

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE**

FALL, 2008

Professor: Frank Wilson
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Office Hours: M, W: 2:00-3:00
and by appt.

SOCIOLOGY 224: AMERICAN MINORITY GROUPS

DESCRIPTION:

Sociology is a social science broadly concerned with examining the forces which bring people in groups together, draw them apart, and generate change in the social world. In studying race and ethnicity, sociologists examine the social structures and relationships of the various systems, institutions, organizations, collective actions, intergroup and interpersonal dynamics, and definitions of identity present in minority-majority relationships. More specifically, continuing sociological theory and research have addressed these issues: the meanings of ethnic groups, racial groups, and minority groups; the social consequences of race and cultural contacts; the causes of racial and ethnic stratification; and social change in racial and ethnic relations. The complex and diverse nature of these issues frequently require interdisciplinary perspectives. Accordingly, the subject matter in race and ethnicity draws on the contributions of anthropologists, economists, historians, political scientists, psychologists, as well as sociologists.

This course will introduce students to the major sociological perspectives and issues in race and ethnic relations in general and American minority groups specifically drawing from the theory, research, and commentary. Primary emphasis will be given to contemporary minority groups in the United States. Main topics to be examined include: Classical and Contemporary Perspectives of Racial and Ethnic Relations in the U.S.; The Nature of Prejudice; Intergroup Contact, Adaptation, and Assimilation, Colonization, Institutional Discrimination, and Racism; Post-World War II Changes in Race Relations; The Changing Significance of Race and Racism in the U.S.

FORMAT:

There will be a combination of lectures and class discussions. A lecture format will primarily be used the first several weeks of the semester. After this, greater emphasis will be on discussions. There will be opportunities to ask questions. Each student is expected to keep up with the required readings. Not reading the syllabus does not excuse you from the course requirements or meeting them on time. Class attendance and participation are expected.

The sociological examination of American minorities in this course has a historical focus. Contemporary race and ethnic relations are partly influenced by historic events accompanying colonization, frontier expansion, industrialization, urbanization, and globalization. Although this course does not emphasize the memorization of dates, it is useful to have a knowledge of the legislation, executive actions, court decisions, wars, and social movements which influence processes of inclusion and exclusion.

This course also has a comparative focus. Questions of inter-group contacts, adaptation, assimilation, successes, and continuing conflicts will be analyzed through a diversity of group experiences. The insights learned concerning different group struggles and successes should inform an appreciation of both the uniformities and complexities.

I will regularly distribute materials in class such as definitions, tables, chronologies, and outlines. If you are not able to attend class, you should have a classmate obtain copies of the handout for you. Assignment, quiz, and exam dates are listed in the syllabus. Not reading the syllabus does not excuse you from these requirements or meeting them on time.

Every week, I have office hours. If you are unclear about the expectations for the course, readings, written assignments, and other issues, please see me during the first few weeks. Do not wait until the last weeks of the semester to see me.

REQUIREMENTS:

Grades will be based on two (2) short quizzes, two exams (mid-term, final), one short essay paper, group presentation, and class participation. The quizzes will be short (20-25 minutes) consisting of multiple choice and short answer items. The format of the exams will be a combination of multiple choice questions, short answers, and long essays. Information and instructions concerning the short essay paper will be distributed in class. Grades will be determined in the following way: two quizzes (20%; 10% each), paper (10%), mid-term (25%), final exam (25%), group presentation (10%), class attendance and participation (10%).

The group presentations will require groups of students (approximately 4-6 per group) to present before their colleagues a review, discussion, and critique of selected social issues (sociological controversies) bearing on the course. Within each group, there will be students who argue the pro or con side of the controversy. The readings informing these issues will be drawn from reserve readings and other sources.

The grading scale for this course consists of the following:
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 = below 60.

Grades are curved with respect to the students in the course. There are no examples of the exams.

Why American Minority Groups carries GER credit:

This course addresses how many problems experienced by individuals and groups are produced by social structural and cultural factors. The social structural factors center on social institutions, organizations, intergroup relations, and social interaction. The cultural factors identify world views, norms, values, beliefs, and symbols.

Simultaneously, the course will explore the different concepts and theoretical perspectives sociologists have used to describe and analyze racial and ethnic relations in general and group subordination specifically. While some of these concepts and theoretical perspectives emphasize the more or less orderly processes of adaptation, assimilation, and integration, others identify processes of racial inequality, stratification, and exclusion. Students will learn how economic, political, cultural, sociological, and psychological factors influence processes of inclusion and exclusion.

Through course readings, written work, and class discussions, students are expected to demonstrate knowledge and comprehension of the different historical and sociological contexts influencing immigration to the United States, the consequences of racial and ethnic group contacts, and racial stratification and inequality. Students will learn to recognize how the actions of important social institutions produce social problems bearing on racial inequality. Students will be given an opportunity to apply sociological concepts and theories through written work and exercises.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Joe R. Feagin and Clairece Feagin. Racial and Ethnic Relations. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall. 2008 (Eighth Edition). Hereafter referred to as (RER). (Available from the UWM Bookstore).

Sept. 27 & 29 **POWER CONFLICT PERSPECTIVES OF RACISM AND RACIAL STRATIFICATION.** Cox's perspectives on Capitalism, Class, and Race. Blauner's Internal Colonialism Theory. Bonacich's Split Labor Market. Other Perspectives: Middleman Minorities, Ethnic Enclaves, and Segmented Assimilation.

Feagin and Feagin, "Power Conflict Theories" (RER), 37-52.

