Overview

In this course, we will examine the social construction of race and ethnic groups in the U.S. In order to examine current social issues, we must first explore and understand its history. As sociologists, we will deconstruct various social inequalities, such as class and gender, to analyze how each of these affects the intersectionalities of race.

How do you define ‘minority’? What does it mean to belong to a minority group in the United States? During the duration of this semester, we will explore several minority groups in American society. We will address how macro, meso, and micro social structures can work to reinforce or challenge the existing social climate. And finally, we will conclude with exploring various experiences, resistance and social movements that have and continue to emerge in combating inequality and oppression.

The course will be organized to allow time for lectures, reviewing reading material, viewing documentaries, and class discussion.

Goals

• To identify concepts, theories, and empirical research centered on the social construction of race and ethnic relations in the U.S.

• To apply sociological concepts, principles and theories to contemporary society

• To gain an deeper understanding and appreciation of ways in which the historical social construction of race has contributed to current social climate

• To learn how to use a sociological lens to analyze and deconstruct society by exploring scholarly research in the field

• To provoke critical and sociological thought

Materials


Notebook and pen/pencil

Additional readings will be posted on Canvas.

Milestones

Weekly
Quizzes (12.5%)

During Weeks 3-7 & Weeks 9-14
Leading Class Discussion (12.5%)

During Weeks 3-7 & Weeks 9-14
Five Reflection Papers (12.5%)

March 9th
Midterm Exam (25%)

April 13th
Term Paper (12.5%)

April 20th
Final Exam (25%)
**Semester Schedule:** Additional weekly readings are posted in Canvas under ‘Modules’

**Week 1 (1/12):** Course Introduction  
Chapter 1: Race in the Twenty-first Century

**Week 2 (1/19):** No Class (MLK Day)

*Part I Reflexivity:*
**Week 3 (1/26):** Chapter 2: The Invention of Race  
Group 1 leading class discussion

*Part II Relationality:*
**Week 4 (2/02):** Chapter 3: Politics  
Group 2 leading class discussion

**Week 5 (2/09):** Chapter 4: Economics  
Group 3 leading class discussion

**Week 6 (2/16):** Chapter 5: Housing  
Group 4 leading class discussion

**Week 7 (2/23):** Chapter 6: Crime and Punishment  
Group 5 leading class discussion

**Week 8 (3/2):** No Class (Spring Break)

**Week 9 (3/9):** Midterm  
(Midterm first 1/3 of class, lecture second 1/3 of class, and group assignment last 1/3 of class)

**Week 10 (3/16):** Chapter 7: Education  
Group 6 leading class discussion

**Week 11 (3/23):** Chapter 8: Aesthetics  
Group 7 leading class discussion

**Week 12 (3/30):** Chapter 9: Associations  
Group 8 leading class discussion

**Week 13 (4/06):** Chapter 10: Intimate Life  
Group 9 leading class discussion

*Part III Reconstruction:*
**Week 14 (4/13):** Chapter 11: Toward Racial Justice  
Group 10 leading class discussion

**Week 15 (4/20):** Final Exam

**Evaluation**

**Attendance:** This course is designed to be interactive so attendance is expected. In addition to attending class regularly, students must complete all assigned readings before our meeting time. Attendance is crucial to keeping up with readings, lectures, in-class activities, and any class updates. Being late (not on time) and/or leaving early is disruptive to the classroom environment. In an occasion where you need to leave early, or if you will be late, you should notify me in advance.
Excused absences must meet the requirements of the University of Florida policies: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx. Email me only if your absence meets the requirements, and you would like for it to be considered excused. All documentation must be original, no copies accepted. Tardiness and unexcused absences may negatively affect your course grade.

Participation: Class participation is required from all students. As upper-level undergraduate students, you are expected to keep up with readings, and to come prepared to contribute to class discussions. While your voice is encouraged and appreciated, you should be mindful and considerate of your opinion toward others. Verbal harassment will not be tolerated. If you do not respect the opinions of others, you will be asked to leave class. Lack of class participation throughout the semester may negatively affect your grade.

Quizzes* (50 points): There will be a total of 10 in-class reading quizzes (each worth 5 points). The quizzes will only be administered during the first 15 minutes of class. If you are late or absent, for whatever reason, you will not be allowed to make up the quiz. Arrive early and come prepared (read the chapter, review the assigned material). * The lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Thematic Reflection Papers (5 total; excluding the week you are leading class discussion) (10 points each; 50 points):
Over the course of the semester, you are required to write five reflection papers. Each reflection paper should be 1-2 page in length (double-spaced, 12 font, Times New Roman, with 1” margins). In order for your papers to be accepted, you will have to upload the assignment to canvas and bring a copy of the reflection to class. This reflection is not a summary of the readings, rather a critical analysis of them. They should include commenting on the authors work, and applying what you have learned to everyday experiences, current news events, or your knowledge of a particular organization or system. The reflections will be used to prepare you for thoughtful class discussion. Only one reflection may be completed per week, excluding the week you lead class discussion. The paper theme should match that for the current weekly assigned readings. Your paper should be based on fact, to support any opinion. A rubric for the reflection papers will be released to you via Canvas.

