

## **SOC 131AC: Race and Ethnic Relations in the U.S.**

Summer Session A: M, Tu, W, Th 2-4pm Room: 20 Barrows Hall  
Professor: Zawadi Rucks-Ahidianana Email: zra-soc@berkeley.edu  
Office hours: M, W 4-5pm  
Office hours sign up: <https://wejoinin.com/sheets/wpoxl>

### **Course Description**

This course will survey the literature on race and ethnic relations in the U.S. and connect the topics of the literature to recent current events that illuminate the continuing significance of race. Through lecture, discussion, and small group activities, students will both learn about the empirical and theoretical literature on race and ethnicity and connect that to current events and personal experiences in a safe classroom environment.

Students who complete this course will be able to:

- Describe examples of racial inequality in the United States
- Explain the ways the term “race” is used
- Explain why sociologists call race a “social construction”
- Compare the emergence of racial and ethnic categories
- Explain and critique existing theories of racial formation
- Explain how racial segregation was enforced and why it continues
- Identify examples of racism and microaggressions
- Identify ways to engage in allyship

This course meets the requirements for an American Cultures course. As such, it presents “the diversity of American experience to the diversity of American students whom we educate” (American Cultures website). While much of the race literature focuses on blacks and whites, we will cover blacks, whites, Latinos, and Asians as that is the reality of the state of California and the future of race in the United States.

The readings selected for this course include “classic” scholarship on race and ethnicity, as well as less discussed, but important works. Because of the nature of racism and sexism in the academy, much of the scholarship that is deemed “classic” and “foundational” is dominated by white men. For example, W.E.B. Du Bois is often excluded from the sociological cannon despite that his methodological, empirical, and theoretical contributions to studies of race, class, and urbanity surfaced before the Chicago School began their research (Morris, 2015). In order to counter this tendency, I have explicitly required readings by scholars of color and women whenever possible. The optional readings list includes many of the more traditional readings, which I will cover in lecture.

Our class time for each learning unit will be split over two class meetings. In the first meeting (Monday or Wednesday), I will provide a lecture of the main concepts you are expected to understand for the unit and answer any questions you have about the main concepts. This will include materials from the required readings and additional information from optional readings. We will also do some small group activities to break up lecture and provide an opportunity for students to engage directly with the course content.

During the second meeting (Tuesday or Thursday), we will focus on connecting our course materials to current events through small group and full class discussion. I will provide information about the current event topic of the day in class so that we all have some common information about the topic. There will also be a few guest lectures on select days. Any content covered in class is fair game for the final exam.

## **Course Requirements**

### Readings

We will have two sets of readings each week, one set for class on Monday and Tuesday and the other for class on Wednesday and Thursday. You are expected to read the materials for class on Monday and Wednesday in preparation for discussion about the readings. You can find the required and optional readings on the BCourses site.

### Class Participation

Attendance is mandatory at all course meetings. Attendance will be taken at each day. If you need to miss class, you must email me before class to let me know that you will be missing class. You are responsible for any content that you miss.

In addition to attending class, students are expected to actively participate in class including participating in class discussion and small group activities. Actively participating in class discussion can include asking questions as well as responding to questions. You will be graded on both your attendance and class participation.

### Assignments

*Reading responses.* Over the course of the class, I will provide 6 reading response prompts of which you must complete 4. Each week you will be given one option for the assignment that corresponds with the topics of the weeks. You will choose one and write a one-page response (see below for more details). The reading response is due before class by 1:59pm as indicated on the schedule. The first of your four assignments must be submitted by 5/24 or 5/29 so that you can get feedback on how you are approaching the assignment (see more on this below). The goal of the reading response assignments is to make a concise argument in response to a broad question. This is meant to be a challenge!

To successfully complete the assignment, you will need to hone in on a specific topic and do a lot of paraphrasing. All reading responses must be completed in 12 point font with 1 inch margins and be single-spaced. Parenthetical citations must be used to indicate where the ideas you reference originate from. No exceptions! You may draw on any readings we have done up until that point.

Here are a few tips:

- Avoid quotations. They take up space. This should be an exercise in paraphrasing and summarizing key arguments from the texts.
- Keep in mind that you may not be able to engage with all of the readings from one section in one reading response, particularly if they do not enforce the same point. Instead, you might make an argument about one specific subset of readings.

The first reading response will be graded for completion (pass/fail) and will include more extensive feedback than normal in order to guide you on how to do the assignment well. All subsequent reading responses will have less feedback and will be given a grade of check plus (=A), check (B), or check minus (C).

You can find all of the reading response prompts at the end of the syllabus.

*Paper.* In order to gauge your mastery of course material, you will have a paper due in the middle of the term in place of a midterm. In the paper, you must explain in your own words why race and ethnicity are considered to be social constructions including an example of how they have been socially constructed. The paper should be 5 pages single spaced maximum with 1 inch margins and 12 point font. Be sure to not use quotations, but explain the literature in your own words and cite the corresponding readings from class. You must cite any work you refer to even when paraphrasing an author's argument.