Blauner, "Colonized and Immigrant Minorities" in Racial Oppression in America.

Bonacich, "A Theory of Ethnic Antagonism: The Split Labor Market" (Reserve).

Oct. 1 **THE ASSIMILATION QUESTION.** Assimilation in America. Intergroup Dynamics of Assimilation. Economic and Political Contexts of Immigration, Adjustment, and Assimilation. Anglo Conformity, the Melting Pot, and Cultural Pluralism. The Role of Migration. Human and Social Capital.

Feagin and Feagin, "A Nation of Immigrants" (RER) 53-62.

Gordon, "The Nature of Assimilation" in Assimilation in American Life. (Reserve)

OPTIONAL

Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America" (Reserve).

Portes and Manning, "The Immigrant Enclave: Theory and Empirical Examples" (Reserve).

Greely, "The Ethnic Miracle" Public Interest (Fall, 1976): 20-36 (Reserve)

Oct. 6 **ESSAY DUE**

Oct. 6-15 **SELECTED CASES OF INTER-GROUP RELATIONS, ADAPTATION, AND ASSIMILATION: EUROPEAN AMERICAN ETHNIC GROUPS.**

Feagin and Feagin, "English Americans and the Anglo-Protestant Culture" (RER) 63-81

Gordon, "Theories of Assimilation: Anglo Conformity" in Assimilation in American Life.

Feagin and Feagin, "Irish Americans" (RER) 83-95

Feagin and Feagin, "Italian Americans" (RER) 95-111

Feagin and Feagin, "Jewish Americans" (RER) 112-134

OPTIONAL

Thernstrom, "Protestants, Catholics, and Jews" in The Other Bostonians.
Steinberg, "Education and Ethnic Mobility: The Myth of Jewish Intellectualism and Catholic Anti-Intellectualism" in The Ethnic Myth.
Anderson, White Protestant Americans

Oct. 20

MID-TERM

SELECTED CASES OF INTER-GROUP RELATIONS, ADAPTATION AND ASSIMILATION: CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN MINORITIES.

Oct. 22 &
27

NATIVE AMERICANS

Feagin and Feagin, Native Americans (RER) 135-164
Kalt and Taylor, Means-Testing Indian Governments: Taxing What Works (Reserve)
Mills, A Deadly Mix (Reserve)

OPTIONAL

Weatherford, Indian Givers: How the Indians of America Transformed the World
DeLoria, Custer Died For Your Sins

Oct. 29-
& Nov.5

AFRICAN AMERICANS

Feagin and Feagin, African Americans (RER) 165-204
Butler, Multiple Identities (Reserve)
Williams, Myth Making and Reality Testing (Reserve)

OPTIONAL

Bennett, Before the Mayflower
Wilson, The Declining Significance of Race
Marable, How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America

Nov. 5

Quiz #2

Nov. 10-17

MEXICAN AMERICANS, PUERTO RICANS, CUBAN AMERICANS

Feagin and Feagin, Mexican Americans, 205-243
Feagin and Feagin, Puerto Rican and Cuban Americans, 244-278
Chavez, Out of the Barrio (Reserve)
Aponte, Urban Disaggregated Poverty (Reserve)

OPTIONAL

Moore and Pachon, Hispanics in the United States;
Fitzpatrick, Puerto Rican Americans: The Meaning of Migration to the Mainland

Nov. 12-

SELECTED PROBLEMS OF RACIAL AND

Dec. 3

ETHNIC RELATIONS

Group presentations and the second written assignment
Will be focused on the following controversies:

Should sovereignty for native Americans be increased?
Kalt and Taylor, Means Testing Indian Governments
Mills, A Deadly Mix

Should we call ourselves African Americans?
Butler, Multiple Identities.
Williams, Myth Making and Reality Testing
Are Hispanics making significant progress?
Chavez, Out of the Barrio
Aponte, Urban Disaggregated Poverty

Are Asian Americans a Model Minority?
Bell, America's Greatest Success Story: The Triumph
of Asian Americans
Takaki, The Myth of the 'Model Minority'

Is immigration a problem in the U.S.?
Brimelow, Immigration: Dissolving the People
Cole, The New Know-Nothingism: Five
Myths About Immigration

Is systemic racism in criminal justice a myth?
Wilbanks, The Myth of A Racist Criminal Justice
System
Mann, Unequal Justice: A Question of Color

Does affirmative action alleviate discrimination?
Read at least two (2) of the arguments pro and
con in "Does Affirmative Action alleviate
discrimination?" in Racism in American:
Opposing Viewpoints (Reserve).

Should minorities continue to demand more rights?
Hatchett, The Future of Civil Rights in the Twenty-
First Century
Loury, The Struggle to Return to Self-Help

Nov. 19-26 **Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, and the
Contemporary Asian American Immigration**

Feagin and Feagin, Japanese Americans, 279-302
Feagin and Feagin, Chinese, Filipino, Korean,
Vietnamese, and Asian-Indian Americans, 289-322

Bell, America's Greatest Success Story: The
Triumph of Asian Americans (Reserve)
Takaki, The Myth of the 'Model Minority' (Reserve)

OPTIONAL

Takaki, "The Heathen Chinese" and American
Technology" and "The Masculine Thrust Toward
Asia" in Iron Cages (Reserve); Kitano and
Daniels, Asian Americans: Emerging Minorities

Dec. 1-3 **Arab and Other Middle Eastern Americans**

Feagin and Feagin, 341-361

Dec. 8-10 **WRAP-UP**

Feagin, Chapters 13-14

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, December 18, 2008, 12:30-2:30

