

Course Syllabus

Course Information

SOC 6355

Race, Ethnicity, and Community

Section 501

Fall 2009

Professor Contact Information

Dr. Bobby C. Alexander

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Office Room Number: GR 2.124

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-2:15 p.m., 6:45-7:00 p.m., and by appointment

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

No pre-requisites or co-requisites exist. Nor do other restrictions.

Course Description

The sociological study of race and ethnicity, one of the main subfields of sociology, emerged in the 1920s in the study of populations in large urban settings. Contemporary sociological study in the U.S. was revitalized by the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s and by social movements involving other racial and ethnic groups encouraged by it, as well as by the new immigration of the 1970s, which contributed to a more racially and ethnically diverse population. Challenging predictions by many social scientists that race and ethnicity would lose their significance in the face of industrialization and forces of modernization, they remain central to people's identity and social experience around the world. This course examines some of the reasons why.

The course introduces a variety of sociological theories, including social stratification by race and ethnicity, "dominant-minority" groups, prejudice and discrimination, and power relations, to explain discrepancies in the distribution of resources to people of different racial and ethnic groups and their social and economic opportunities. The course considers public policy, for example Affirmative Action and immigration law, as a means of addressing inequities and unequal opportunities. While conflict and competition characterize ethnic relations, harmony and accommodation, which are encouraged by public policy and law, do so as well. The course considers why this is the case.

Other issues considered include immigration by a variety of racial and ethnic groups, and patterns of ethnic relations after settlement including cultural and structural assimilation, pluralism, and multiculturalism. Attempts to address these and other issues by government and extra-governmental institutions also are considered.

The course highlights some of the main racial and ethnic groups in the U.S., including black Americans, Latino Americans, Asian Americans, Jewish Americans and other white “ethnic” Americans, and white Americans. The course concentrates on the United States, but considers race and ethnicity from a global perspective.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

The course objective is to understand the social meaning of race and ethnicity as well as the ideology of racism, the social construction of race and ethnicity, and their roles in multiracial and multiethnic society. Closely related to this key objective is understanding race and ethnicity in relation to divergent patterns in the distribution of wealth, education, political representation, and other resources, as well as opportunities in employment, political power, and social status.

The course objective will be accomplished by students’ writing two essay exams on the course reading assignments as well as five short literature reviews of peer-reviewed journal articles on a sociological topic related to race and ethnicity.

Required Textbooks and Materials

Two texts are required: Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives, by Martin N. Marger, 8th edition, Wadsworth, 2009; and Diversity in America, by Vincent Parrillo, 3rd edition, Pine Forge Press, 2009. Both texts are available at the UTD Bookstore and Off Campus Books. The reading assignments are listed in the course calendar below. Students are required to read the assigned materials before class in order to contribute to class discussion. Students will supplement the required course readings with peer-reviewed journal articles or other scholarly sources they will read in order to write a literature review of five published sources.

Supplemental readings will be placed on electronic reserve through the UTD McDermott Library. The instructor will provide information on accessing the readings placed on reserve.

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Students will write two take-home exams. Both will be in essay format. Exam questions will be handed out in class one week before the exams are due. Each exam will cover material assigned after the preceding exam. Exam due dates are printed in the course calendar below.

Students also will write five short, three-page literature reviews on a topic they choose on race and ethnicity that is of sociological importance, is important to U.S. society, and is relevant to public policy. Topics must be approved by the instructor. Students will read and review five recent peer-reviewed journal articles or other scholarly sources. The instructor will provide instructions for the literature reviews. Dates for the literature reviews are found in the course calendar.

Students must submit hard copies of the exams and literature reviews; e-mailed electronic files are not accepted, with the exception of emergencies.

Students will make informal class presentations on their topics based on the literature reviews.

The instructor will provide instructions.

The instructor will make available instructions for all of the course assignments on eLearning. Students will download and print the instructions and bring them to class.

