

**INTERSECTIONS OF RACE, CLASS, GENDER and SEXUALITY**  
**SOC 264**  
**Spring 2009**  
**Bellevue Community College**

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Office Hours: Daily 11:30-12:30  
or by appointment  
Class Meets: M, W 12:30 - 2:40  
Class Location: C-164



**COURSE INTRODUCTION**

We live in a society that – for better or for worse – organizes people according to race, class, and gender. Until the 1990s, most sociologists talked about inequality along just one variable or identity – such as race or gender. But in recent years, scholars have attempted to understand the *relationship* between multiple identities.

Thus, in this course we will study race, class, and gender not as separate entities, but as entities that intersect and interact with one another. We will examine the intersections, interconnections, tensions, and harmonies of race, class, gender and sexuality as systems of privilege and oppression. We will explore how a given human being can be advantaged and disadvantaged *simultaneously*. This “intersectional” approach is relatively new, and it is at the forefront of a modern and more-complex way of thinking about society.

We will begin the quarter by conceptualizing this intersectional approach to race, class, and gender. Then, we’ll turn our attention to a handful of our major social institutions – families, the mass media, and the economy – and examine how race, class, and gender play out in these places. Towards the end of the quarter, we will study how different people and groups have resisted oppression and fought inequalities. Throughout, we will try to understand the experiences of diverse groups from their own perspectives – thus, the readings draw from a wide range of authors and viewpoints. When we are exposed to the perspectives of previously excluded groups, our horizons broaden, encouraging us to think more complexly and inclusively. By the end of this quarter, you should see yourself and the world around you in a new way. You may even find yourself relating to others in a new way as well. So, welcome to our class!

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

1. Margaret Andersen and Patricia Hill Collins, Race, Class, and Gender: An Anthology. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. Thomson/Wadsworth Press (2007).
2. Additional articles and/or handouts are posted on the course website (My BCC – Shared Documents) or distributed in class.

## **LEARNING ATMOSPHERE**

I believe that students learn best when they are actively involved in the teaching and learning process. Thus, this is an active and interactive course where you will often learn by doing. You are expected to observe the world, read, write, discuss, and participate. I think of our class as a collaborative learning community where we all teach and learn from each other. Every time you make a comment or ask a question, you teach something to the rest of us. I challenge you to abandon the traditional passive student role and to get involved with teaching and learning – I think you’ll enjoy it and learn a lot in the process.

A note about course content: Since sociologists examine just about every aspect of the social world, we will sometimes talk about provocative material in class. Please be advised that when we explore controversial topics, they will be framed in an academic context. Topics run the gamut in sociology and at times there may be material that makes people uncomfortable. Keep in mind that when we find ourselves in a space outside of our comfort zone, it’s an opportunity for learning. You may be confronted with subject matter that is difficult to watch, see, discuss, or listen to. You are free to leave the room at any time, but please know you will be responsible for any course material you may have missed while you were gone. Also, profanity exists in our social world and thus will be used throughout this course - so please be advised. If you have any questions or concerns about course content or climate, don’t hesitate to let me know.

## **COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

After completing the course, the successful student will be able to:

- Think creatively and critically about the social world;
- Explain the concepts of race, class, and gender from a sociological perspective;
- Describe the theoretical application of “intersectionality”;
- Explore how race, class, and gender intersect to shape our lives – our identities and our life chances;
- Discuss the role of power and privilege in maintaining dominance and oppression;
- Understand the fundamental social experiences that make us “different” from one another;
- Describe how racism, classism, and sexism are embedded in the social structure;
- Explain how he or she is a member of a complex social system; and
- Suggest ideas and strategies for challenging inequality in society.

## **GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES:**

This course’s General Education ratings are: 3 in Critical Thinking, 2 in Reading, 2 in Ethics, 2 in Historical and Intellectual Perspectives, and 3 in Cultural Diversity.

