

US Racial and Ethnic Relations- SOCY 1021-001
Course Syllabus- Fall 2015

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Office: Atlas building (in or near Pekoe coffee shop)
Office Hours: T/R: 9:15-10:15

Course Description:

This course is designed to provide students with an introduction to the study of race and ethnicity in the U.S. We will focus on key theoretical perspectives on race and ethnicity and will consider many commonly believed myths about race in the U.S. We will not be entering debates about whether or not race is “real” in a biological sense; instead, we will be focusing on the real-life consequences that result from being born into a socially-constructed racial group. This class will analyze how race impacts where you live and who lives in your neighborhood, how you see yourself, and how you are perceived and treated by others.

Despite common rhetoric that America is “post-racial” or “colorblind,” this course will challenge us to recognize and talk about race and racism. This class will be both academically and personally challenging for all of us. I fully anticipate that we will talk about ideas or concepts in this class that we, as a society, would rather pretend did not exist; consequently, if there is never a time that someone is not uncomfortable or angry when talking about the material I am NOT doing my job. This class takes the perspective that racism is a **social problem** that must be dealt with on the individual and structural levels.

Course Objectives:

1. Understand the major theoretical perspectives in race, ethnicity and immigration, and how these are embedded within social, political, and historical conditions.
2. Learn to recognize how your own racial/ethnic identity(ies) and experience is situated within broader structural and cultural systems.
3. Understand, analyze, apply, and critique course information through exam responses and writing assignments.
4. Develop, through in-class group work, the skills to frame useful and thoughtful questions over class readings and how to successfully participate in academic discussions.

Required Course Materials

McClure, Stephanie M. and Cherise A. Harris. 2015. *Getting Real About Race: Hoodies, Mascots, Model Minorities, and Other Conversations*. Sage Publishing. (marked GRAR in the syllabus)
Other readings (marked ** on syllabus) posted on D2L.

Grade Scale:

Letter	Percentage	Description
A	94-100%	Exceptional: Exceeds all required elements of the assignment and the quality of the work is considerably greater than what is required.
A-	90-93%	

B+ B B-	87-89% 84-86% 80-83%	Good: Meets all required elements of the assignment and the quality of work is better than what is required.
C+ C C-	77-79% 74-76% 70-73%	Average: Meets all required elements of an assignment, no more, no less. Quality of assignment is satisfactory for college level work.
D+ D D-	67-69% 64-66% 60-63%	Below average: Does not meet all required elements of the assignment and/or the quality is below satisfactory for college level work.
F	59% or below	Failing: Very few or no requirements of the assignment are met and/or the quality of the assignment is unacceptable.

Grading and Assessment:

Your grades will be based on the following items (for a total of **500 points**):

<i>Current Events:</i>	<i>50 points</i>
<i>Exams:</i>	<i>200 points</i>
<i>Application Projects:</i>	<i>200 points</i>
<i>Participation:</i>	<i>50 points</i>

Assignments:

Current Events Assignments (50 points):

News media is one area where you can see how the concepts and ideas we cover in class apply to understanding our world. For this assignment, you will need to find a news story/current event and write a response that details how the article relates to sociological concepts covered in the class.

You are required to turn in **5 current events assignments** over the course of the semester (you choose which weeks to submit!). Each response is worth **10 points** for a total of **50 points**. Your current events assignments need to be uploaded to the D2L dropbox no later than **Friday** of the week for which you want to submit by **11:59 pm** (in other words, if you want to do a current events response for the readings we will cover in week 2, your assignment needs to be uploaded by 11:59pm on Friday of week 2). I will be closing the dropbox each week at 11:59pm, so please make sure that you upload your response before then!

