**SOAN 272: Race and Ethnicity in the United States**

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Office Hours: Mon: 2:30 - 3:30 pm
Tues: 9:30 - 10:30 am
Wed: 2:30 - 3:30 pm
Fri: 2:30 - 3:30 pm

For all office hours, sign up on the sheet on my door
And by appointment, if necessary

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### Course Description

With the election (and re-election) of President Obama, many pundits declared we are now in a post-racial society. However, as social scientists, we know race continues to be a ‘master status’ that shapes our lives. This course provides an overview of the study of race and ethnicity through a sociological framework. Primarily, we analyze race through the lens of inequality, analyzing how race intersects with gender and class to shape identity and opportunity. We will also explore how racial groups are represented in the media. In addition, we will examine the fluidity of racial categories and boundaries, concluding with a discussion of interracial unions and the multiracial population in the United States.

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### Course Goals

- To provide students with a broad overview and a vocabulary to talk about race and ethnicity in the United States
- To help students contextualize their own experiences and the experiences of others
- To develop students’ critical thinking skills
- To hone students analytic reading and writing skills
- To encourage thoughtful conversations about difficult questions

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### Course Expectations

In an age of color blindness, sometimes talking about race is not easy. Paraphrasing one of the great founding figures in sociology, WEB DuBois, “The problem of the century is the problem of the color line.” These words were uttered over a century ago. However, they may be just as true today as they were in DuBois’s day.

This course is designed to get you to think, to write, and to talk with each other. In order to fully participate in this class, it is vital for you to help create a collegial atmosphere based on a foundation of respect, intellectual curiosity, and a willingness to speak up. The more you are willing to critically engage with the materials and each other, the better class will be.

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### Required Course Materials

The following texts are available at the Carleton Bookstore:

*Race in an Era of Change*, edited by Heather Dalmage and Barbara Katz Rothman

*The Diversity Paradox*, by Jennifer Lee and Frank Bean

*Speaking of Race and Class*, by Elizabeth Aries, with Richard Berman
Additional readings are available on Moodle

**Student Learning Outcomes:**
The Department of Sociology and Anthropology has specified six student learning outcomes (SLOs) that we want students to acquire. In this course, our focus is on the following three:

- Learning how to connect information about historical and contemporary socio-cultural phenomena;
- Applying sociological theory to analyze socio-cultural phenomena;
- Drawing upon your understanding of historical and contemporary socio-cultural phenomena to engage the world.

**Assignments**
- Response papers – 2 different 1000 word review/response papers @ 9% each (more on these later)
- 1000 word reflection paper about your experience with race and social class at Carleton, drawing on Aries’s work 9%
- Interview project (2-3 page write up of the interview and 2-3 page write up about what it was like to sit down and have a conversation about race for you and your respondent) 13%
- Take home midterm: 25%
- Paper (12 pages): 22%
- Student led discussion with discussion questions posted on moodle: 3%
- Class participation and attendance: 10%

**Grades**
Grades will be assigned according to the following distribution:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>F</td>
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*Policy on late work:* The ten week term is short and falling behind is a recipe for disaster. Get your assignments done on time. In general, I do not accept late work and I do not give makeup exams.

**Academic Integrity**
In line with Carleton’s policy on academic integrity, it is assumed that the student is the author of all coursework. Please refer to Carleton’s full policy for additional information or see me if you have questions. [http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity/](http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity/)

**Disability Services for Students**
Carleton College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services, Andy Christensen, at 222-4464 or anchrist@carleton.edu, to begin the process.
**Attendance/Class participation/Respectful use of electronic devices**

Just showing up to class is not sufficient. You are encouraged to speak up, raise questions and take risks. *There is no such thing as a stupid question!*

Students who are consistently tardy or miss three or more classes will forfeit their participation grade. I am a reasonable person so should you have an extenuating circumstance and the documentation to verify it (i.e. a note from a doctor, class dean, etc.), we can work something out.

It should go without saying but in addition to being present, students should refrain from inappropriately using electronic devices during class time.

The “default” participation grade is 5 out of 10, so students who actively and productively contribute to class will substantially increase their grades. Egregious absenteeism and tardiness will significantly affect your grade beyond participation points.

**Summary of Due Dates**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection paper</td>
<td>Jan 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Jan 24</td>
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<td>Essays</td>
<td>Feb 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take home midterm</td>
<td>Feb 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>March 15</td>
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**Part 1: Theoretical Perspectives on Race**

Monday Jan. 6. Class 1: A Post-racial society?
- Introduction to the course
- What is a master status?
- Talking about race (it is seen as so difficult that there are websites and programs geared to help people do it)
  - [http://www.talkingaboutrace.org/](http://www.talkingaboutrace.org/)
  - [http://www.indiana.edu/~equity/talking.php](http://www.indiana.edu/~equity/talking.php)

Wednesday Jan. 8. Class 2: Setting the stage
- Read: Race and Class Matters at an Elite College by Elizabeth Aries (chapters 1-4)

Friday Jan. 10. Class 3: More on Aries
- Aries chapters 5-6
- Microaggressions at Carleton (see moodle links)
• REC: Chapter 1. Racial Formation in the United States (Omi and Winant)

Monday Jan. 13. Class 4: Racial Formations
• REC: Chapter 2. The Racial Formation of American Indians
• Defining race: comparative perspectives by F. James Davis
• Doing Race: An Introduction

1,000 word response paper about your experiences with race at Carleton, using Aries (due 1/14) in my mailbox by 4pm

Wednesday Jan. 15. Building a vocabulary
• “Constructing Racial and Ethnic Identity” by Nagel
• Optional Ethnicities – For Whites Only? by Waters

