

RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS
SOCI 3314; CRN 10261
SPRING SEMESTER, 2014
TUESDAY/THURSDAY, 12:30-1:45
ENGLISH BUILDING, 166

Instructor: Bobby Jo Otto

Office: Social Science Building, 4005

Office Hours: T/R 2-3 and by appointment

E-mail: bobettebuchar22@yahoo.com or botto@kennesaw.edu

Phone: (C): 630-903-3861

**The best way to contact me is through e-mail; however, if you need to contact me by phone, feel free (please do not call after 10 p.m.)

**When you e-mail me, please be specific in the subject.

Course Description:

While many believe that racism is a thing of the past, especially since the election (and re-election) of Barack Obama, inequality based on race is still 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 colorblindness, 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 sociological imagination 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 analyze and interpret empirical data/research that is relevant to and explanatory of race and ethnic relations.
- 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.

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

ISBN: 0078026636

**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.

Grading System:

- 3 Exams—45% (15% each)
- Article Reviews—20% (10% each)
- Analysis paper: An interview of the unfamiliar—15%
- Informal writing assignments/group work—10%
- Quizzes—10%

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR OWN GRADE

- Exam One: (your grade x .15) = a
- Exam Two: (your grade x .15) = b
- Final Exam: (your grade x .15) = c
 - OR (average of three exams x .45)
- Article Reviews: (average grades x .20) = d
- Analysis paper (your grade x .10) = e
- Informal Writing Assignments: (avg. all grades after dropping lowest x .10) = f
- Quizzes: (avg. all grades after dropping lowest x .10) = g

Total Grade: a + b + c + d + e + f + g (out of 100)

Grading Scale

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
59 and below = F

Exams

There will be 3 exams, which will constitute 45% of your final grade. Exam questions will be drawn from the textbook, additional readings, class discussion, lecture, and video clips. Since I am aware that students have different learning styles, you have one of two options on exam day. The first choice consists of multiple choice and short answer questions. The second option is an all essay/short answer exam. You need to inform me of your exam preference at least two days before exam day.

**I will provide study guides before each exam and we will review at the end of class prior to examination day. Please be on time for the exam.

****Make-up Policy:** If something comes up, and you cannot take the exam on the scheduled exam day, and your absence is excused, you can make up your exam. However, if you do not contact me (either through phone or e-mail) before your exam and notify me of your absence, you will receive a zero. If you schedule a make-up and do not come, you will also receive a zero. Make-ups need to be taken **within one week** of when the exam was scheduled. Make-up exams will either be taken in the testing center on campus, the small conference room in the sociology department, or in my office.

- Examples of excused absences: death in the family, car accident, serious illness, arrest, court date/jury duty, University-sponsored activity (athletic events, etc.). **You must provide documentation pertaining to your absence.**
- Examples of non-excused absences: routine doctor or dentist visit, forgetfulness, oversleeping.
- As the instructor, I reserve the right to determine what “counts” as an excused absence and what “counts” as appropriate documentation so you should ask me before missing an exam.

Analysis Paper: An Interview of the Unfamiliar

The goal of this assignment is for you to understand, from a sociological perspective, an individual’s life experiences that are completely different from your own. The person you interview must be from a different racial group than your own. I am asking you to investigate the role race has in shaping the experiences and attitudes of the person you interview. Each person has a story to tell that can be framed and understood from the models and theories we have discussed in class. **You must find out your interviewee’s story and place it within the theoretical context of our readings and classroom discussions.** No phone interviews. Tape-record your interviews. Be professional. If you have any questions about this assignment, don’t hesitate to ask.

- 1) **Background Questions:** Where did this person grow up? What was their neighborhood like? Was it integrated, or segregated? What was their school like? Was it integrated, or segregated? Did they move around? If so, where? What is (was) their social class background? Are they married/single/divorced/widowed? Do they have kids? How was it growing up (race relations)? **USE PROBES TO ELICIT MORE INFORMATION.**
- 2) **Present Questions:** What do they think about race relations today? Do they see a change in their place of employment, neighborhood, in their children’s attitudes or in the role government has placed in race relations?
- 3) **Crisis Brings Change:** Was there a central, perhaps traumatic experience in their lives that left a permanent impression on your respondent? Equal Rights Movement, busing, discrimination, affirmative action, neighborhood flash points?
- 4) **Finding a Pattern:** Upon reviewing your recorded responses, are you able to uncover a pattern of events or experiences that might be linked to the different theoretical models we have discussed in class. Link what you see to the theories we read and discussed in class.
- 5) **Interviewing + Theoretical Framework = Ethnography:** It is required and essential to link your respondents experiences with our classroom readings. Your write up should be **IN YOUR OWN WORDS**; however, you can include quotes

from the literature which support the theoretical claims you make in your paper, as well as quotes from your respondent. **HOWEVER, USE QUOTES SPARINGLY!!**

***For this paper, you need to cite at least **five readings** from your textbook (or other assigned readings) to validate your argument. List each source in the reference section/work cited page.

