Race and Society

Sociology 208
Fall 2012

Professor Stewart
Teaching Assistant
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

For years we have understood that race is, biologically speaking, an exceedingly complex matter and that preconceived biases much more than biology govern the way people think about race. Students in this course will critically review both the biological myth and social reality of race. In particular, students will assess the social significance of race by examining the reality of racial stratification, the reality of the experience of race, and the rationality of those who study racial dynamics and processes.

During this course students will review the origins of the concept race, the historical science and statistics used to justify racial thinking, and review several empirical works on race in Sociology. The first portion of the course is aimed at disentangling the social construction of race. The readings, lectures and classroom discussions for this part of the course are largely based on historical figures and events that played a role in the social genesis of the racial construct. Our discussions will center on the reality of race prior to the 16th century, the early science that validated the racial construct and the associated social hierarchy, the eugenics movement, and the current scientific perspective on the relationship between race and intelligence. In the second portion of the course, students will review and critically examine a number of theoretical and empirical readings on the Sociology of race. Taken together, these latter readings are an introduction to the theories and empirical research on race in Sociology. At the end of the course, students will have an in-depth understanding of the origins of race, the structure of racial hierarchy in the United States, and a fundamental understanding of many sociological theories of race and racial stratification in America.

The class meets on Mondays and Wednesdays between 3:30 p.m. and 4:50 p.m. in Annenberg Hall room G21. My office is located on the first floor of 1812 Chicago Ave in Room 109. I will be available in on Mondays and Wednesdays between 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. in my sociology office, or by appointment. I prefer that you make an appointment before you come during my office hours. When you come to my office for a meeting please DO NOT wear perfume or cologne. I will have to ask you to reschedule our meeting if you wear perfume or
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course requirements include: Regular reading assignments, class attendance and participation, quizzes, and exams. Students should do the reading prior to the class meeting. Class participation and in-class projects constitute 5% of your final grade. Participation will be graded through contribution to class discussions, and in-class group assignments which generally require cooperation among members to answer a question or complete a task related to the reading/lecture. Students who fail to actively participate in group assignments or miss more than 1 in-class assignment will be penalized (a minimum of 0.5 percentage points per assignment over one). There will be three in-class quizzes to test your comprehension of the readings and class discussions. The quizzes will constitute 30% of the grade for the course (10% each). The quizzes will be announced one class prior to the class meeting they will be administered. The quizzes will draw from previous lectures, and class discussions. There is no make-up quiz. There will be a midterm examination (October 29th, 2012). The midterm will constitute 25% of the final grade. The final exam (December 14th, 2012, 3:00pm-5:00pm) will constitute 40% of the grade for the course.

The quizzes and exams will all be short answer. They will draw directly from the information in the readings and covered in class. To score well on the quizzes and exams it is imperative that you know the respective material and sufficiently understand the concepts so that you may define, explain, describe, compare and contrast, provide examples, highlight counterexamples, and fulfill other tasks as they pertain to the concepts and subject matter of the course. The first quiz will take place a few weeks prior to the midterm. It will cover all the material up to that point. The remaining quizzes will take place after the midterm. The final exam is cumulative. Questions will cover the entire scope of the course and require you to be very familiar with the material. Please do not discount the exam because it is open note. As in all of my courses, I want students to perform well. I encourage you to do your part in actively participating and asking questions to clarify any confusion so that you may earn your desired grade.

Grading - As in all courses, sometimes we make a few mistakes in grading quizzes and exams. Sometimes these mistakes are in favor of the student, and other times they may penalize the student. If you have a concern about a grade on a quiz or an exam, you must type a request to have the grade reviewed. Your request should include: 1) identification of the question(s) you would like us to review, 2) clear and concise reason for reviewing the answer, and 3) statement of evidence as to why the grade should be adjusted. This type written request must be given in person to John Robinson with your quiz/exam no more than one week after the quiz is handed back. We will not accept electronic requests, requests without quizzes, nor requests with altered quizzes. If a quiz is altered and a request is made for a review, the student will receive a grade of 0 for the quiz. While we review a particular quiz, we will also review other questions to make sure there are no other mistakes. If we find another mistake (that may benefit or penalize the
grade) we will make the necessary adjustment to your grade. As a consequence, a review of a quiz/exam may either increase or decrease one’s initial grade.

