. Students may be paired or grouped to discuss their passage entries.
  3. Students may volunteer to share their passage entries.

You are required to complete SIX (6) passage assignments between September 10th and November 19th. You are permitted to submit ***only one assignment per week****,* meaning that up to four passage assignments can be completed prior to the midterm essay exam. Assignments must be submitted to me via email ([michelle.jacobs@wayne.edu](mailto:michelle.jacobs@wayne.edu)) by 1:00 PM on the day the reading is due. NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED, period. *You* are responsible for tracking your submissions.

\*\*BONUS POINTS will be earned by students who complete a “practice” passage assignment for the readings due Wednesday, September 5th.

Passage journaling assignments must have the following clearly delineated components:

* Component 1: Quote (word for word) and properly cite (in ASA format) a *passage* in the reading(s) that seems particularly important and/or compelling. The passage might express a primary take-away point of the reading or it might present an idea that is interesting or troubling to you. [Advice: As you work through the reading(s), pay attention to the places that grab your attention. Highlight, underline, or make note of these passages, and *then* determine which passage will be most useful for class discussion and/or for studying for the midterm.]
* Component 2: Write a paragraph (approximately 4 to 6 sentences, one page maximum) in which you reflect on the passage. *In your own words,* explore the passage’s meaning and importance. Explain what you appreciate and/or do not understand about the ideas presented in the passage. Do you agree with or feel resistant to the author’s ideas? Explain. What does the passage make you think or feel? Can you relate to the passage? Why and/or how? (Etc.)
* Component 3: Pose ONE thoughtful discussion question that addresses the implications of the reading *and* is relevant to the passage you selected for this assignment. A *good* *discussion question[[2]](#footnote-2)* is answerable and challenging. It inspires analysis, synthesis, interpretation, and/or critical thinking.

Prompts for questions that facilitate thoughtful, sustained discussions include:

Analysis questions might begin with:

“Why…?” “How would you explain…?” “What is the importance of…?” “What is the meaning of…?”

Compare and/or contrast questions might begin with:

“Compare…” “Contrast…” “What is the difference between…?” “What is the similarity between…?”

Cause and effect questions might begin with:

“What are the causes/results of…?” “What connections exist between…?”

Clarification questions might begin with:

“What is meant by…?” “Explain how…”

[Important note: *Bad discussion questions*, for which you will receive zero points, are vague, leading, and/or require only a “yes” or “no” response.]

**Midterm essay exam (25%):** The midterm exam is comprised of take-home essay questions. It is open book and open notes. The exam will be distributed at the end of class on Monday, October 8th and your responses must be uploaded to Canvas by 2:00 PM on Saturday, October 13th. To ensure that each student has adequate time to work, we will not meet for class on Wednesday, October 10th. The midterm exam requires you to examine course concepts, theories, and readings *intelligently* and *critically*. Questions about readings may cover methodology, central arguments, key findings, and contributions to the sociology of race and ethnicity. Some questions will require you to draw connections between concepts, theories, and ideas presented in different readings. More detailed expectations will be discussed in class.

**In-class activities (15%)**: You are required to complete ***three*** creative, in-class activities that are intended to deepen your understanding of course concepts, theories, and ideas. You must complete work *outside* of class (i.e., homework) *and* you must participate in group work *in class* to receive full credit for the assignment. Detailed expectations for each assignment will be discussed prior to the in-class activity dates, which are (currently) scheduled for September 26th, October 24th, and November 26th.

**Final project, *three* options (25%):** You may choose one of the following options for your final project: 1) Research paper; 2) Presentation; or 3) Community engagement. I encourage you to meet with me to discuss your educational and/or occupational goals so we can determine which option best suits you. You are *encouraged* to collaborate with a classmate on final project options #1 or #2, but you are also permitted to work alone. Collaborators are expected to do equal amounts of work and will receive the same grade – no exceptions, so choose a partner wisely. By ***Monday, October 8th***you must provide me with a written statement that includes: 1) whether you will be working alone or with a classmate; 2) your chosen option – paper, presentation, or community engagement – and why you chose this option; and 3) the topic and/or community organization you intend to explore and why the topic/organization interests you. If you are working with a classmate, please submit a joint statement. Detailed expectations for each option will be posted to Canvas and discussed in class.

**Grades**

You will be graded according to the following scale:

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| --- | --- |
| Grade | Percentage |
| A | 93 – 100 |
| A- | 90 – 92 |
| B+ | 87 – 89 |
| B | 83 – 86 |
| B- | 80 – 82 |
| C+ | 77 – 79 |
| C | 73 – 76 |
| C- | 70 – 72 |
| D+ | 67 – 69 |
| D | 63 – 66 |
| D- | 60 – 62 |
| F | 59 and below |

**Final grades are *FINAL*!** No points will be added to *any* student’s grade (including yours) at the end of the semester. Please do *not* ask me to give you a higher grade than you earned because you are on academic probation or need it to maintain a scholarship or have any other special circumstance. I do not give grades; rather, you earn the grade you receive.