Logistics

- *Format:* This paper should be double-spaced, utilizing 12-point font (Times New Roman), and be at least 4-5 pages in length. PLEASE staple your paper in the top left hand corner and you do not need to include a cover page.
- Use ASA or APA format throughout. If you do not follow one of these formats, specifically in regards to citations and your bibliography, points will be deducted from your final paper grade. **If you have any questions, please ask me. I will help you in any way I can!**
- *How will I be graded:* Your final paper grades will be dependent upon a number of aspects:
 - Content: Do you include what was asked for? **SECTION 5 is the most important!!** Do you make solid connections between your respondent's comments and class material/outside readings?
 - At least 25 points will be deducted if this section is neglected.
 - Clarity and Organization: Does your paper "flow?" Are transitions appropriate and clear?
 - Grammar/Spelling: Proofread!!
 - Logic: Does your argument make sense?
- *Late Papers:* First off, for your paper **not** to be considered late, I need a hard copy by the end of the class time on **April 24th**. For every day that your paper is late, 10 points will be deducted from your overall grade. I will NOT accept papers over **FIVE** days late, and I do NOT accept e-mailed papers.

Article Reviews

Throughout the semester, you are required to turn in 2, 2-3 page article reviews. To complete this assignment, you must conduct either a *Google scholar* search, or search for articles via the library (on-line or in person) on current race and ethnicity topics. **The article must be peer reviewed and located in a recognized scholarly journal. The article must be published after 2000. You must turn in a copy of the article with your review.**

****Some examples of referred journals include: American Journal of Sociology; American Sociological Review; Contemporary Sociology; Ethnic and Racial Studies; Social Forces; Sociological Spectrum; Social Justice; Social Problems**

Similar to your analysis paper, these reviews must be double-spaced, utilizing 12-point font (Times New Roman), and stapled. Use ASA or APA as your style guide. You will be graded for content, clarity, logic, grammar, and following directions.

****Similar to your interview paper, the same rules for lateness apply.**

Each review must address the following components:

- 1) Describe the focus, or main point of the article? What is the author(s) research question? What are the methods utilized? What are the main highlights of the argument and the conclusions?
- 2) Identify one major strength of the article and tell me **WHY** it is strength.
- 3) Identify one major weakness of the article and tell me **WHY** it is a weakness.
- 4) Conclude with your overall opinion of the article (a couple of sentences to a short paragraph—no more than this or points will be deducted). What did you learn? Why did you choose this article?

POINTERS: The author’s writing style is not a valid strength/weakness. Look at the methods—is it a qualitative or quantitative study? What are strengths and weaknesses of each method? Or, look at the question the author investigates. Is it important? Why or why not? What does it add to the literature, if anything?

Informal Writing (in-class)

Throughout the semester, you will be given **seven** opportunities to critically analyze the assigned readings (or videos/discussion) for that day. Each assignment is graded on a 3-point scale (0=Did not complete; 1=Poor; 2=Average; 3=Excellent). If you show up late, leave early, or do not attend class and miss the opportunity, you cannot make up this assignment. You are allowed to **drop one** of your informal writing assignments. If your absence is excused (see excused absences) and you miss the opportunity, set up an appointment with me and the question posed will be provided to you.

“Pop” Quizzes

There will be **six** quizzes throughout the semester, which will be based on class readings and discussion. Each quiz will consist of 5 questions (worth one point a piece) and they will pertain to sociological concepts, theories, and main ideas during a particular week. If you show up late, leave early, or do not attend class and miss the quiz, you cannot make it up. **You are allowed to drop your lowest quiz grade.**

How do I Succeed in this Course?

- 1) Read the syllabus! It outlines the whole course as well as what is expected of you.
- 2) Attend class and be on time. Being late disrupts your learning, as well as those around you. Punctuality is a good quality to have!
- 3) Do the reading! It will help you to participate in class as well as succeed on the exams.
- 4) Notes, notes, notes. Take notes on each of the readings. Trust me, it will help!
- 5) Study in groups—others may pick up on material that you overlooked, and vice-versa. However, don't rely on those groups to teach you the material in lieu of attending class or doing the readings yourself.
- 6) The reading load varies for each class. Anticipate days with heavier reading and **START EARLY**

**Don't e-mail me at the end of the semester asking what you can do to get the grade you want. You get the grade you earn, and you have the whole semester to do so.