## **GENERAL COURSE RULES AND EXPECTATIONS**

- **ATTENDANCE:** Attend all class meetings and come to class on time. Your presence in class contributes significantly toward your final grade in the course as I cover a lot of material in class that cannot be found in the readings. More than *three unexcused absences* or late attendances will lower your grade, and continue to do so as you miss more classes. To have an absence or tardy considered excused, you must discuss it with me prior to the absence or tardy, unless it is an emergency. Excused absences include doctor’s visits, family emergencies, and sometimes work-related issues. If you miss class, please connect with your colleagues to find out what you missed. I highly recommend that you get the names and contact information of one or two of your classmates so you can contact them for any assignments or notes you may have missed while absent.
- **PREPARATION:** You should come to class having done all the assigned reading and homework and you should always bring the proper supplies with you daily, including your textbook. Note that the BCC guideline for homework is two hours outside of class for each hour spent in class.

- **ASSIGNMENTS:** All assignments are due at the start of the class period. Assignments, papers, homework, or exams must be typed, printed out, stapled, and handed in at the beginning of class. Emailed assignments are not accepted. If you know you are going to be absent on the day an assignment is due, then turn it in early. All major due dates are indicated on the attached Course Calendar. Please see the writing guidelines for the format of submitting all written assignments.
- **LATE WORK:** I believe that one of the major lessons students take away from college is the importance of meeting deadlines. As a result, **no late work will be accepted** unless you have had it approved by me BEFORE the due date. Late work will receive a zero grade.
- **CONTRIBUTION:** Learning about each other's experiences and perspectives is an integral part of the learning process in this course. I believe that you will learn a lot about yourself and your fellow classmates. Therefore, you are expected to be an active participant in our learning environment. An active participant can include contributing to discussions, but can also mean getting to class on time, taking notes, listening to your peers, and coming to class prepared. You should do your best to contribute to class discussions and activities.
- **CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:** All electronic devices are prohibited in the classroom at all times. This includes cell phones, blackberries, laptops, i-pods/mp3 players, etc. If you need a laptop to take notes, I will need verification. All texting devices should be placed in your bag for the duration of the class. Please note that that texting, excessive talking, or other disruptive behavior is not only disrespectful to me, it is also disrespectful to the people around you. Your participation grade will be affected and lowered by these types of behaviors.
- **RESPECT:** I expect that your behavior in class be respectful. Learning about diverse experiences is central to this course, so it is of the utmost importance that you respect your classmates' experiences, differences, and opinions. In order for us to learn from each other, we have to allow each other to make mistakes and to offer unpopular positions for debate. This is a college classroom and as such, I expect students to behave as adults. I do not tolerate excessive talking or whispering, consistent late arrivals, or early departures. *Students who are disrespectful to their classmates or the instructor will be asked to leave class and will be marked absent until arrangements are made with the instructor to return to class and will result in your participation credit lowering.*
- **HONESTY:** Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will result in a failing grade for the course and a report to Student Affairs. No excuses will be taken into account. Your work must be your own, except when asked to work with other students. Furthermore, you are required to acknowledge in your papers if you borrowed any ideas, terms, or phrases, even if you have borrowed from a classmate. See the BCC handbook on academic dishonesty for further details and if you are at any time unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please see me.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

All students are responsible for all requirements of the class, but the way they meet these requirements may vary. If you need specific academic accommodations due to a disability, please speak with me and with Disability Support Services (425)564-2498. You will need to obtain the appropriate documentation from DSS in room B233. The disability accommodation documentation must be given to me before it is needed rather than afterward, so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

**GRADING:**

Grades are based on six factors. (1) Participation and Discussion, (2) Weekly Papers, (3) Film Questions/Handouts, (4) Group Activity for Identity Week, (5) a Research Paper or Project, (6) Exam, and (7) Facilitate a class discussion. Each of these elements is awarded a specific number of points:

<b>Participation/Discussion</b>	<b>50 points</b>
<b>Weekly Papers</b> (10 at 10 points/each)	<b>100 points</b>
<b>Film Questions/Handouts</b> (5 at 20 points/each)	<b>100 points</b>
<b>Group Activity for Identity Week</b>	<b>100 points</b>
<b>Research Project or Paper</b>	<b>150 points</b>
<b>Exam</b>	<b>100 points</b>
<b>Facilitate 1 Class Discussion</b>	<b>100 points</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>700 points</b>

Grade	Points	Percentage
A	648-700	100-93%
A-	647-627	92-90%
B+	626-606	89-87%
B	605-578	86-83%
B-	577-557	82-80%
C+	556-536	79-77%
C	535-508	76-73%
C-	507-487	72-70%
D+	486-466	69-67%
D	465-417	66-60%
F	416-below	59% & below

**DESCRIPTION OF THE 7 GRADING COMPONENTS:****1. Participation/Discussion: (50 points total)**

Participation is essential to the format of this class and will therefore contribute significantly toward your grade. In short, your success in this class depends on your active participation. Participation includes attendance, getting to class on time, class discussions, and group work. Disruptive behavior, excessive talking, texting while in class, or other interruptions will lower this portion of your grade. See the *General Course Rules and Expectations* for details about what is considered disruptive behavior. Do not take this portion of your grade lightly!