**Additional Student & Instructor Responsibilities**

**Student responsibilities:**

* Treat all members of the class and the broader community with *respect***.** Listen attentively when others are speaking and use *inclusive language*when it is your turn to speak. We will discuss sensitive topics in this course. Everyone is encouraged to participate in these discussions, but personal opinions must be presented in a way that does not marginalize any person or group.
* I (the instructor) reserve the right to make adjustments to the syllabus. As such, you (the student) are responsible for keeping up with any changes that are announced in class, on Canvas, or in email communications. Not attending class, not checking Canvas, and/or not checking your WSU email account are not legitimate excuses for missing assignments and other information relevant to this course.
* **It is YOUR responsibility to check Canvas regularly to ensure that grades are posted accurately.**
* Check Canvas when class is canceled due to weather, power outage, etc.
* You are *strongly encouraged* to communicate with me in person or by email if you have any comments, questions, or concerns about the course. Please *schedule an appointment* when you wish to meet with me during office hours or at another designated time.
* *Emails* must have a clear and informative subject line that includes your full name and the name of the coursein which you are enrolled. Emails without this information in the subject line will be promptly returned to sender. I also ask that you send emails that are appropriate for the university setting, meaning that they should have a salutation and should be written in complete sentences with real words – i.e., “you” instead of “u.”
* *Written course work* should be double-spaced with one inch margins and 11 or 12 point easy-to-read font (e.g., Times New Roman). In-text citations and works cited pages should be in American Sociological Style (ASA) format.
* *Religious holidays:* “It is University policy to respect the faith and religious obligations of the individual. Students with classes or examinations that conflict with their religious observances are expected to notify their instructors *well in advance* so that mutually agreeable alternatives may be worked out.”
* *Accommodative services:* “If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. The SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-202-4216 for videophone use. Once you have met with your disability specialist, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your accommodations. Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University.” You can learn more about the disability office at [www.studentdisability.wayne.edu](http://www.studentdisability.wayne.edu/). To register with Student Disability Services, complete the online registration form at:   
  <https://wayne-accommodate.symplicity.com/public_accommodation/>
* *Academic dishonesty*, which includes cheating, plagiarism, and any other form of unethical academic behavior, *will not be tolerated*. Cheating and plagiarism are forms of academic theft that destroy the integrity of academic communities. It is expected that all students enrolled in this class support the letter and the spirit of the Student Code of Conduct. It is your responsibility to review the Code of Conduct, which is available for download at the Dean of Students Office website: <http://www.doso.wayne.edu/student-conduct-services.html>. Ignorance is not a viable defense against allegations of student conduct violations.

***My policy on academic dishonesty:***Suspected academic dishonesty will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Students suspected of academic dishonesty may receive a score of 0 on the assignment or a score of 0 in the course, depending on the magnitude of the offense. Moreover, *I am obligated to report all instances of suspected academic dishonesty to university administrators.*

***Instructor* responsibilities:**

* I will come to class prepared to discuss the materials and facilitate the educational process.
* I will be available to answer questions you have about course materials during class times, office hours, or independently scheduled meetings. If you send an email and do not receive a response within 48 hours, you should assume that your email was not received and resend it.
* I will explain class assignments and outline my expectations for graded work.
* I will grade your work consistently, fairly, and in a timely fashion.
* I will treat all students with respect.
* I will acknowledge and correct my mistakes.

**Important Dates**

Wed, August 29: Classes begin

Mon, September 3: *Labor Day* (university closed)

Wed, September 12: Last day to add a course or drop a course with full tuition reimbursement

Wed, September 27: Last day to drop a course with no grade reported (no tuition reimbursement)

Fri, September 28: Degree applications due

Tues, October 16: Early assessment period ends

Sun, November 11: Last day to withdraw from a class *with instructor permission*

Wed, November 21: *Fall holiday* (no classes); university closed November 22 & 23

Mon, December 10: Classes end

Tues, December 11: Study day

Wed, December 12: Final exam @2:45 pm

**Course Schedule**

The course schedule is *tentative* and may be adjusted throughout the semester. All of the assigned readings are available on Canvas. Additional short readings and/or web links may be added.