Friday Jan. 17. Class 5: Historical Constructions of Race
• REC: Chapter 11: The Morphing Properties of Whiteness
• REC: Chapter 10: The Future of Whiteness
• REC: Chapter 18: The social construction of race in two immigrant eras

Part 2: Talking about race: Interview Assignment

Monday Jan 20. Class 6. MLK DAY. Not by the color of one’s skin: the unfulfilled dream of colorblindness

Note: Professor is out that day. We will watch a movie in class on Dr. King’s legacy and future direction

Wednesday Jan. 22. Class 7: The Color Line
• TDP: Chapter 1 and 2
• REC: Chapter 25: The Impact of “Color-Blind” Ideologies on Students of Color
• Read short interview with Beverly Tatum
• http://www.pbs.org/race/000_About/002_04-background-03-04.htm

Friday Jan. 24. Class 8. Colorism
• Race, Gender and the Politics of Skin Tone by Hunter
• The Persistent Problem of Colorism: Skin Tone, Status, and Inequality
• Unpacking the white privilege knapsack

Interview Assignment due at the start of class (1/24)

Part 3: Measuring Race:
Monday Jan. 27. Class 9: Race: who’s counted and who’s counting?
• TDP: Chapter 3: What is this person’s race? The Census and the Construction of Racial Categories
• Read various Census reports about demographics of racial and ethnic groups in the US
Wednesday Jan. 29. Class 10: Race and Genetics
• REC: Chapter 6: The Book of Life: A Personal Guide to Race, Normality, and the Implications of the Genome Project
• Which Difference Difference Makes: Race, DNA, and Health
• Multiracial Americans: Racial Identity Choices and Implications for the Collection of Race Data

Part 4: Racial Intersections

Friday Jan. 31. Class 11: Racial stereotypes and privilege
• REC: Chapter 13: Those ‘loud black girls’ and those ‘quiet Asian boys’
• From Jim Crow to Laissez-Faire Racism: The Transformation of Racial Attitudes by Bobo and Smith

Monday Feb 3. Class 12: Race and Class
• Excerpt from Blue Chip Black by Lacy
• Excerpt from Compelled to Excel by Louie

Wednesday Feb. 5. New Directions in Racial Dialogue
• Aries chapters 8-9
• The Educational Benefits of Inter- and Intraracial Curricular Dialogues

Friday Feb. 7. No Class. Work on take home final.

NOTE: CONVO this week is Joy DeGruy, the author of Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America’s Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing. It lays the groundwork for understanding how the past has influenced the present, and opens up the discussion of how we can eliminate non-productive attitudes, beliefs and adaptive behaviors and, build upon the strengths we have gained from the past to heal injuries of today.


Take home midterm due in my mailbox (in the SOAN office, 2nd floor of Leighton Hall) by 4pm Tuesday 2/11. Hard-copy plus an electronic copy submitted to the courses network

Part 5: Immigration Revisited

Wednesday Feb. 12. Class 14: Theories of Assimilation
• The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and Its Variants
• Models of American Ethnic Relations: Hierarchy, Assimilation and Pluralism

• Excerpts from The Latino Threat by Chavez
• Rethinking Crime and Immigration by Sampson

NOTE: CONVO this week is Kimberly Bryant, “Her vision is to increase the number of women of color in the digital space by empowering preteen and teenage girls of color to become
innovators in science/technology/engineering/math fields, leaders in their communities, and builders of their own futures through exposure to computer science and technology.”

Monday Feb. 17. Class 16: Immigration Narratives continued
  • Excerpt on “the Model Minority” from Yellow by Frank Wu
  • Are Asian Americans becoming White?

Part 6: Theoretical Perspectives on Racial Inequality

Wednesday Feb. 19. Class 17: Explanations of Inequality
Structural vs. Cultural
  • The Culture of Poverty by Oscar Lewis
  • More than Just Race by WJ Wilson

Friday Feb. 21. Class 18: How do we explain racial inequality in a post-racial world?
  • Excerpts from Bonilla-Silva Racism without racists
  • The Good Racist People http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/07/opinion/coates-the-good-racist-people.html

NOTE: CONVO this week feature’s Joan Morgan, a “provocative cultural critic” who is speaking about, “Is America Post-Racial?”

Response Paper 1 Due on OR before Feb. 21

Part 7: Racialized and Racializing Institutions

Monday Feb. 24. Class 19: Housing and Segregation
  • REC: Chapter 21: Subprime Lending
  • Excerpts from American Apartheid by Massey and Denton
  • Fences and Neighbors: Segregation in 21st Century America

  • REC: Chapter 20: Are Emily and Greg More Employable?
  • Walking the Talk? What employers say vs. What they do? By Pager

Friday Feb. 28. Class 21: Library Day
  • Meet in the library to discuss research paper
  • Everyone should come in with a topic

Monday Mar. 3. Class 22: Media and Prison
  • Television and the Politics of Representation by Lewis and Jhally
  • The New Jim Crow

Part 7: Multiracial America

Wednesday Mar. 5. Class 23: Assimilation
• TDP: Chapter 5. The cultural Boundaries of Ethnoracial Status and Intermarriage
• Unaccustomed Earth by Jhump Lahiri

Response Paper 2 Due on OR before March 5

Thursday March 6.
Optional Study Break: pizza and cupcakes. 6pm [details to follow]

Friday Mar. 7. Class 24: Multiracial Families
• TDP: Chapter 6. What about the children?
• TDP: Chapter 7: Who is multiracial? The Cultural Reproduction of the One Drop Rule
• The Multiracial Population in the US (Census Report)
• Multiracial America

Monday Mar. 10. Class 25: Deportations under Obama
• Video in class

Wednesday Mar. 12. Class 26: Last day of classes. Wrap up and evaluations

Final Papers due in my mailbox by Friday March 15, 4:00pm