
SOC 438
Race and Ethnic Relations

Professor: Timothy L. O'Brien, Ph.D.
Location: Schroeder Family Bldg., Room 75
Time: M/W/F 9:00AM - 09:50AM
My Office: Schroeder Family Bldg., Room 58
Office Hours: M/W 1:00PM – 4:00PM; T/Th 3:00PM – 5:00PM
My Mailbox: Schroeder Family Bldg., Room 50
My Email: to28@evansville.edu

Course Description

Race and ethnicity are central to social life, and they shape a wide range of life chances and social interactions in both the United States and around the world. This course examines major theoretical and empirical approaches to the study race and ethnicity as well as the current state of racial and ethnic relations in the United States and globally. We will explore the major debates and assumptions regarding what constitutes race and ethnicity and how these concepts matter for individuals and societies. Drawing on a variety of sociological and social psychological theories and research, this course provides historical and contemporary frameworks to view race and ethnic relations. Although the class includes some lecture, most class time will be spent discussing the assigned readings, which come from academic journals and books as well as magazines and blogs. We will also incorporate aspects of popular culture (movies, music, and television programs) throughout the class in order to contextualize and highlight the everyday significance of the scholarly material we cover.

Course Goals

This course aims to accomplish several specific goals. First, students will learn about race and ethnicity as sociological concepts and learn to distinguish between scholarly and popular definitions of race and ethnicity. Second, students will become acquainted with sociological and other social scientific research that documents the many and complex ways in which race and ethnicity continue to shape social life. Third, students will gain experience thinking critically about issues related to race and ethnicity. Fourth, through a series of written assignments, students will gain experience developing and communicating sociological arguments.

Required Texts

- 1) Ray, Rashawn (Ed.). 2010. *Race and Ethnic Relations in the 21st Century: History, Theory, Institutions, and Policy*. Cognella: San Diego. (Available from the UE Bookstore and online.)
- 2) Anderson, Elijah. 2011. *The Cosmopolitan Canopy: Race and Civility in Everyday Life*. W.W. Norton: New York.
- 3) Several additional required readings will available via Blackboard

All readings should read carefully prior to the class for which they are assigned.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Students have the opportunity to earn up to 1000 points throughout the semester. Letter grades will be based on the usual scale:

A (1000-930), A- (929-900)
B+ (899-870), B (869-830), B- (829-800)
C+ (799-770), C (769-730), C- (729-700)
D+ (699-670), D (669-600)
F (<600)

Final grades will be calculated from the following components:

-Attendance and participation – Regular attendance and active participation are mandatory. It is important for students to attend all class meetings because lectures and other class activities will not simply repeat what is covered by readings. Starting in week 2, I will circulate an attendance sheet during each class meeting. It is the student's responsibility to sign the sheet each class. If you need to miss class for any reason, you are responsible for any material covered during the absence (including notes, assignments and announcements). Furthermore, if there is an in-class assignment on the day you miss, you will not be able to make it up.

Please use the space below to record contact information from classmates who you could contact in the event of an absence.

Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Name: _____ E-mail: _____

-In Class Assignments (100 points total or 20 points each) - Throughout the semester there will be 7 brief, in-class writing assignments. These may or may not be announced ahead of time. Some of these assignments consist of open-ended questions that students will respond to individually. Other assignments consist of small-group activities aimed at increasing comprehension of class material. At the end of the semester, students' *lowest 2 scores will be dropped, and the remaining 5 will count for 20 points (or 2%) each toward final grades.* These assignments are based on class readings, and are designed to encourage students to complete readings on time, and also to think critically about class materials. It is not possible to make-up in-class assignments missed due to absence.

-Opinion Editorials (Op-eds; 500 points total or 50 points each)—Students will write 10 op-eds over the course of the semester. Op-eds can be thought of as reflection statements on the reading or readings assigned for a particular class. Op-eds will be graded on your ability to—
1) Define concepts discussed in class and in the readings; 2) Summarize the main points of the reading; 3) Critique the reading (What do you think? From your perspective, was the main point correct or not?); 4) Offer alternative explanations if you disagree with the reading. In addition to content, op-eds will be graded for grammar and spelling. Students may write an op-ed for any 10 classes they choose (I strongly recommend that you not wait until the final 10 classes of the semester). Each statement should be no shorter than 250 words and no longer than 500 words. Op-eds should be double-spaced and include the student's name, the op-ed number, date, and a title. For each op-ed, students must 1) turn in a paper copy during class and 2) upload an electronic version to TurnItIn through our class Blackboard page.

-Mid-term Exam (150 points)—Students will complete a take-home mid-term exam consisting of several short answer essays similar to op-eds. Each answer should be 150-300 words. The exam must be double-spaced in and include your name and date. In addition to content, exams will be graded for grammar and spelling. Students may use a personal or university computer during the time of class at a location of their choosing but ***their work must be entirely their own***. On the day of the exam, students will begin the test at 9:00am and must submit their exam answers by 9:50am to TurnItIn for full credit. Failure to submit your exam by the specified time will result in a 10 point reduction in your exam grade every 15 minutes it is late.