**2. Weekly Papers (10 points each/100 points total)**

Since this is a discussion-based course, 10 times over the course of the quarter (roughly one per week), you will need to submit a 1 page typed paper. The purpose of these brief papers is for you to make connections between the various readings and for me to make sure you are reading. These papers will also help to make out conversations more lively and informed. Each 1-page seminar paper should include the following: a reflection on the main theses of the articles read on a particular day, 3-4 central questions that you have about the articles, and most importantly, connections that you are seeing between the articles.

**3. Film Questions/Handouts (20 points each/100 points total)**

Throughout the quarter, we will watch 5 films which we will read as “texts” for the class. For each of these films, I will provide you with a handout and questions to consider while watching the film. The purpose of these questions is to keep you focused and to push you to analyze the film through the lens of intersectionality.

**4. Group Activity for Identity Week (100 points total)**

In the first week of May, BCC is holding its annual “Identity Week” for students. The purpose of this event is, generally, to raise awareness of difference – difference experiences, different perspectives, and different identities. Since we will be focusing on these same topics in this class, it is perfect that this Week falls within the Spring quarter! Our class will be involved in one way or another with this event, although I won’t know for certain until more details about the day are arranged. As it looks now, we will either attend an event (during our regularly-scheduled class time) and write a brief reflection-paper about it, or we will collectively plan our own activity for the day (also to be held during regularly-scheduled class time). *Details will be shared within the first three weeks of the quarter.*

**5. Research Paper or Project (150 points total)**

Instead of a final exam in this class, you will have the choice of either writing a 7-8 page research paper on a topic of your choice or doing a creative research project and presenting your project to the class during our scheduled exam time on Thursday June 17<sup>th</sup>. Both research papers and projects will be due at this time. Creative projects can include original art, song/poetry, creating a website/multi-media platform, etc. Just keep in mind that this project/paper is a larger portion of your grade. You are strongly encouraged to submit proposals or seek out feedback on this assignment. More details and structure for this assignment will follow.

**6. Midterm Exam (100 points)**

You will take one midterm exam that integrates the course’s in-class activities (lectures, films, etc.) and readings. Exams are designed to make sure you understand important course concepts and themes. Exams might include multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay questions. Please note that you cannot make up missed exams.

**7. Facilitate 1 Class Discussion (100 points)**

Students will divide into pairs and “teach” the class about the particular readings for the given day. Each teaching lesson should take 30-40 minutes and should have certain components: it should be interactive, interesting, and cover the main points of the readings. I encourage you to be creative – feel free to bring in outside material if you’d like. You might break the class into pairs, or groups, and ask us to talk about certain thought-provoking questions. You might bring in a film or music clip that relates to the topic. You might conduct a role-playing activity for the class, or you might organize a structured debate. Basically, you will “teach” the class for a day. All pairs are required to meet with me at least two days before your presentation in order to share with me your lesson plans. **Facilitations begin week 4.**

PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, COSIDERATIONS, OR COMPLAINTS ABOUT A GRADE YOU RECEIVED, I ASK YOU TO TAKE 24 HOURS TO REEXAMINE THE ANSWERS OR THE WRITING THAT YOU SUBMITTED AND THEN COME AND TALK WITH ME.

**GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ALL WRITTEN WORK**

All papers or written work should be typed, in Times New Roman, 12 point font, double-spaced with 1” margins on all sides, and stapled. Assignments are due at the beginning of class – promptly at 12:30 a.m. – no late work will be accepted. Late papers or assignments will receive a zero. No emailed assignments will be accepted. Your work must be cited in MLA style and you must always give proper credit to the texts from which you draw and formulate your ideas. Title pages and bibliographies are not counted toward the minimum page requirements. Student information (name, assignment title, class) is single-spaced, at the top left-hand side of

the page. Do not put extra spaces between paragraphs and paragraphs contain no less than four sentences. Magazines, newspapers, journals, and books are *italicized*. Movie titles, article titles, song titles, etc. are “in quotation marks.” Quotes inside of a quotation use ‘single quotation marks.’ Papers should be written from an academic perspective – so no colloquial language please!

