

RACE AND ETHNICITY
SOCI 3314/02 (CRN 80301)
FRIDAY 8am-10.45 am
FALL 2014
SOCIAL SCIENCES BUILDING (SSB) 3007

Instructor: Joseph Kingsley Adjei, Ph.D (ABD) Office: Social Sciences, Room 2003
Office Hours: Fridays 11am–12 mid-day Email: jadjei@kennesaw.edu

Course Description

Boundaries that separate humans and sometimes provoke conflicts are not limited to geographical demarcations but extend to abstract human creations. Two of such symbolic abstract boundaries or social constructions are ‘race’ and ‘ethnicity’. The abuses of race and ethnicity manifest in inequality and discrimination. In fact, inequality exists in many modern societies and it is a dominant feature of American society. Throughout this course, we will discuss how racial background influences one’s life chances, particularly in regards to income, wealth, power, education, and visibility.

The first section of this course will be devoted to the social construction of race and how racial categories have changed over time. We will then discuss the concept of color blindness, a dominant belief in our current society. This dominant ideology, however, will be challenged, as we will then discuss the influence that prejudice, discrimination, and racism have in our society. While whites often benefit from institutional discrimination, although often not knowingly, people of color are adversely affected. We will discuss how race influences one’s experience in specific institutions, with a specific look at the criminal justice system, workplace, media, and education systems. We will end the semester with a discussion on the implications on our diverse society. For example, we will examine the influence that immigration and the increase in interracial marriage, have had on ethnic identity and the blurring of America’s color lines.

Course Objectives

- Students will utilize the knowledge gained when analyzing the influence of racial background on one’s life chances.
- Students will be able to explain how agency and structure both influence the life opportunities of different racial groups.
- Students will be able to identify a racially controlled society from that which is not by properly appreciating the manifestations of racism and abuses of ethnic affiliation.
- Students will be able to think critically about how their actions have an effect on the perpetuation of racial and ethnic stereotypes.
- Students will develop stronger writing skills on race and ethnicity.

Required Reading: Gallagher, Charles A. 2012. *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*, 5th edition. ISBN: 0078026636

Note that additional articles will be on Desire2Learn, and the due dates will be announced throughout the semester (if they have not already been listed on the syllabus). We will discuss them in class and you will be tested on them through quizzes and exams, so it is in your best interest to read all the assigned reading for each class period.

Course Requirements:

Reading represents the major assignment for this class. I expect each student to come to class prepared to discuss questions and clarify the day's reading assignment. While I do not expect you to have mastered all of the readings before coming to class, I do expect you to have read the texts, and to be prepared to discuss them.

Assignments:

a. Class Participation

Students will be put into small groups of three or four. Each group will be assigned book chapters and or articles to present to the class on a biweekly basis. Attendance is mandatory. Students will be graded on their ability to participate in class discussions by regularly asking or answering questions related to both past or current lectures and events. Students will lose half of their participation grade if they miss three (3) classes. A student is not eligible for the in-class participation grade if s/he is regularly absent (student skipped more than three classes).

Note: *Any absence must be justified with a written note or a medical proof.*

b. Term Paper and Class Presentation

Each student is required to write a research paper (RP) in which s/he will demonstrate that s/he mastered the concepts race and ethnicity and how they manifest in society. The length of the RP is 4-6 pages, not including references or work-cited. Be sure to use the American Psychological Association (APA) style. Papers must be typed in Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1 inch margins, and double spaced. Topics must be approved by the instructor by the fourth week of class. The completed paper is due on November 12, 2014. This is 30% of your course grade.

- c. Final presentation: A power point presentation of the final paper will be done in class by each student.
- d. Participation: Attendance does not mean participation! You may collect the maximum number of 10 points for this assignment only if you participate and contribute actively in the class debates and exercises.

Evaluation and scores

Class Participation and attendance 10%

Quizzes 20%

Mid-term exams 30%

Final Paper 40%

Grading Scales

The following general grading scale will be used for participation, presentations and completed assignments for this course:

- A to A- (90-100 points): The student was able to appropriately use concepts taught in this course to show an understanding in his/her interventions in class, presentations and papers. The student understood and was able to use 'race' and 'ethnicity' and related concepts to apply to the social world. In addition, the student had a perfect attendance score and successfully took all the quizzes.
- B+ to B- (80-89 points): The student was able to appropriately use theories taught in this course in his/her interventions in class, presentations and papers. In addition, the student had a perfect attendance score and successfully took part in all the assignments. However, the student had few errors in his/her papers.
- C+ or C- (79-70 points): The student did not contribute meaningfully to the course. The student skipped one or two classes with no legitimate reasons but took all the quizzes with passing grades. When present, the student rarely spoke in class. The student has difficulties in his/her term papers and exams.
- D (69-60 points): The student never spoke in class, skipped more than three classes without any legitimate reasons, and had difficulties meeting the course learning objectives.
- F (< 60 points): The student was consistently absent (very poor attendance), or when present, the student never spoke in class and failed class assignments as well as mid-term and final exams.