August 25

Orientation to the Course

September 1

Basic Concepts

Read: Marger, Chapter 1: "Introduction: Some Basic Concepts"

Ethnic Stratification

Read: Marger, Chapter 2: "Ethnic Stratification: Power and Inequality"

On reserve: William Julius Wilson "The Decline in the Significance of Race" in Society, and

Joe Feagin "The Continuing Significance of Race" in American Sociological Review

September 8

Prejudice and Discrimination

Read: Marger, Chapter 3: "Techniques of Dominance: Prejudice and Discrimination"

On reserve: Leslie Inniss and Joe Feagin "The Black 'Underclass' Ideology in Race Relations Analysis" in Social Justice, and

William Julius Wilson "Racial Antagonisms and Race-Based Social Policy" in When Work Disappears

Literature review topic due

September 15

Assimilation and Pluralism

Read: Marger, Chapter 4: "Patterns of Ethnic Relations: Assimilation and Pluralism," and Parrillo, Chapter 1: "Perception and Reality"

September 22

The "American Ethnic Hierarchy"

Read: Marger, Chapter 5: "Foundations of the American Ethnic Hierarchy" (includes "Middle-Eastern Americans" and the new immigrants)

First literature review due

September 29

Diversity of Americans

Read: Parrillo, Chapter 7: "Diversity in the Information Age," and Chapter 8: "Intergenerational Comparisons"

First Exam questions handed out

October 6

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White “Ethnic” Americans

Read: Marger, Chapter 7: “Italian Americans”

First Exam due

October 13

Jewish Americans

Read: Marger, Chapter 8: “Jewish Americans”

Second literature review due

October 20

African Americans

Read: Marger, Chapter 9: “African Americans”

Third literature review due

October 27

Latino Americans

Read: Marger, Chapter 10: “Hispanic Americans”

November 3

Asian Americans and “Middle-Eastern Americans”

Read: Marger, Chapter 11: “Asian Americans,” and
Handout on Middle-Eastern Americans from Middle Eastern Quarterly

Fourth literature review due

November 10

Multiculturalism

Read: Parrillo, Chapter 9: “Is Multiculturalism a Threat?”, and
Chapter 10: “Multiculturalism after 9/11”

Class Presentations

November 17

Responses to Race and Ethnicity in the U.S.

Read: Marger, Chapter 12: “Current and Future Issues of Race and Ethnicity in the
United States,” and
Parrillo, Chapter 11: “The Next Horizon”

Fifth literature review due

Class Presentations

November 24

Global Issues of Race and Ethnicity

Read: Marger, Chapter 17: “Global Issues of Ethnic Conflict and Change,” pages 569-
578 and 591-594 only

Class Presentations

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December 1

Class Presentations

Second Exam questions handed out

December 8

Second Exam due in the instructor's office during the scheduled final exam period (4 p.m.)

Grading Policy

50%: two exams

40%: five literature reviews

5%: class presentation

5%: attendance

Note: Students automatically will be excused from two classes. Students who miss more than two classes will be excused if they have legitimate reasons (for example, illness and death in the family) and provide proper documentation.

The grading scale follows.

A+ = 97-100

A = 94-96

A- = 90-93

B+ = 87-89

B = 84-86

B- = 80-83

C+ = 77-79

C = 74-76

C- = 70-73

D+ = 67-69

D = 64-66

D- = 60-63

F = \mathfrak{F} and below

Course & Instructor Policies

Students must submit hard copies of all assignments in class on the due dates; late papers will not be accepted without the prior approval of the instructor. This requirement is intended to help students stay on track in submitting written work and to be fair to students who submit work on time.

While class attendance per se is not required, keeping up with the course will be difficult without regular attendance.

Technical Support

If you experience any problems with your UTD account you may send an email to: assist@utdallas.edu or call the UTD Computer Helpdesk at 972-883-2911.

Field Trip Policies

Off-campus Instruction and Course Activities

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD printed publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Series 50000, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391) and online at <http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-HOPV.html>

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic Dishonesty, any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a

student or the attempt to commit such acts.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials, including music and software. Copying, displaying, reproducing, or distributing copyrighted works may infringe the copyright owner's rights and such infringement is subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as criminal penalties provided by federal law. Usage of such material is only appropriate when that usage constitutes "fair use" under the Copyright Act. As a UT Dallas student, you are required to follow the institution's copyright policy (Policy Memorandum 84-I.3-46). For more information about the fair use exemption, see <http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/copypol2.htm>

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22
PO Box 830688
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)
disabilityservice@utdallas.edu

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with the Coordinator of Disability Services. The Coordinator is available to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with Disability Services to notify them of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Disability Services can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student

and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.