Attendance for this course is required and I will take attendance at the beginning of each class period (please be prompt; I will count excessive tardiness [i.e., >3] as an unexcused absence). Students are penalized 2% per unexcused absence during the course of the quarter. I will excuse absences for sickness, religious holidays, in-patient hospital admissions, and military service. Please do not bring me documentation for any other reason. I urge you to take attendance seriously to avoid any dissatisfaction associated with a lower final grade.

Your final grade will be calculated from the respective attendance, participation, quizzes, and exams based on the percentages above. Furthermore, there is no extra credit for this course. I encourage you to work hard to avoid encountering any dissatisfaction with the grading process. The tabular breakdown of your final grade is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation/In-Class Projects</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>3 (announced)</td>
<td>30% (10% each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>10/29/12</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>12/14/12</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-2% per unexcused absence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note regarding Syllabus Changes - I reserve the right to make changes to the schedule of readings and/or lectures during the course of the quarter. I will announce any such changes in class. You are responsible for noting the changes and preparing for class appropriately.

Note regarding Cheating/Honor Code - Any student that presents the work of another student (except for his/her partner in in-class assignments) as his/her own or who is caught copying the work of another student during a quiz/exam or allowing another student to copy from him/her will receive a grade of F on that project or exam, to be counted as zero in computing the final grade. As per university policy, I will refer students violating the honor code to the Assistant Dean for Academic Integrity in the Weinberg College of Arts & Sciences. No exceptions will be made. Also, any student that forges (i.e., signs) another student’s name on the attendance roster will be penalized 5 points on their final grade—falsifying information related to a course grade is a violation of the honor code.

TEXTBOOKS
(Available at the Norris Bookstore):


**READINGS**

(Available on Blackboard)


**SCHEDULE**

**Part 1: What is Race?**

10/1  
*Introduction and a Brief History of Race*  
Drake, St. Clair. 1987. *Black Folk Here and There*. Chap. 1 (Blackboard)  
Film Clip: Implicit Attitudes Test
10/3  Historical Race
    Reading: Graves, Chaps. 1 & 2
    Film Clip: The Matrix

10/8  Early Science of Race
    Reading: Graves, Chaps. 3
    Film Clip: The Power of Illusion - Part 2

10/10 Early Science of Race, cont.
    Reading: Graves, Chaps. 4

10/15 Social Darwinism
    Reading: Graves, Chap. 5
    Film Clip: The Jerk

10/17 Galton’s Hereditary Genius
    Comparison of the two Classifications
    The Comparative Worth of Different Races
    Film Clip: Trading Places

10/22 Early Eugenics
    Reading: Graves, Chap. 6
    Film Clip: The Power of Illusion - Part 1

10/24 Race and IQ in the new Millennium
    Reading: Graves, Chap. 10 & Conclusion

10/29 Midterm Examination!!!!

Part 2: Theory and Empirical Research on Race

10/31 The Race Relations Cycle and Protecting Privilege
    Pacific Sociological Review
    Reading: Blumer. 1958. “Race Prejudice as a sense of group position”
    Film Clip: A Class Divided

11/5 Race as Structure
    Reading: Bonilla-Silva. 1996. “Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation”
    Film Clip: Eddie Murphy, SNL.

11/7 Wealth Disparities: An Example of Structure
11/12  Color Blind Racism  

11/14  Segregation: The House of Colorblindness  
Film Clip: Dateline - White Flight

11/19  Racial Stories  

11/21  Labor Market Discrimination  

11/26  Changing Race: More than just Black and White  

11/28  How Many Racists? A Systemic Perspective  
Reading: Stewart, Quincy Thomas. 2010. “Big Bad Racists, Subtle Prejudice and Minority Victims: An Agent-Based Model of the Dynamics of Racial Inequality.”

12/3  No Class/Reading Week

12/5  No Class/Reading Week or Short Overview and Exam Review

12/14  Final Examination!!!!!
   3:00pm-5:00pm  
   Annenberg G21