

# Sociology 216: Racial and Ethnic Minorities

## Spring 2011

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Office Hours:  
Monday: 2:30 - 3:30  
Wednesday: 10:00 - 11:00  
and by appointment

### What is this class all about?

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The goal of this course is to examine the nature of race and ethnicity in this society. This entails two primary undertakings: to understand the history of race and ethnicity and to understand how these concepts are manifested in our culture and social structures.

In simpler language, this means that our society has constructed or created what we think of as race and ethnicity. This is a process that has occurred over time - from the first moment that Columbus met the people who populated the islands off the east coast we have created meaning for the terms race and ethnicity in this country. These meanings have changed over time and differ by geographic region (and would be different if we looked at a different country), but they have common elements and implications for the groups that are defined this way. These definitions become part of our institutions and determine the form of our institutions. In this way we create a culture and structure that is dependent on certain ways of thinking about groups. This then affects who is likely to have a particular type of opportunity, and hence define which outcomes are easier and more difficult for members of different groups.

#### Course Goals:

This course has two primary goals. First, you should understand how the larger social system shapes our ideas about race and ethnicity. Second, you should understand how historical and current social forces create different outcomes for members of different racial and ethnic groups. In order to achieve these goals you should be able to fulfill the following more specific objectives:

1. Define race and ethnicity and explain how these definitions have changed over time,
2. Explain how the relationship between racial and ethnic groups can be understood, in part, as a relationship between dominant and subordinate groups,
3. Describe the relationship between groups historically,
4. Define assimilation and explain how it does and doesn't apply to various racial and ethnic groups,
5. Explain how the changing nature of race and ethnicity is influencing our current society and will influence our society in the future.

### How are we going to get there?

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#### Teaching Methods:

This course will rely on both lectures and discussions. The lectures are intended to both explain and go beyond what is contained in the reading. Class discussions are about working toward understanding the material and using it to understand the world around you. You should do the reading thoroughly before class and be prepared to discuss it. This assumes that you have spent some time thinking about the material to determine what is confusing to you (mark it so you can ask in class) as well as considering the implications of what you have read.

You should feel free to come to see me to discuss problems with the material, help with study skills, ideas about the material or just to chat. I will be available during my office hours, most class days in the afternoon and by appointment. Please also feel free to call me or email me with any questions you have at any point.

If you have a documented disability please let me know so that we can implement the appropriate accommodations.

## Course Requirements:

### **Moodle: 20% of your grade.**

This course will be web-enhanced. Some assignments will be completed through the use of Moodle. We will discuss the mechanics of this process in class. You are required to check your Moodle account at least three times per week to participate in discussions, read material assigned from the web, and participate in informal discussions when appropriate. You must read all of the material posted in the class space regarding posting rules and other issues of netiquette.

Do not wait until the last minute to complete your assignment on Moodle. Computer difficulties are not sufficient reason for extensions. Most of these assignments require that you post your own thoughts and respond to the posts of your classmates. Hence, you will generally need to post your first comment at least three days before the final due date.

All Moodle assignments must be completed by the due date, no late or alternate assignments will be accepted. These assignments are due by 9:00 am on the date specified.

### **Class Participation: 20% of your grade.**

You are expected to come to class and participate. This assumes that all reading has been completed and considered before class. Readings should be completed before the class on the date listed next to the reading. Class participation will be graded on the basis of both quality and quantity of participation. This does not mean that you have to get things "right". It means that you should have familiarity with what you have read, even if it confuses you, and be willing to work through it with the rest of the class. Attendance is required and any student missing more than four classes will have their class participation reduced by one letter grade.

### **Papers: 60% of your grade.**

There are four short papers assigned - one for each section of the course. The question for each paper will be available on Moodle at least one week in advance. These papers are meant to represent an analysis of the main issues of each section.

Length: 5 - 7 pages

Format: Typed, double spaced, one inch margins

These papers are designed to help you think about the material. They all require that you use material from the readings to explain and expand upon the issues we cover in class. Because these papers require substantial thinking you should plan to start working on them as soon as you receive the assignment. The best way to do this is to start by organizing the ideas we have covered into a coherent argument. This requires that you go back to your notes and the readings and construct an outline of the argument you plan to make, along with the sources (citations) of the material you will use to back up your assertions. We will discuss this in class extensively before the first paper and revisit it for each paper.

**Drafts:** You are encouraged to hand in drafts for comments prior to the due date. These can be in the form of an outline, a paragraph, half of the paper, or the entire thing. They can be hand written scribbles or typed sections.

You may email them to me in Moodle or hand them to me in class. Emailed papers may be attached in the following formats: Microsoft Word, rich text (rtf), open document (odt) or Adobe Acrobat (pdf). I cannot open Microsoft Works or WordPerfect files reliably.

*Drafts must be turned in by class time if they are on paper the class before they are due and by noon on the day before the paper is due if they come by email.*

**Late Papers:** Late papers will be accepted but will have a late penalty of 4 points deducted for the first class they are late and two points for each class they are late after that, up to a maximum of 10 points. Papers are late immediately after class on their due date. Extensions *may* be granted for personal or family illnesses or problems. Please make the request before the due date.

**Rewrites:** You will be permitted to rewrite the first three papers. Rewrites should represent a substantial reworking of at least one section. This should go beyond grammatical editing and include revision of your argument - either through rethinking it or supporting it with more evidence or reorganizing it. The new grade will be averaged with the original grade. *Rewrites are due one week after the graded papers are returned.*

## Some additional details:

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### **Snow Days:**

If the college is closed for a snow day (or I am out sick), check Moodle for any changes in the schedule.

