

Sociology 2319-07: Introduction to Ethnic Studies (3 credit hours), Spring 2017
Tues/Thurs: 12:30-1:50 PM; CHSS 110

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Office Hours: T/TH 11:00-12:30 & by appointment

Course Description: This course will introduce you to sociological ways of interpreting, analyzing, and explaining issues related to race and ethnicity in contemporary society. From a biological perspective, there is only one “race” of human beings. The genetic codes that create skin color, hair texture, facial features, height, and so on do not come in distinct packages that place us firmly in one category or another, and there are many more differences within groups than between them. Moreover, the boundaries of different racial and ethnic categories have changed – and continue to change – over time. New categories have been created and old categories discarded. Although race and ethnicity are not “real” in a biological sense, they are very real in a social and political sense. In this course, we will examine what it means – from a sociological perspective – to be a member of a racial or ethnic group. 3 credit hours.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Throughout the semester, we will be working to develop our ability to:

- Describe key concepts, histories, and contemporary issues facing different racial and ethnic groups
- Explain how racial and ethnic differences are socially constructed, maintained, and changed
- Explain how race and ethnicity “intersect” with other categories of difference
- Think critically about these issues, dig deeper, and have fun along the way!

Required Texts:

1. Healey, Joseph F., and Eileen O’Brien. 2015. *Race, Ethnicity, Gender, & Class*. 7th Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
2. Additional required readings will be posted on Blackboard.

*** All readings should be completed prior to the day they appear on the schedule. ***

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

Exams (300 points): There will be three non-cumulative exams based on readings, discussions, films, and class activities. Each exam will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions and be worth 100 points. There will not be a comprehensive final examination in this course.

Quizzes (100 points): Before classes start each week, you will take an online quiz on the readings assigned for that week. These will be posted on Blackboard by the end of the previous week and you will have until 12:00 noon on Tuesdays to take them. Note that Blackboard will not let you start a quiz after the deadline has passed, so don’t wait to the last minute to take these! Each quiz is worth a maximum of 10 points (the cumulative equivalent of one exam grade). These are **open book**. If you’ve read carefully, they should be easy. You’ll get one “free pass” (10 points) this semester to cover unexpected events (forgot to take the quiz, accidentally submitted it before you were done, internet/computer crashed, etc.) or to supplement a low score.

Extra Credit: To encourage you to apply what you are learning, extra credit opportunities will be offered occasionally and will be announced in class. All extra credit assignments must be printed out and handed in in class. They are due no later than the beginning of class on our last review day. No exceptions.

Grading Scale: Final grades will be based on a total of 400 points and will be assigned as follows:

360 – 400 = A

280 – 319 = C

0 – 239 = F

320 – 359 = B

240 – 279 = D

Grades that fall short of these thresholds will NOT be rounded up. The only exception is for students who have not missed more than two classes and are within one point of the threshold for the next highest grade. Those students will receive the next highest grade.

POLICIES

Attendance Policy: Learning in this course requires the active participation of all students, so regular attendance is expected and will be monitored. If you must miss class (regardless of the reason), you are responsible for finding out from your classmates what you missed, including schedule changes and in-class announcements. To be counted fully present, you must arrive on time and remain the entire time. Arriving late or leaving early counts as half an absence.

Students who have no more than two unexcused absences and are within one point of the threshold for a higher grade at the end of the semester will receive the higher grade. For example, if you earn a total of 359 points (one point away from the point threshold for an A) and have only missed two classes, you will receive 360 points and an A for the course. Students who have more than two unexcused absences will not be eligible to receive extra credit points (or will forfeit them if they've already been earned).

Make-Up Policy: You may make-up missed exams only if you have a verifiable emergency (ex. death in the family, a severe illness of your own). You must notify me at least ONE HOUR PRIOR to the exam and provide me with official documentation regarding your absence (e.g. written note from your doctor). Missed exams must be made up within one week of the regularly scheduled exam. If you miss an exam for any non-emergency reason (e.g. receiving a traffic ticket, not setting an alarm) or do not provide appropriate documentation, you will receive a zero for that exam. Make-up exams will cover the same material but may follow a different format. Since everyone gets one free pass on quizzes, missed quizzes cannot be made-up.