### **GENERAL GRADING GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN WORK:**

**A Paper** - An A paper shows me you're engaged with the readings, the media, and the lectures in class. It's a paper free from grammar and spelling errors, and a paper that demonstrated your command not only of the English language, but of the form and flow of a solid piece of written work. Your arguments are solid and backed up with intellectual ammunition. You've demonstrated a strong understanding of our readings and the in-class materials and how they intersect with one another.

**B Paper** - The B tells me you're doing very good work. You may have a few grammar issues, but your paper is still tidy and the writing is still strong. You have a relatively firm grasp on the themes in the course but you may not be as well versed in the readings or materials as you could be. Your understandings of some of the course materials are stronger than others, but I would like to see you challenge yourself a bit more with the course issues and themes.

**C Paper** - The C paper means that you're not as invested in the class as I'd like to see. Your writing is relatively weaker than it could be and you're not thinking as critically as I'd like you to. Some of what you point out I may not follow logically, and your use of the course materials may not be as solid as it could be. You omit some of the important points raised in class.

**D Paper** - A D paper is not proofread and it does not deal critically with the themes in the course. It responds, perhaps, to one part of one of the readings but there is no integration of material or questions raised in class. The course materials are not presented clearly, or at all. I will work closely with each of you as much as time allows. Please note: a D paper or below may be resubmitted once during the quarter for a better grade.

### **INSTRUCTOR NOTES:**

If at any point throughout the quarter you are confused or unclear about the expectations of the course, course material, a grade you received, or any other matters, I strongly encourage you to come talk with me early. It is my goal that all students succeed in this course; but, I can only help you if you meet me half way. Furthermore, if you are having personal problems or other issues going on outside of school, please let me know. I recognize that we all have lives outside of school, and am very willing to work with students, but I can only do so if I know there is a problem.

**SYLLABUS:**

**You are expected to have read the readings assigned for the current day by the time you arrive in class!**

**\*\*Though I will try to remain as faithful as possible to this syllabus, I reserve the right to make changes. These will be announced in advance in class. \*\***

**WEEK 1**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1<sup>ST</sup>: Introduction to the course**

Go over the syllabus and begin discussing intersectionality



**WEEK 2**

**MONDAY, APRIL 6<sup>TH</sup>: Shifting the Center**

**Readings:** "Why Race, Class, and Gender Still Matter" pp. 1-16  
"Missing People and Others: Joining Together to Expand the Circle" pp. 17-22  
"La Güera" pp. 22-29



**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8<sup>TH</sup>: Reconstructing Knowledge**

**Readings:** "Oppression," pp. 29-32  
"A Different Mirror" pp. 32-44  
"From a Native Daughter" pp. 45-51  
"Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference" pp. 52-59

**Weekly Paper #1 Due**

**WEEK 3**

**MONDAY, APRIL 13<sup>TH</sup>: Systems of Power and Privilege: Race and Racism**

**Readings:** "Systems of Power and Inequality" pp. 61-88  
"Racism without 'Racists'" pp. 91-97  
"White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" pp. 98-102

**Weekly Paper #2 Due**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup>: We will attend the Queer Film Festival Today!**



**WEEK 4**

**MONDAY, APRIL 20<sup>TH</sup>: Ethnicity and Nationality**

**Readings:** "Of Race and Risk," pp. 103-105  
"Seeing More than Black and White," pp. 105-111  
"What White Supremacists Taught a Jewish Scholar about Identity," pp. 111-115  
"Is This a White Country or What?" pp. 190-198  
"Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only," pp. 198-207

**Weekly Paper #3 Due**



**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22<sup>ND</sup>: Film Analysis #1 - Do the Right Thing**

**WEEK 5**

**MONDAY, APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup>: Systems of Power and Privilege: Class and Inequality**

- Readings:** "Growing Gulf Between Rich and Rest of Us" pp. 116-118  
 "Tired of Playing Monopoly?" pp. 118-127  
 "Hidden Cost of Being African American" pp. 127-135  
 "Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril among the Black Middle Class" pp. 136-143  
 "Broken Levees, Unbroken Barriers" pp. 143-146