### **Textbook:**

**Required:** Norman R. Yetman (ed.). 1999. *Majority and Minority: The Dynamics of Race and Ethnicity in American Life*, 6th edition (Needham Heights, Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon)

**Recommended:** Diana Hacker, 2007. *A Writer's Reference, Sixth Edition* Bedford/St. Martin's (any edition will do).

### **Core Competencies:**

Students who enter BCC in the fall of 2004 or later and students with fewer than 15 credits by fall 2004 are required to complete a core competencies portfolio. Students who would like to use a paper from this course to fulfill a competency should meet with me. All of the papers in this class fulfill the following competencies:

- Critical Thinking
- Human Understanding and Interaction
- Written Communication with sources

### **Additional Readings:**

Occasionally we will develop a question in class that requires more information or I will come across a new resource that will enhance the work that we are doing. As a result, I reserve the right to add additional (generally short) readings to the list below. If this occurs, the readings will be announced in class and on Moodle.

### **Dropping the Class:**

I do not withdraw students from class except for cases of plagiarism. If you no longer want to continue in the course, please fill out an add/drop form and bring it by my office.

### **Catalog Description:**

A study of the social, economic, and political conditions affecting the status of major racial and ethnic groups in the United States. Attention will be focused on selected minority groups emphasizing immigration, intercultural conflict, accommodation, and assimilation.

Prerequisite: Soc 105 or Psy 107 or permission of the instructor.

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Date	Reading	Due
Mon, Jan 24	Introduction to the Course	<b>Forum 0 Starts</b>

Introduction to Race & Ethnicity		
Wed, Jan 26	Websites: The Social Construction of Race, PBS and Mixed Race Twins (See Moodle)	
Fri, Jan 28	No Reading	<b>Forum 0 Ends</b>
Mon, Jan 31	Ethnicity and Race and Social Stratification: pp. 1 - 16.	
Wed, Feb 2	Majority-Minority Relations: pp. 16 - 22.	<b>Forum 1 Starts</b>
Fri, Feb 4	Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism: pp. 23 - 38	
Mon, Feb 7	No Reading	<b>Forum 1 Ends</b>
Wed, Feb 9	Article 3: Ashley W. Doane, Jr., "Dominant Group Ethnic Identity in the United States: The Role of "Hidden" Ethnicity in Intergroup Relations", pp. 72-77	
Fri, Feb 11	Article 3: Ashley W. Doane, Jr., pp 77- 81	
Mon, Feb 14	Article 3: Ashley W. Doane, Jr., pp 81- 85	
Wed, Feb 16	No Reading: Discussion of Papers	

Historical Perspectives		
Fri, Feb 18	American Indians/Native Americans: pp. 87 - 95.	
Mon, Feb 21	<i>No Classes: Presidents' Day</i>	
Wed, Feb 23	European Americans: pp. 95 - 100.	<b>Paper 1</b>
Fri, Feb 25	African Americans: pp. 101 - 109.	
Mon, Feb 28	Article 7: William Julius Wilson, "The Declining Significance of Race"	
Wed, Mar 2	Article 9: Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton, "The Construction of the Ghetto"	<b>Forum 2 Starts</b>
Fri, Mar 4	<i>No Classes: Professional Day</i>	
Mon, Mar 7	Hispanic Americans/Latinos: pp. 109 - 116.	<b>Forum 2 Ends</b>
	<i>March 15 - 19: Spring Break</i>	
Mon, Mar 21	Article 10: Frank D. Bean and Marta Tienda, "The Structuring of Hispanic Ethnicity: Theoretical and Historical Considerations"	
Wed, Mar 23	Asian Americans: pp. 116 - 121 Websites on Asian American History	
Fri, Mar 25	Article 11: Don Mar and Marlene Kim, "Asian Pacific Americans: Historical Trends"	
Mon, Mar 28	No Reading: Discussion of Paper	

Date	Reading	Due
<b>Patterns of Ethnic Integration</b>		
Wed, Mar 30	Assimilation: pp. 227 - 238.	
Fri, Apr 1	No Reading	<b>Paper 2</b>
Mon, Apr 4	Dimensions of Assimilation: pp. 238 - 253.	
Wed, Apr 6	Assimilation Rates: pp. 253 - 271.	
Fri, Apr 8	Article 14: Mary C. Waters & Karl Eschbach, "Immigration and Ethnic and Racial Inequality in the United States."	
Mon, Apr 11	Article 17: Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou, "The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and Its Variants"	<b>Forum 3 Starts</b>
Wed, Apr 13	Article 20: Joe R. Feagin, "The Continuing Significance of Race: Antiracist Discrimination in Public Places"	
Fri, Apr 15	No Reading	<b>Forum 3 Ends</b>
Mon, Apr 18	<i>No Class: Patriots' Day</i>	
Wed, Apr 20	Article 21: David R. James, "The Racial Ghetto as a Race-Making Situation: The Effects of Residential Segregation on Racial Inequalities"	
Fri, Apr 22	Article 22: Herbert J. Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America"	
Mon, Apr 25	No Reading	

<b>Race and Ethnicity at Century's End</b>		
Wed, Apr 27	Demographic Changes and Contemporary Ethnicity: pp. 431 - 443. Websites: Census data on the foreign-born population (this is a pdf)	<b>Paper 3</b>
Fri, Apr 29	The Coalescing of "White" America: pp. 443 - 460.	
Mon, May 2	Websites: Demographics	
Wed, May 4	Article 23: Douglas S. Massey, "The New Immigration and Ethnicity in the United States"	<b>Forum 4 Starts</b>
Fri, May 6	Article 24: Saskia Sassen, "America's Immigration 'Problem'"	
Mon, May 9	Article 27: Roger Waldinger, "The New Urban Reality"	<b>Forum 4 Ends</b>
Wed, May 11	Last Class: Wrap Up	
Final Exam		<b>Paper 4</b>