Each current event response should be approximately 1-page, single-spaced. You should begin by providing a short summary paragraph (~5 sentences) of the current event. The rest of the paper (approximately 2-4 additional paragraphs) is devoted to applying multiple course concepts to understanding/analyzing your current event. Each current event assignment **must** include a minimum of **TWO[2] readings** from the course and should answer the question: **How does this relate to course concepts?** You **MUST** include properly cited, in-text references to course materials in your

paper (in other words, I am NOT just looking for your opinion on the article—you should think of these assignments as mini research papers and include references from the texts).

Exams (200 points):

There will be three exams this semester (including the final exam). The first two exams will be worth **60 points** each. The third exam will be worth **80 points**. The exams will consist of a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions. *None of the exams are cumulative!*

Application Projects (200 points):

There are three required application projects due this semester. Each assignment requires students to complete research and a paper that ties together class readings, discussions, other in-class materials, and outside research. More details about the particulars of each application project will be discussed in-class. Assignment prompts for the application projects will be handed out in class and posted on D2L after they have been assigned. The point breakdown is as follows:

Application Project #1: 50 points

Application Project #2: 75 points

Application Project #3: 75 points

Participation (50 points):

Group Participation: On a regular basis throughout the course you will get together in small groups (3-4 students) to discuss questions I pose on the material. This will give you an opportunity to “think out” your ideas in a smaller, lower pressure environment before sharing them with your classmates. Group participation is worth a total of **25 points**.

Individual participation: Throughout the semester you will have the opportunity to earn up to **25 points** for individual comments, questions, and ideas that you express (a) in the classroom, (b) in office hours, or (c) in the online discussion boards available via D2L. If you wish to comment on the discussion board on D2L, this will need to be completed by **11:59pm on Saturday** of each week. (For example, if you wanted to receive participation credit for week 3, you would need to post comments and/or questions to the week 3 discussion board by 11:59pm on Saturday of that week).

While you will not lose points for not participating (except under circumstances outlined in the “Disruptive behavior” section of the classroom policies below), you can only **GAIN** points from participation. In other words, if you never speak in class, in office hours, or on the discussion board, you will receive a score of “0” for individual participation.

Classroom Policies:

Class arrival and departure: Arrive on time and do not leave early without prior permission from instructor. In the event you are late, please come in quietly and do not disrupt the class.

Cell phones: No use of cell phones (i.e., no texting, no talking, no social media). Please turn your phone OFF or on SILENT during class time.

Laptops: Laptops are to be used for **class purposes only!** If I catch you using your laptop for other purposes you will lose laptop privileges for the remainder of the semester!

Disruptive Behavior: Disruptive students in the academic setting hinder the educational process. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. “Disruption” means behavior that interferes with normal academic functions. Examples include, but are not limited to: persistently interrupting other speakers; behavior that distracts the class from the subject matter or discussion; or in extreme cases, physical threats, harassing behavior or personal insults, or refusal to comply with faculty direction.

Class Discussions: It is a priority that classroom discussion is respectful and fosters further exploration of the topic. Each and every person, including myself, needs to respect the views of their classmates. Hateful, discriminatory, or mean-spirited remarks will not be tolerated on any level and may result in an embarrassing situation in which I have to ask someone to dismiss themselves from the classroom. Please keep this in mind and always remain aware of how impactful our words can be.

Class Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes during the semester and come prepared to discuss the material for that day (in other words- do the reading!). If you are unable to attend a class, I strongly recommended that you contact a classmate for course material, as my notes are not provided online and I will not provide them to you in the case of an absence. In the event that there are major life events that affect your ability to attend class, it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible to discuss your situation.

Makeup Work: The exam schedule and due dates for assignments are listed at the end of the syllabus. I do NOT allow for makeup work for any exams, papers, and/or assignments unless the absence falls under a CU-recognized extenuating circumstance (outlined below).