**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29<sup>TH</sup>: Welfare and Poverty**

- Readings:** "Media Magic: Making Class Invisible" pp. 384-392  
 "Aid to Dependent Corporations: Exposing Federal Handouts to the Wealthy" pp. 422-426  
 "Race, Class, Gender, and Women's Works" pp. 283-292  
 "The Invisible Poor" pp. 303-312  
 "Doméstica" pp. 312-320



**Weekly Paper #4 Due**

**WEEK 6**

**MONDAY, MAY 4<sup>TH</sup>: Identity Week – Group Activities today**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 6<sup>TH</sup>: Systems of Power and Privilege: Gender and Sexism**

- Readings:** "Sex and Gender through the Prism of Difference" pp. 147-155  
 "Ideological Racism and Cultural Resistance: Constructing Our Own Images" pp. 156-165  
 "Masculinities and Athletic Careers" pp. 172-184  
 "Toward a Theory of Disability and Gender" pp. 185-189

**Weekly Paper #5 Due**



**WEEK 7**

**MONDAY, MAY 11<sup>TH</sup>: Film Analysis #2 – Set it Off**

**Research Paper/Project Topic Due**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 13<sup>TH</sup>: Systems of Power and Privilege: Sexuality and Heterosexism**

- Readings:** "You Talkin' to Me?" pp. 228-234  
 "Where Has Gay Liberation Gone? An Interview with Barbara Smith" pp. 234-238  
 "Black Sexuality: The Taboo Subject" pp. 247-252  
 "Straight is to Gay As Family is to No Family" pp. 343-348

**Weekly Paper #6 Due**



**WEEK 8**

**MONDAY, MAY 18<sup>TH</sup>: Film Analysis #3 – Tongues Untied**

**Research Paper/Project Outline Due**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 20<sup>TH</sup>: Re-Thinking Institutions: Mass Media**

- Reading:** "Racist Stereotyping in the English Language" pp. 365-375  
 "The Myth of the Latin Woman: I Just Met a Girl Named Maria" pp. 393-397  
 "Crimes against Humanity" pp. 376-383  
 "Gladiators, Gazelles, and Groupies: Basketball Love and Loathing" pp. 398-403

**Weekly Paper #7 Due**



**WEEK 9**  
**MONDAY, MAY 25<sup>TH</sup>: NO CLASS**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 27<sup>TH</sup>: Midterm Exam**

**WEEK 10**  
**MONDAY, JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup>: Re-Thinking Institutions: Families**

**Readings:** "Our Mothers' Grief: Racial-Ethnic Women and the Maintenance of Families"  
pp. 321-334

"Navigating Interracial Borders: Black-White Couples and Their Social  
Worlds" pp. 335-343

"Chappals and Gym Shorts: An Indian Muslim Woman in the Land of Oz"  
pp. 358-364

"Unequal Childhoods" pp. 348-358

**Weekly Paper #8 Due**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3<sup>RD</sup>: Film Analysis #4 – *Senorita Extraviada*  
*Research Paper/Project Bibliography Due***



THE REVOLUTION  
WILL NOT BE  
TELEvised

**WEEK 11**  
**MONDAY, JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup>: Sites of Change**

**Readings:** "Interrupting Historical Patterns" pp. 499-511

"Women of Color on the Front Line" pp. 511-522

"Whosoever Is Welcome Here: An Interview with Rev. Edwin Sanders II" pp.  
522-529

"Silent Covenants" pp. 530-534

**Weekly Paper #9 Due**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup>: Film Analysis #5 – *All of Us*  
*Research Paper/Project 1<sup>st</sup> Draft/Detailed Outline Due***

**WEEK 12**  
**MONDAY, JUNE 15<sup>TH</sup>: Processes of Change**

**Readings:** "How the New Working Class Can Transform Urban America" pp. 535-542

"From the Ground Up" pp. 543-547

"Manifesta" pp. 547-550

"What Does an Ally Do?" pp. 550-557

"Can I Get a Witness?: Testimony from a Hip Hop Feminist" pp. 557-565

**Weekly Paper #10 Due**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17<sup>TH</sup>: RESEARCH PAPERS/PROJECTS and  
PRESENTATIONS DUE (11:30-1:20)**