Course Policies and Conduct

Academic Dishonesty

According to KSU's academic policy in the student handbook "No student shall receive, attempt to receive, knowingly give or attempt to give unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any work required to be submitted for credit (including examinations, laboratory reports, essays, themes, term papers, etc.). Unless specifically authorized, the presence and/or use of electronic devices during an examination, quiz, or other class assignment is considered cheating. Engaging in any behavior [that] a professor prohibits as academic misconduct in the syllabus or in class discussion is cheating. When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated, and when the ideas, theories, data, figures, graphs, programs, electronic based information or illustrations of someone other than the student are incorporated into a paper or used in a project, they should be duly acknowledged. No student may submit the same, or substantially the same, paper or other assignment for credit in more than one class without the prior permission of the current professor(s)". (http://www.kennesaw.edu/student_life/forms/shb/ksushp14.pdf)

**Plagiarism is only one example of academic dishonesty. Familiarize yourself with the above website concerning all aspects of academic dishonesty. Violation of the Academic Honesty policy will result in an F in the course and possible disciplinary action. All violations will be formally reported. Do not cheat, plagiarize, or violate any of the rules concerning this policy! Again, do not cheat, plagiarize, or violate any of these rules!

Disabilities and Accommodation

Students who wish to request accommodations for a disability may do so by registering with the Office of Disability Services. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of Disability Services, of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to me in which an accommodation is sought.

If you are a student with a documented disability, please contact me at the beginning of the semester to discuss accommodations.

Withdrawals

Last day to withdrawal from the course is **March 3rd**—the midpoint of the semester. If you withdraw by this point and are passing the course, you will receive a “W.”

Extra Credit

I do not offer any extra credit, so please do not ask. Yet, there will be one-two bonus questions on each exam, which will give you a chance to improve each exam grade.

Desire2Learn

Check Desire2Learn frequently as important announcements and content will be continuously posted.

Classroom Behavior

- **We will be talking about a number of sensitive topics throughout the semester and while I encourage class discussion, be respectful of your peers.** Do not interrupt your classmates or say derogatory comments towards each other; it will not be tolerated. Do not talk when others are speaking; that also includes me! If you intentionally offend someone or myself, I reserve the right to ask you to leave class on that particular day. If you are respectful, there should be no problems. Remember, since we all have different experiences and come from different walks of life, we can learn a great amount from each other.
- Technology is a fundamental aspect of the classroom; however, it can often interfere with the learning environment if it is used inappropriately. Therefore, laptops are **NOT ALLOWED** to be used **INAPPROPRIATELY** in my classroom. You may take notes, but do not surf the internet, login to Facebook, etc. Also, **DO NOT** use your cell phones (or other electronic devices—iPods, MP-3 players, etc... I shouldn't have to explain myself) while you are in my class; please turn them off or on silent! If you choose to utilize technology in a manner that I deem inappropriate (see above), I reserve the right to confiscate your technological device for that day.

Phone Numbers That May be Useful

- **Teaching Support Numbers**
 - Writing Center: 770-423-6380
 - Disability Services: 770-423-6443
- **Health and Medical Services**
 - Student Health Service Clinic: 770-423-6644
 - KSU Counseling and Psychological Services: 770-423-6600

Important Dates to Remember

February 11th—Exam One
February 18th— Article Review #1 due
March 13th—Exam Two
March 27th— Article Review #2 due
March 29th-April 4th—Spring Break
April 24th—Interview with the Unfamiliar due
April 29th—Final Exam

Course Schedule

****The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations will likely occur****

Reading schedule: For each class, please read the assigned material (textbook and additional readings on Desire2Learn) for each particular day. Since writing assignments are given out randomly, it is in your best interest to be prepared for class. Furthermore, reading the assigned material will enhance your participation and the class discussion

**Make sure you check Desire2Learn on a regular basis, as web links relevant to our class discussion and other scholarly readings will be posted throughout the semester.