The Meaning of the grades

Grades serve as numeric codes to evaluate your performance in this course. While grades characterize your immediate accomplishments, they say nothing about your general abilities, skills, or qualities. They also cannot predict your potential as an individual to grow and learn in the future. Therefore, grades do not reflect my personal preferences for particular students; they are merely a contextual assessment of your knowledge and performance at a given point in time.

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory starting August 22, 2014 till the end of the semester. All the assignments are connected to the material covered in class and in readings, so you might not want to miss a class. Low attendance and participation in this class will affect your grade.

Classroom Conduct:

Please turn your cell-phones off during the class, and also do not read newspaper or take a nap during class time! Since our class is debate-oriented, I expect you to respect and listen to everybody’s opinions and perspectives. Our class is a space free of sexist, racist or other offensive comments. Living harmoniously among different races and ethnic groups is the essence of this course and must be put into practice in class.

Academic Integrity:

Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct as published in the Undergraduate Catalog. Section II of this Code addresses the university policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to university materials, misrepresentation/ falsification of university records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an “informal” resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, oral formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct’s minimum one semester suspension requirement.

Students with Disabilities:

If you are a student with special needs, please notify me as soon as possible to accommodate your needs.

Class Schedule

DATE	SUBJECT	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS
August 22	Introduction to class: Syllabus and self-introductions	No readings; Dividing the class into groups for future group assignments
August 29	Social construction of Race	1. How Skins Got Their Color 2. Drawing the Color Line 3. Racial Formations 4. Defining race and ethnicity 5. Racialized social system approach to racism
September 5	Race and ethnicity: contemporary socio-economic trends	6. Understanding racial-ethnic disparities in health: sociological

		<p>contributions</p> <p>7.Transformative assets, the racial wealth gap and the American dream</p> <p>8. Defining race: comparative perspectives</p>
September 12	Race and ethnicity	<p>9. A tour of Indian people and Indian lands</p> <p>10. Asian American pan-ethnicity: contemporary national and transnational possibilities</p> <p>11. Beyond black and white: remaking race in America</p>
September 19	Color-blind America: fact, fantasy, or our future?	<p>12. Color blind privilege: the social and political functions of erasing the color line</p> <p>13. The ideology of color blindness</p> <p>14. The possibility of a new racial hierarchy in the 21st century United States.</p>
September 25	Testing your understanding	QUIZ 1
October 1	Understanding racism	<p>15. Race prejudice as a sense of group position</p> <p>16. Race and gender discrimination: contemporary trends</p> <p>17. Discrimination and the American creed</p> <p>18. How does it feel to be a problem? Being young and Arab in America</p>
October 8	Understanding racism	<p>19. The possessive investment in whiteness: racialized social democracy</p> <p>20. Laissez-faire racism, racial inequality, and the role of the Social Sciences</p>
October 15	How space gets raced	<p>21. Residential segregation and neighborhood conditions in US, metropolitan areas</p> <p>22. The code of the streets</p>
October 22	Testing your understanding	QUIZ 2
October 29	How space gets raced	<p>22. The code of the streets</p> <p>23.Environmental Justice in the 21st Century</p> <p>24. Race, religion, and the color line</p> <p>25. Why are there no supermarkets in my neighborhood? The long search</p>

		for fresh fruit, produce, and healthy food.
November 5		26. No equal justice: the color of punishment 27. The new Jim Crow 28. Radicalized mass incarceration: rounding up the usual suspects 29. The mark of a criminal record 30. Using DNA for justice: color-blind or biased?
November 12	Testing your understanding	QUIZ 3
November 19	How race shapes the workplace	31. Kristen v. Aisha, Brad v. Rasheed: What is in a name and how it affects getting a job 32. When the melting pot boils over: the Irish, Jews, Blacks, and Koreans of New York
November 26	Fall break	No class
December 3	Testing your understanding	Final Exam

❖ Note that the instructor reserves the right to change aspects of the schedule.