Leading Class Discussion:
Connecting History with Contemporary Social Matters (50 points):
You will sign up to lead class discussion in small groups. Your group is to generate a theme that will connect the weekly class readings with a contemporary social issue pertaining to two or more racial/ethnic groups. This will require a bit of brainstorming from each of your team members. This is a group effort, so each member is responsible for contributing to the assignment. Once a theme has been declared, group members should disseminate work accordingly, and coordinate meeting times outside of class. Group members are to start class discussion by reviewing key points of the contemporary social issue, why they chose that theme, and how it relates to the weekly readings. Each of your group members should include 5-7 thought-provoking, open-ended, questions that will inform our class discussion. These questions should be uploaded to the appropriate discussion section of Canvas 24 hours prior to class time – by Sunday at 8:30a. That way, the class is able to view the questions and prepare for discussion.

You have been assigned to a group. You are able to view your group members and communicate with them using the Collaborations tab in Canvas. I prefer that you use this method of group communication so I may be able to chime in if need be. A rubric will be provided to you on Canvas for this assignment.
**Term Paper** (50 points): This paper will serve as an extension of your individual work completed by leading class discussion. All papers will be due April 13th to allow for ample time for every student.

This will be a scholarly written paper, 6-7 pages in length (double-spaced, 12 font, Times New Roman, with 1” margins). It should include a minimum of 6 peer-reviewed journal articles (you will need to retrieve these articles and read them critically; using material we have covered in class may be used in addition to these if you so desire). This paper will only need to be uploaded to Canvas. If you need help navigating the online library system, you can either ask a librarian or stop by my office. A rubric with detailed instruction will be uploaded to Canvas.

**Midterm** (100 points): This will be a non-cumulative exam on the assigned readings. The exam will include multiple-choice, fill in the blanks, and short essay.

**Final** (100 points): This will be a non-cumulative exam on the assigned readings. Although this exam is non-cumulative, major theories discussed in the first portion of class may be included on the final. The exam will include multiple-choice, fill in the blanks, and short essay.

**Grading**

92.5 – 100: A
89.5 – 92.4: A-
86.5 – 89.4: B+
82.5 – 86.4: B
79.5 – 82.4: B-
76.5 – 79.4: C+
72.5 – 76.4: C
69.5 – 72.4: C-
66.5 – 69.4: D+
62.5 – 66.4: D
59.5 – 62.4: D-
0-59.4: E

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Any student that has a disability should meet with a support coordinator in the Disability Resources Program, found through the Dean of Students Office. In order for me to provide you with the appropriate classroom accommodations, I will need documentation on file. As your instructor, I am willing to work with you and provide you with the support strategized through the Disability Resource Center. You can also visit their website for more information http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/.

**Counseling and Student Health**

Students may occasionally have personal issues that arise in the course of pursuing higher education or that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing problems affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and to seek confidential assistance at the University of Florida Counseling Center, 352-392-1575, or Student Mental Health Services, 352-392-1171. Visit their web sites for more information: http://www.counsel.ufl.edu/ or http://www.health.ufl.edu/shcc/smhs/index.htm#urgent
The Student Health Care Center at Shands is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health at Shands offers a variety of clinical services, including primary care, women’s health care, immunizations, mental health care, and pharmacy services. The clinic is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center.

For more information, contact the clinic at 392-0627 or check out the web site at: www.health.ufl.edu/shcc. Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from: Alachua County Crisis Center: (352) 264-6789. Do not wait until you reach a crisis to come in and talk with us. We have helped many students through stressful situations impacting their academic performance. You are not alone so do not be afraid to ask for assistance.

Class Etiquette and Student Professionalism

Electronic Devices: All electronic devices (e.g. cell phones, laptops, iPods, etc.) are to be turned off or put on silent during class time (not on vibrate). Electronic devices should not be visible whatsoever. In emergency cases where a student is required to take a phone call, the student is to inform the instructor of the circumstances and will be permitted to have their phone on vibrate. In such cases, students should quietly exit the classroom if the call is received.

This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion. Students will be informed of any changes in advance.

Thank you.