

Race and the US



IN CLASS ROOM SECTION

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Office Hours 10.30-12.20 Tuesdays and Thursday, 12.30-1.00 Monday and Wednesday, and by appointment, held outside of R101.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

***Privilege, Power and Difference*, Allan G. Johnson, 2nd, or 3rd ed.**

Course Description: This course provides a historic and contemporary perspective on the social, political, and cultural issues of Race and Ethnicity in U.S. Society. Good friends, even family members, often disagree about racial issues. Are we in a "post-racial" society in America? Is there a level playing field? Do we still need affirmative action? This course begins by examining how race is socially constructed, first by exploring how racial categories have changed over time then by discussing the ways in which these definitions have served the interests of powerful groups. Using pop culture, visual images and archives, and multimedia, you will also explore contemporary representations of race, and analyze how these images intersect with gender, class, and sexuality.

A Note about Course Content: In Interdisciplinary Studies/Ethnic Studies/American Studies, we examine just about every aspect of the social world, we talk about provocative material. When we explore controversial topics, they will always be framed within an academic context. Keep in mind that when we find ourselves in a space outside of our comfort zone, it's an opportunity for learning, and you may be confronted with subject matter that is difficult to watch, see, discuss, or listen to. Please note that you will be responsible for any course material you miss if you choose not to participate. If you have any questions or concerns about content or climate, feel free to speak with me about it right away.

Instructor's Philosophy:

I strongly believe that each of us is responsible for what happens in this class. Students are just as capable of making a class great as the instructor. We are studying communities and cultures, and in the process we are also creating a new community online. We are all still striving, still learning. The key to a successful class is mutual responsibility. We all have a myriad of valuable insights to offer. I will expect each of you to be committed to the course, just as you will expect commitment from me. I am excited to learn with you. It is my hope that we can have a fun, enriching quarter. Therefore, expect to do a good bit of work, and plan on participating fully in online discussions and seminars.

I would like to really encourage every student to keep informed about issues of race in current events. By watching the news, reading newspapers and magazines, listening to the radio, students will be better able to talk about the ways that race impacts all of our lives.

Learning Outcomes:

- Explain the difference between race and ethnicity
- Describe race and ethnic relations from a sociological perspective
- Articulate how race and ethnicity are social constructs
- Evaluate claims regarding the concept of race
- Recall key historical and sociological facts regarding race and ethnic groups
- Contrast the experiences of selected racial and ethnic groups in the U.S.
- Compare race and ethnic relations in the United States with selected non-U.S. countries
- Apply findings of race and ethnic research to your own life

General Rules & Expectations:

- Complete readings and homework assignments **on time**. I do not check whether you complete your readings; this is on the honor system! You do need to read your required material in order to complete homework assignments.
- I expect that your behavior in our classroom be respectful. Continued disrespectful behavior in my class will result in your grade lowering. This goes for both in class discussions and online. Please keep your postings to discussion boards (DBs) thoughtful and polite. One-on-one conversations should be taken off-board and onto email so our DBs don't get clogged. If you find at any point that you are uncomfortable with anything posted to a DB, please email me right away. Be wary of soap boxing in this class; you may be tempted to present your opinion and editorialize, but refrain from doing this.
- **Policies in support of the Course Objectives:**
 1. Be Here! I expect each student to be in class, on time, each day, for the full time allotted for the class. Absences will affect the final grade in the following way:
MORE THAN 5 ABSENCES FOR ANY REASON WILL RESULT IN THE STUDENT NOT BEING ALLOWED TO TAKE THE FINAL, AND THE STUDENT WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF "F" FOR THE COURSE.

2. Work must be turned in on time and presented in a professional manner.
3. We must listen to each other. This one will be difficult for all of us. We have to give respect, and create an atmosphere in the classroom where we can all feel comfortable enough to make mistakes. We must also be able to express our opinions even if what we have to say is not popular, or easily received. True learning can only take place in an atmosphere which is safe enough to examine any ideas which arise. It is the responsibility of each of us to keep this classroom safe.
4. In a similar vein as #3, I expect to hear from you. Part of the thought process is verbalization. Both speaking and writing help to clarify our thoughts. Participation counts. Therefore, I expect all students to be prepared for each class, and to contribute.

Critical Reflections: You will be investigating Race and Ethnic Relations through a wide variety of mediums, including film, music, art, recorded lectures, and critical writing/essays. The intention of the Critical Reflections is to engage you deeply with the course content, some of which might be very new to you in terms of how you have thought or have been taught about race and racism. We engage a variety of experiences from multiple perspectives, so you should expect to be challenged often. **Stay open to learning new things and different ways of thinking about the world**

Tests, Projects and Papers:

Â· Each student will turn in 1-2 page Response paper on the readings, films and discussions of the week every Friday. There will be a total of 11 weekly papers. You must turn in a total of 10 paper to get full credit for all of the response papers.

Â· Each student will create 1, 5 item annotated bibliography on a choice of topics outlined on the assignment sheet. This will serve as your mid term project/exam

Â· Students will also be responsible for finding current event articles related to the class topic of race in the U.S. each week for the first 4 weeks of the quarter.