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| ***Date*** | ***Topic*** | ***Readings & other assigned work*** |
| 8-29 | Welcome ☺; introductions & other important things |  |
| 9-03 | *Labor Day (university closed)* |  |
| 9-05 | What is race? What is ethnicity? | Race: What Does It Mean? The Social Construction of Race and Ethnicity, Higginbotham & Anderson (2015), p.1-5  Race (2005), Morning, p.7-11  The Race Myth (2004), Graves, p. 12-21 |
| 9-10 | Race theory, race research I: racial formations | Racial Formation (1994), Omi & Winant, p.26-30  Racial Formation of American Indians (2001), Garroutte, p.224-239 |
| 9-12 | Race theory, race research II: racial formations | Racialization of Muslim Men and Women (2015), Selod, p.77-95 |
| 9-17 | Race theory, race research III: colorblind racism | Racism without Racists (2003), Bonilla-Silva, p.176-181  Testimonies of Colorblind Racism (2004), Bonilla-Silva et al, p.555-581 |
| 9-19 | Race theory, race research IV: guest lecturer – Dr. Brewster | Servers’ Perceptions of Black-White Tipping Differences (2018), Brewster & Nowak, p.1-15 |
| 9-24 | Race theory, race research V:  black feminist thought | Black Feminist Thought (1986), Hill Collins, p.14-32 |
| 9-26 | Reflecting on standpoint: *in-class activity* | *\*Detailed assignment with HOMEWORK requirements distributed by 9-24-18.* |
| 10-01 | Racial/ethnic identities I: reflected appraisals | If You’re Half Black, You’re Just Black: Reflected Appraisals and the Persistence of the One Drop Rule (2010), Khanna, p.96-121 |
| 10-03 | Racial/ethnic identities II:  ethnic options | Race, Ethnic Options, and Ethnic Binds: Identity Negotiations of Second-Generation Chinese and Korean Americans (2000), Kibria, p.77-95 |
| 10-08 | Wiggle room + discuss/distribute take-home exam |  |
| 10-10 | Take-home exam (*no class*) |  |
| 10-15 | Immigration I: Latin@ identities | Latino and American Identities as Perceived by Immigrants (2007), Massey & Sanchez, p.81-107 |
| 10-17 | Immigration II: Mexican immigrant families | Deportation and Children in Mexican Immigrant Families (2012), Dreby, p.829-845 |
| 10-22 | Immigration III: subordinating mythologies | Subordinating Myth: Latin@ Immigration, Crime (2013), Longazel, p.87-96 |
| 10-24 | Reflecting on racial/ethnic identities: *in-class activity* | *\*Detailed assignment with HOMEWORK requirements distributed by 10-17-18.* |
| 10-29 | Ghettoization,  poverty concentration I | *To be announced*, William Julius Wilson |
| 10-31 | Ghettoization,  poverty concentration I | *To be announced*, William Julius Wilson |
| 11-05 | Ghettoization,  poverty concentration III | Mass Incarceration in African American Communities (2004), Roberts, p.1271-1305 |
| 11-07 | Ghettoization,  poverty concentration IV | Eviction and the Reproduction of Urban Poverty (2012), Desmond, p.88-133 |
| 11-12 | Health and racial(ized) environments I: overview | Racism and Health I: Pathways and Scientific Evidence, Williams & Mohammed, p.1152-1173 |
| 11-14 | Health and racial(ized) environments II: asthma | Health Politics of Asthma (2003), Brown et al, p.453-464 |
| 11-19 | Health and racial(ized) environments III: food justice | Food Justice Activism (2009), Alkon & Norgaard, p.289-305 |
| 11-21 | *Fall holiday (no class, university closed 11-22&23)* |  |
| 11-26 | Reflecting on race/ethnicity and food: *in-class activity* | *\*Detailed assignment with HOMEWORK requirements distributed by 11-19-18.* |
| 11-28 | White people I | Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position (1958), Blumer, p.3-7  America’s Angriest White Men (2013), Kimmel, p.1-6 |
| 12-03 | White people II | White Identities and Social Justice (2001), Eichstedt, p.445-470 |
| 12-05 | (More) work for racial justice I | Theorizing Racial Movement (2015), Fleming & Morris, p.105-126 |
| 12-10 | (More) work for racial justice II | 10 Ways to Fight Hate (2017), Southern Poverty Law Center, p.1-36 |
| 12-12 | Final exam, 2:45-4:45 PM |  |

***Reading tips***

Engaged reading is *active* reading. You should take notes as you read and reread an author’s work, paying careful attention to the author’s arguments. Doing so will help you judge the strength of the author’s claims.

Think about the following questions as you read:

* What is the author’s primary focus &/or primary research question?
* What key terms contribute to your understanding of this work? How are these terms defined by the author?
* What are the author’s key claims &/or findings?
* What evidence is used to support the author’s claims/findings?
* Which theory/theories does the author use?
* Are data used to support the author’s claims?
* If so, what are the data and how are they analyzed?
* Does the author acknowledge arguments that contradict her claims? What are they?
* What are the strengths of this piece?
* What are the weaknesses of this piece?
* What is the most interesting part of the author’s work?
* What assumptions / life experiences do you bring to this process that lead to your unique interpretations?

Tips for highlighting and annotating during the active reading process:

* A pencil works as well as a pen or marker; try them all and see which you like best.
* Underline each claim an author makes.
* Circle or box definitions or essential terms.
* Use arrows or lines to show connections.
* Use vertical lines in the margins to mark entire passages.
* Star the most important items.
* Use question marks for confusing places.
* Use the margins to:
* Summarize key terms, sections, or ideas in your own words.
* Articulate disagreements with the author’s arguments.

1. At times you will be asked to reflect on a question and bring your response to the next class. These spontaneous assignments are not listed on the syllabus, but they are *required* and will impact your participation grade. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. borrowed from Stanford University Teaching commons: https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/resources/teaching/student-teacher-communication/designing-effective-discussion-questions [↑](#footnote-ref-2)