-Final Paper (250 points)—Students will write an 8-10 page final paper. The paper should be double-spaced and use an 11 or 12 point standard font. In addition to content, final papers will be graded for grammar and spelling. The paper will be based on a set of questions I pose to the class during the final third of the semester. The paper will require students to synthesize information from class with outside research. The final paper is due on Tuesday, December 17 at 10:15am, which is the time that our final exam would be held. You must submit a hard copy of your paper to me and you must also upload an electronic version to TurnItIn. Failure to submit to me and online by the deadline will result in a 10 point reduction in your paper grade for every 15 minutes it is late.

Classroom Expectations

Regular, enthusiastic participation in discussions and class activities is required of all students. Furthermore, I encourage students to ask questions at any point during lectures, discussions, and other activities. One of the best parts of university life is our ability to discuss important, albeit sometimes sensitive topics from a range of backgrounds and perspectives. Keeping in mind that students come from diverse backgrounds, it is necessary to frame contributions to class in a respectful manner; disagreeing with another perspective does not mean we cannot learn from it. Also, as a matter of courtesy to your classmates, I ask that all cell phones and other electronic devices be turned off or set to silent during class meetings.

Laptops, Tablets, Mobile Devices

Class meetings will demand your full attention. Deep learning requires sustained focus on a single task. Using a computer take notes in class is acceptable, but if you use your laptop or mobile device to chat, update social media, play games, watch television, and the like it distracts me and your classmates. If I notice a student who is off task, I will invite them to stop. I encourage your classmates to do the same. Please silence phones. If it is important, feel free to step outside to make or take calls or texts.

Incompletes

I will not provide students with “incompletes” except in the most unusual circumstances.

Academic Integrity

This course is part of the academic community of the University of Evansville and students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of integrity. **Cases of cheating, plagiarism, or any forms of academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated under any circumstance.** Instances of academic dishonesty will be handled in accordance to University policy. Please see the Student Honor Code in this regard;

<http://www.evansville.edu/offices/deanstudents/docs/honorcode.pdf>.

Students with Special Needs

It is the policy and practice of the University of Evansville to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Written notification to faculty from the Office of Counseling Services is required for any academic accommodations. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with me and allow two weeks' notice. Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be received on a timely basis. If you have questions about services for students with disabilities or procedures for requesting services, you may contact the Office of Counseling Services at 488-2663.

Class Meetings and Assigned Readings

-The names and locations of all assigned readings are provided below. All readings are to be completed **before** the class for which they are assigned. The professor reserves the right to alter the syllabus.

-NB: Readings listed along with page numbers are located in the Ray text; Readings marked (BB) can be found on Blackboard

Week	Day	Date	Topic	Reading
1	Wednesday	8/28	Course Introduction	No reading
	Friday	8/30	Race and Ethnicity Defined	Ray— <i>Race and Ethnic Relations in the Twenty-First Century</i> (pg 1) Jones— <i>The Embedded Nature of “Race” Requires a Focused Effort to Remove the Obstacles to a Unified America</i> (pg 7)
2	Monday	9/2	Science of Race	Ray— <i>The Science, Social Construction, and Exploitation of Race</i> (pg 21)
	Wednesday	9/4	Social Construction of Race	Zuberi— <i>The Evolution of Racial Classification</i> (pg 29) *Perform Implicit Association Tests
	Friday	9/6	Social Construction of Race	Feagin— <i>Racist America: Racist Ideology as a Social Force</i> (pg 41)
3	Monday	9/9	Exploitation of Race	Drake— <i>White Racism and the Black Experience</i> (pg 59)
	Wednesday	9/11	Racial Formation	Omi and Winant— <i>Racial Formation: Understanding Race and Racism in the Post-Civil Rights Era</i> (pg 91)
	Friday	9/13	Racial Formation	Min— <i>Are Asian Americans Becoming “White”?</i> (BB) Sacks— <i>How Did Jews Become White Folks?</i> (BB)
4	Monday	9/16	Birth of a Nation	<i>The Willie Lynch letter</i> (BB)

	Wednesday	9/18	Race, Law, and the Civil Rights Movement	King— <i>Letters from Birmingham Jail (BB)</i> <i>The National Black Political Convention—The Gary Declaration (BB)</i>
	Friday	9/20	Race, Law, and the Civil Rights Movement	Goldberg— <i>“We Shall Not be Moved”</i> : <i>The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (BB)</i>
5	Monday	9/23	Black Power Movement	Malcolm X— <i>The Ballot or the Bullet (BB)</i> Black Panther Party— <i>What We Want (BB)</i>
	Wednesday	9/25	Black Power Movement	Davis— <i>Political Prisoners, Prisons, and Black Liberation (BB)</i>
	Friday	9/27	Affirmative Action	Katznelson— <i>When is Affirmative Action Fair? On Grievous Harms and Public Remedies (pg 391)</i> <i>Lee and Shaw—Harvard Graduate Students in Education for Diversity (BB)</i>
6	Monday	9/30	Intergroup Relations	Blumer— <i>Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position (pg 129)</i>
	Wednesday	10/2	The Social Psychology of Prejudice and Discrimination	Pager— <i>Mark of a Criminal Record (BB)</i>
	Friday	10/4	Perceived Discrimination, Relative Deprivation, and Unjust Treatment	Feagin— <i>The Continuing Significance of Race: Anti-Black Discrimination in Public Places (BB)</i>
7	Monday	10/7	Perceived Discrimination, Relative Deprivation, and Unjust Treatment	Rosenbloom and Way— <i>Experiences of Discrimination among African American, Asian American, and Latino Adolescents in an Urban High School (BB)</i>
	Wednesday	10/9	Racial Attitudes and Stereotypes	Ray— <i>Racial Attitudes Research: Debates, Major Advances, and Future Directions (pg 81)</i> Mueller et al.— <i>Unmasking Racism (BB)</i>
	Friday	10/11	Social Psychology of Whiteness	Bonilla-Silva et al.— <i>When Whites Flock Together: The Social Psychology of White Habitus (BB)</i>