Daily Preparation and Classroom Courtesy Policy: To make the most of our time together, it is important that everyone comes to class prepared and ready to contribute thoughtfully to our discussions. That means doing the readings and doing them carefully. In addition, we need to agree on a few interaction rules to maintain a respectful and collaborative learning environment this semester.

- Let's start by putting away ALL electronic devices (phones, laptops, tablets, I-pods, etc.).
- When other students are speaking, listen patiently and do not interrupt.
- Ask questions and volunteer answers to other people's questions.
- Feel free to discuss personal experiences, but be prepared to discuss them sociologically.
- At all times, treat each other respectfully. We can challenge ideas without putting each other down.
- Don't do homework for other classes, carry on side conversations, or sleep in class.
- If your behavior becomes distracting or is disrespectful, you may be asked to leave.

Cell Phone and Texting Policy: There will be absolutely no cell phone use, messaging, or texting during class. You may leave your phones/devices on, set to vibrate, in case of an emergency, but they must be stowed completely out of sight, in your pocket or bag (NOT left on your desktop). If they are visible during an exam, you will receive a zero on that exam (per university policy), and you will not be eligible to receive extra credit points for the semester (or will forfeit them if they have already been earned).

Academic Dishonesty: Students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students must maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. Students engaging in these activities will receive a zero on the exam or assignment in question and will not be eligible to receive extra credit points for the semester (or will forfeit them if they have already been earned). Students who engage in academic dishonesty more than once, will receive an automatic “F” for the course. The university’s policy on academic dishonesty can be found at <http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/728eec25-f780-4dcf-932c-03d68cade002.pdf>. To read the university’s Code of Conduct, go to <https://netreg.shsu.edu/mirror/codeofconduct.html>.

Americans with Disabilities Act: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786, and e-mail disability@shsu.edu). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Services for Students with Disabilities. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/811006.pdf>

Religious Holidays: The Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. “Religious Holy Day” means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20 of the Tax Code. The university’s policy may be found at <http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/0953c7d0-7c04-4b29-a3fc-3bf0738e87d8.pdf>

Visitors to the Classroom: Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar’s Office.

Instructor Evaluations: Toward the end of the semester, you will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation. This is very important to me, the university, and future students. Your feedback helps me make adjustments and improve the course.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change)

*asterisk = Black Board reading

Aug 24	Welcome! Introduction to the course
Aug 29-31	*Schwalbe, “Sociological Mindfulness” *Johnson, “The Social Construction of Difference” Ch. 1 Diversity in the United States
Sept 5-7	*Newman, “Building Order, Culture and History” *Miner, “Body Ritual among the Nacirema” Take online quiz #1 by 12:00 noon Tuesday!
Sept 12-14	Ch. 2 Assimilation and Pluralism: From Immigrants to White Ethnics (p. 30-62) Take online quiz #2 by 12:00 noon Tuesday!
Sept 19-21	Ch. 3 Prejudice and Discrimination Ch. 5 Industrialization and Dominant-Minority Relations (p. 141-end) Take online quiz #3 by 12:00 noon Tuesday!
Sept 26	Review
Sept 28	EXAM 1
Oct 3-5	Ch. 7 Native Americans Take online quiz #4 by 12:00 noon Tuesday!
Oct 10-12	Ch. 5 Industrialization and Dominant-Minority Relations (p. 128-131) Ch. 6 African Americans Take online quiz #5 by 12:00 noon Tuesday!
Oct 17-19	Ch. 9 Asian Americans Take online quiz #6 by 12:00 noon Tuesday!
Oct 24	Review
Oct 26	EXAM 2
Oct 31-Nov 2	Ch. 8 Hispanic Americans Take online quiz #7 by 12:00 noon Tuesday!
Nov 7-9	Ch. 10 New Americans, Immigration, Assimilation, and Old Challenges Take online quiz #8 by 12:00 noon Tuesday!
Nov 14-16	Ch. 11 Gender Take online quiz #9 by 12:00 noon Tuesday!
Nov 21	film (TBA)
Nov 22-24	Thanksgiving Break (no class)
Nov 28	Ch. 12 Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Americans Take online quiz #10 by 12:00 noon Tuesday!
Nov 30	Review
Dec 5	EXAM 3 (at 1:00 pm)