DATE	SUBJECT	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS DUE
January 9 th	Introduction to Class: Syllabus and Introductions	No Readings
January 14 th	Race: A Social Construction Racial Formation	G1: How Skins Got Their Color G2: Drawing the Color Line G3: Racial Formations
January 16 th	Race: The Power of an Illusion	G4: Defining Race and Ethnicity G5: Racialized Social System Approach to Racism
January 21 st	The Changing Concept of Race	G8: Defining Race: Comparative Perspectives G10: Asian American Panethnicity: Contemporary National and Transnational Possibilities G11: Beyond Black and White: Remaking Race in America
January 23 rd	Understanding Racism	G15: Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position G16: Race and Gender Discrimination: Contemporary Trends
January 28 th	Understanding Racism	G17: Discrimination and the American Creed G18: How Does it Feel to be a Problem: Being Young and Arab in America
January 30 th	Color-Blind America	G12: Color-Blind Privilege: The Social Political Functions of Erasing the Color Line in Post-Racial America G13: The Ideology of Color Blindness

February 4 th	White Privilege and Color-Blind America	Tim Wise and the Pathology of White Privilege <i>Reading on Desire2Learn: Peggy McIntosh</i> G19: The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racialized Social Democracy G20: Laissez Faire Racism, Racial Inequality, and the Role of the Social Sciences
February 6 th	Affirmative Action	Video and Discussion <i>Reading on D2L: TBA</i>
February 11th	Exam One	No Readings
February 13 th	How Space Gets Raced	G21: Residential Segregation and Neighborhood Conditions in U.S. Metropolitan Areas
February 18th	How Space Gets Raced	<i>Reading on D2L: The Dynamics of Racial Residential Segregation</i> Article Review #1 Due
February 20 th	Race and the Workplace	G31: Kristen vs. Aisha; Brad vs. Rasheed: What's in a Name and how it Affects Getting a Job. G32: When the Melting Pot Boils Over: The Irish, Jews, Blacks, and Koreans of New York G33: There's No Shame in My Game: Status and Stigma among Harlem's Working Poor G34: Sweatshops in Sunset Park: A Variation of the late 20 th Century Chinese Garment Shops in NYC
February 25 th	Wealth and Income	G7: Transformative Assets, the Racial Wealth Gap, and the American Dream <i>Reading on Desire2Learn: "Forty Acres and a Mule"</i>
February 27 th	Wealth and Income	<i>Reading on D2L: The Making of the Black Middle Class</i>
March 3rd	Midpoint of the Semester	Last day to Withdrawal
March 4 th	Health Disparities	G6: Understanding Racial-Ethnic Disparities in Health G23: Environmental Justice in the 21 st Century: Race Still Matters G25: Why are there no Supermarkets in my Neighborhood? The Long Search for Fresh Fruit, Produce, and Healthy Food.
March 6 th	Race and Criminal Justice	G22: The Code of the Street G26: No Equal Justice: The Color of Punishment G27: The New Jim Crow
March 11 th	Race and Criminal Justice	G28: Racialized Mass Incarceration: Rounding up the Usual Suspects G29: The Mark of a Criminal Record
March 13th	Exam Two	No Readings
March 18 th	Race and Education	<i>Reading on D2L: Sociological Perspectives on Black and White Educational Inequalities</i>
March 20 th	Race and Education	<i>Reading on D2L: Assessing Oppositional Culture</i>

March 25 th	Race and Education	Little Rock Central: 50 Years Later (Video) <i>Reading on D2L: TBA</i>
March 27 th	Popular Culture	G36: Racism and Popular Culture G37: The Media as a System of Racialization: Exploring Images of African American Women and the New Racism G38: Black and White in Movies: Portrayals of Black-White Biracial Characters in Movies **Article Review #2 Due
March 29th-April 4th	SPRING BREAK—ENJOY	NO READINGS
April 8 th	Popular Culture	<i>Video: TBA</i>
April 10 th	Race, Stereotyping, and Sports	G39: Winnebagos, Cherokees, Apaches, and Dakotas: The Persistence of Stereotyping of American Indians in American Advertising and Brands G40: Sport in America: The New Racial Stereotypes
April 15 th	Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration	G41: The Melting Pot and the Color Line G42: Who are the other African Americans? Contemporary African and Caribbean Immigrants in the United States
April 17 th	Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration	G43: The Arab Immigrant Experience G44: Ethnic and Racial Identities of Second Generation Black Immigrants in NYC
April 22 nd	Race and Romance	G45: Guess Who’s been Coming to Dinner? Trends of Interracial Marriage over the 20 th Century G47: Discovering Racial Borders G48: Redrawing the Color Line? The Problems and Possibilities of Multiracial Families and Group Making
April 24 th	Closing the Gap	G50: Ten Things you can do to Improve Race Relations **Interview with the Unfamiliar due
April 29th	FINAL EXAM	No Readings