The University of Colorado authorizes extenuating circumstances. Anticipated extenuating circumstances must be cleared with the instructor prior to the event, and, whenever possible, at the beginning of the semester. Unanticipated or emergency circumstances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Examples of such absences/circumstances and the required documentation/verification are as follows:

<i>Anticipated</i>	<i>Required Documentation</i>
Official university function	University official authorizing the absence
Required court or jury appearance	Clerk of the court
Required military obligation	Copy of orders or commanding officer statement
Religious observance	Student-initiated request

<i>Unanticipated</i>	<i>Required Documentation</i>
Extraordinary illness or injury	Physician note
Death of family member	Copy of death certificate or notice of services
Closed campus-inclement weather	No verification required
Open campus-inclement weather	Highway department closed road verification
Required employment travel	Immediate supervisor note

Grade Contesting: If you feel that you have been given an unfair grade, you need to come and see me during office hours ***within one week (7 days) of receiving the graded assignment*** to explain why you feel that you have earned a higher grade than received. When appealing the grade, you need to be aware that the grade can be raised, lowered, or remain the same. You are responsible for keeping

all materials that have been graded. If you cannot provide these materials, your grades cannot be appealed. ***I will under no circumstances discuss grades via email.***

Rosters: Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. For definitions and University regulations regarding academic dishonesty, familiarize yourself with—and adhere to—the University Honor Code: www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode and the University's Policy on Classroom Behavior: www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html.

Discrimination and Harassment: The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>.

Disability Statement: If you qualify for accommodations due to disability, please let me know during the first two weeks of the semester. It is your responsibility to contact Disability Services and obtain documentation. The Disability Services Office can be contacted at (303) 492-8671 or through <http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices>.

Calendar

Week	Topics and Readings
1	8/25-8/27: The Sociological Imagination & Basic Concepts GRAR: Essay 1
2	9/1-9/3: Historical and Theoretical Perspectives Du Bois: "Chapter 1: Of Our Spiritual Strivings"*** GRAR: Essay 4 and 21 **Additional reading posted on D2L
3	9/8-9/10: Racism, Prejudice, and Discrimination GRAR: Essay 2 and 3 Bonilla-Silva: "Rethinking Racism"***
4	9/15-9/17: Why is There Inequality? GRAR: Essay 6, 8, and 12 <i>9/18/2015: Application Project #1 due by 11:59pm</i>
5	9/22-9/24: Whiteness and White Privilege GRAR: Essay 22 Peggy MacIntosh: "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"*** <i>9/25/2015: Exam #1</i>

6	9/29-10/1: Colorblind Racism GRAR: Essay 5 and 17
7	10/6-10/8: Race and Space Bonilla-Silva and Embrick: "Every Place has a Ghetto"*** Massey "Residential Segregation and Neighborhood Conditions in US Metropolitan Areas"***
8	10/13-10/15: Race and Education GRAR: Essay 13 and 14
9	10/20-10/22: Race and Crime GRAR: Essay 19 Angyal: "I Don't Want to be an Excuse for Racist Violence Anymore"*** Alexander: "The New Jim Crow"*** <i>10/23/2015: Application Project #2 due by 11:59pm</i>
10	10/27-10/29: Race and the Media GRAR: Essay 7 and 10 <i>10/29/2015: Exam #2</i>
11	11/3-11/5: Immigration GRAR: Essay 18 Golash-Boza: "Immigration Nation" (chapter 1 ONLY)
12	11/10-11/12: Immigration Golash-Boza: "Immigration Nation"*** (chapter 3 and 4)
13	11/17-11/19: Immigration Huntington: "The Hispanic Challenge"*** Telles: "Mexican Americans and the American Nation: A Response to Professor Huntington"***
14	11/24-11/26: No classes, Fall Break
15	12/1-12/3: Affirmative Action GRAR: Essay 15 and 20
16	12/8-12/10: Moving the Conversation Forward Lee and Bean: "Beyond Black and White: Remaking Race and Ethnic Relations in America"*** GRAR: Essay 23 <i>12/11/2015: Application Project #3 due by 11:59pm</i>
17	Final exam: Monday, December 14, 2015 7:30-10pm