Â· Each student will complete the class final.

All written work will be turned in to our class website on Canvas and subject to turnitincom.

Final Grade Configurations:

Total Quarter Points: 300

- **Discussions --100 Total Points**
 - **10 Possible Points per discussion**
- **Written Assignments--100 Total Points**
 - **10 Possible Points per essay**
- **Participation--100 Total Points**

- **These points will come from both actively participating in the class discussions and from active listening. It will also be based on positive contributions to the class.**

For all of your work: Submit proofread work **only**. If you need help with your writing, or anything else, please visit the following page of the Bellevue College Website for student support services:

- [Academic Success Center - Bellevue College](#)(Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.
- [Current Students Menu - Bellevue College](#)(Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.
- [Library Media Center @ Bellevue College](#)(Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Writing Guidelines:

- Twelve-point sized Times font, double-spaced
- 1inch margins all around
- APA or MLA Citations where appropriate; credit must be given even where any *ideas* presented in the paper are not your own (see notes below about avoiding plagiarism)
- Title pages and bibliographies are not counted as pages due
- Student information is at the top left of the page, single spaced
- There are no extra spaces between paragraphs.
- 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.
- Avoid the universal; ask yourself: Can I speak for everyone? If you cannot, do not write it. Also avoid phrasing such as nowadays and since the beginning of time. Be accurate. Know what you're writing and why.
- Do not use Wikipedia, CliffNotes, or other such encyclopedic references. These are places to start, and get a basic understanding, but they are not academic sources.

Your work is evaluated on:

1) Content

1. Fulfilling the entire assignment. Doing the minimum amount of work expected will likely get you a passing grade, but not an outstanding one. You're expected to go the extra mile.
2. Fully developing your argument(s) and making use of examples and evidence to support your argument(s).

3. Flow of thought throughout the paper, with strong analyses and conclusions.

2) Writing Style

1. Clarity of thought.
2. Good organization and attention to detail.
3. Persuasiveness of your argument/s.
4. Make it an interesting read!
5. Command of the English Language
6. PROOFREAD your work. Please do a spell/grammar check before you hand it in. Read it out loud to yourself, too! It really helps.
7. Dude, like totally don't write **colloquially**. A conversation is a conversation. A paper is an entirely different way of presenting your research and ideas.

Preventing Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty occurring when students use information or material from outside sources and do not properly cite those sources. This is grounds for disciplinary action. It is your responsibility to understand plagiarism and its consequences. Plagiarism occurs if:

1. You do not cite quotations and/or attribute borrowed ideas.
2. You fail to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks.
3. You do not write summaries and paraphrases in his/her own words and/or doesn't document his/her source.
4. You turn in work created by another person.
5. You submit or use your own prior work for a current or past course, or work from one current course in another course *without express permission* from your professors. This may also be considered academic dishonesty.
6. Consequences: If it is determined that you have plagiarized or engaged in other forms of academic dishonesty, you will likely fail the assignment and possibly the course, despite points earned through other work. Acts of academic dishonesty are reviewed for disciplinary action.

Grading Scale:

Please use the following to help explain the grade you're given for a given assignment. Please do not hesitate to come to me with any questions you ever have on a grade you receive. There is no limit to how many times you email me! My email door is *always* open and I'm always happy to go over grades with you.

A: 94-100

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: 59 and below

90-100 = A Range. A work shows me you're engaged with all course material by utilizing quotes and ideas. It is writing **completely free** from grammar and spelling errors, demonstrating your command not only of the English language, but of the form and flow of a solid piece of written work. I also like to see/read/hear your "writing voice." That is, I want your style to come through! Your arguments should be solid and backed up with intellectual ammunition. You should demonstrate a strong understanding of our readings and the in-class media and how they intersect with one another. Your ideas should be "fleshed out" and not just a series of statements, in other words.

80-89 = B Range. The "B" tells me you're doing very good work. You may have a couple of grammar issues, but your work is still tidy and the writing is still strong. You have a firm grasp on the themes in the course but you may not be as well-versed in the readings and/or media and/or lecture material as you could be. I should see that you're being challenged and that you're struggling with the course issues and themes, and what they represent to you in an interconnected way. Your understandings of some of the course materials are stronger than others.

70-79 = C Range. C work means that you're not as invested in the material as I would like to see. Your writing is relatively weaker than it could be and you're not thinking as critically as I would like you to. You write the bare minimum of the length requirement. 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.

60-69 = D Range. Ah, the D is for Don't be Discouraged. I will work closely with each of you as much as time allows, getting you up to speed in class. Your struggles should not be with writing so much at this point but if they are please see me immediately. D

work is not proofread, nor does it deal critically with the themes in the course. It responds, perhaps, to one part of one of the readings but there is little-to-no integration of material and you're not responding to the questions raised in the assignment. Demonstrated understanding of the course materials is not presented clearly, or at all. (NOTE: A D⁻ and below may be rewritten **once** if you choose to do so. It must be turned in within 72 hours, and I enter the better grade.)

Course Outline and Schedule (Subject to Change)

Assignments are always due by 11.59 pm Sunday nights