8	Monday	10/14	FALL BREAK	No reading
	Wednesday	10/16	Public Attitudes about Race	Bobo— <i>Racial Attitudes and Relations at the Close of the Twentieth Century</i> (pg 163)
	Friday	10/18	Mid-term Exam	No reading
9	Monday	10/21	Education	Ray— <i>The Cumulative Pipeline of Persistent Institutional Racism</i> (pg 269) Lewis and Pattison— <i>Cracking the Educational Achievement Gap(s)</i> (pg 291) U.S. Supreme Court Opinion from <i>Parents v Seattle Schools</i> regarding race and schools (BB)
	Wednesday	10/23	Economy	Oliver and Shapiro— <i>Black Wealth, White Wealth: Wealth Inequality Trends</i> (pg 329)
	Friday	10/25	Economy	Bertrand and Mullainathan— <i>Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination</i> (pg 301)
10	Monday	10/28	Neighborhoods and Communities	Anderson— <i>Preface and Chapter 1</i> Sewell— <i>A Different Menu: Racial Residential Segregation and the Persistence of Racial Inequality</i> (pg 279)
	Wednesday	10/30	Neighborhoods and Communities	Anderson— <i>Read one of chapters 2, 3, or 4 (your choice)</i>
	Friday	11/1	Health Disparities	Gilbert and Leak— <i>Root and Structural Causes of Minority Health and Health Disparities</i> (pg 369) Berkman— <i>The Health Divide</i> (BB)
11	Monday	11/4	Race, ethnicity, and the justice system	Western and Pettit— <i>Beyond Crime and Punishment: Prisons and Inequality</i> (BB) Anderson— <i>Chapter 7</i>
	Wednesday	11/6	Race, ethnicity, and the justice system	Sampson and Wilson— <i>Toward a Theory of Race, Crime, and Urban Inequality</i> (pg 351)

	Friday	11/8	Citizenship and Nationalism	Noy— <i>Citizenship, Nationalism, and Human Rights</i> (pg 261)
12	Monday	11/11	Assimilation and the New Racial Structure	Bonilla-Silva— <i>From Bi-racial to Tri-racial: Towards a New System of Racial Stratification in the U.S.A.</i> (pg 109)
	Wednesday	11/13	Immigration and Ethnic Conflict	Pettigrew— <i>Reactions toward the New Minorities of Western Europe</i> (pg 137)
	Friday	11/15	Group Threat Theory and Contact Theory	Dixon— <i>The Ties that Bind and those that Don't</i> (pg 233)
13	Monday	11/18	Race and Cities	Anderson— <i>Chapter 5-The Color Line and the Canopy</i>
	Wednesday	11/20	Lookism, Tokenism, and Skin Color	Ray— <i>“One-Drop” to Rule them All? Colorism and the Spectrum of Racial Stratification in the Twenty-First Century</i> (pg 221) Viglione— <i>The Impact of Light Skin on Prison Time for Black Female Offenders</i> (BB)
	Friday	11/22	Work Day for Final Papers-No class	No reading
14	Monday	11/25	Whiteness	Maier— <i>Invisible Privilege</i> Scanzi— <i>Straight White Male: Easiest Setting There Is</i>
	Wednesday	11/27	THANKSGIVING	No reading
	Friday	11/29	THANKSGIVING	No reading
15	Monday	12/2	The “N” Word	Anderson— <i>Chapter 8</i>
	Wednesday	12/4	Race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality	Ray and Rosow— <i>Getting off and Getting Intimate</i> (pg197)
	Friday	12/6	Media, culture, and sports	Hoberman— <i>The Price of Black Dominance</i> (BB) Neal— <i>Hip Hop and Gender</i> (BB)
16	Monday	12/9	Social Change	Bobo— <i>What Do We Think about Race?</i> (pg 425)
	Wednesday	12/11		
	Friday	12/13	Social Change	Ray— <i>Engaging Social Change by Embracing Diversity</i> (pg 383) Mauro and Robertson— <i>Engaging Future Leaders: Peer Education at Work in Colleges and Universities</i> (pg

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Final Papers Due 10:15am, Tuesday, Dec. 17				