Please note that this assignment overlaps with one of reading responses. You may expand on your reading response assignment in this paper. If you choose to do this, please address any feedback provided on your reading response.

*Reflection paper.* At the beginning of the final week of class on 6/26, you will submit a short reflection paper that connects your personal experience to the course content. In this 2-page paper (single spaced), you will reflect on your own raced experience and how it connects with the topics we have discussed in class. This should be more of a personal reflection essay than an academic paper. Be sure to include citations.

*Final exam.* For the final exam, students will have essays questions similar to the reading responses, which will have a longer page limit, and more than one essay required. Students will be expected to draw on multiple readings to

### Grades

The final course grade will be based on the following:

- Attendance: 5%
- Class participation: 10%
- Reading responses: 20%
- Paper: 25%
- Reflection paper: 15%
- Final exam: 25%

## Classroom Policies

In order to promote an environment where students can share personal experience, we will establish classroom policies together that to create a safe and respectful environment. Central to doing this is remembering that regardless of what academic research says most people do or experience, there are always experiences outside of that average.

## Communication

Outside of class time, I will send communications through email. You are responsible for keeping up with course communications and responding to any emails requesting contact in a timely fashion. I will in turn respond to emails within 24 hours of receipt during the week. If you have a question about an upcoming assignment, make sure you reach out to me more than 24 hours before the assignment is due.

## Late Assignments

I expect that you will submit assignments by the deadlines specified on the syllabus. Any late assignments will be deducted one letter grade for each day it is late. I will not accept any assignments that are more than 3 days late.

## Academic Integrity

Plagiarism will result in receiving an F for the assignment. This means representing others' work as your own including using another student's work or using any sources without proper citation including Internet sources. I do not expect you to include a reference list for assignments, but you must use parenthetical citations to indicate where ideas and concepts you reference originate from. To cite William Julius Wilson's book *the Truly Disadvantaged* for example, I would cite (Wilson, 1987) or (Wilson 1987).

## Syllabus Revisions

I may update the syllabus over the course of the summer. Please note that any changes that affect your readings or assignments will be reductions in the amount of readings or assignments, not additions. The only additions I will make to readings will be to optional readings. I will send a notification through BCourses and upload a new syllabus whenever this occurs.

## Overview of Schedule

Assignment deadlines are in bold and red.

Topic	Date(s)
I. Course introduction and Why does race matter?	5/22, 5/23
II. Racial identity vs. Racial classification	5/24, 5/25
<b>Required reading response 1 due</b>	<b>5/24 by 1:59pm</b>
III. Race and ethnicity as social constructs	5/29, 5/30
<b>Required reading response 2 due</b>	<b>5/29 by 1:59pm</b>
IV. Whiteness and white privilege	5/31, 6/1
<b>Reading response 3 due</b>	<b>5/31 by 1:59pm</b>
V. Who is black?	6/5, 6/6
VI. Creating "Latino"	6/7, 6/8
<b>Reading response 4 due</b>	<b>6/7 by 1:59pm</b>
VII. Asian identity	6/12, 6/13
VIII. Race theory	6/14, 6/15
<b>Reading response 5 due</b>	<b>6/14 by 1:59pm</b>
<b>Paper due</b>	<b>6/15 by 11:59pm</b>
IX. Racial segregation and the historical legacy of racism	6/19, 6/20
<b>Reading response 6 due</b>	<b>6/19 by 1:59pm</b>
X. Modern day racism, racial attitudes, and microaggressions	6/21, 6/22
XI. Coalition and competition	6/26, 6/27
<b>Reflection paper due</b>	<b>6/28 by 11:59pm</b>
Review	6/28 (final distributed after class)
<b>Final exam due</b>	<b>7/1 by 11:59pm</b>

## I. Course Introduction and Why Does Race Matter? 5/22 and 5/23

Welcome to Soc131AC! We will begin class by going over the syllabus and answering any questions you might have about the class. Then we will start into our first learning unit on why race matters. Students are expected to complete all required readings for this unit by 5/23.

Race and ethnicity are core demographic characteristics that sociologists study to understand inequality. We begin this course by establishing racial inequality in the United States including why class alone does not explain racial differences. Most of the literature we will discuss here is on black-white inequalities because much of the literature has focused on whites and blacks for a number of reasons that we will discuss briefly. However, this is no indication of the content of the course as whole.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain racial inequities in the United States
- Explain why class alone doesn't explain racial differences in individual and social outcomes in the United States

### Required readings:

Alexander. The New Jim Crow. Chapter 3.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/detail.action?docID=10383880>

Oliver and Shapiro. Black Wealth, White Wealth. Chapter 5.

Wilson. The Truly Disadvantaged. Chapter 2.

### Optional readings:

Massey and Denton. The American Apartheid. Chapter 3.

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=acls;idno=heb31525>

Noguera. City Schools and the American Dream. Chapter 3.

Pager. "The Mark of a Criminal Record"

Sharkey. Stuck in Place. Chapter 4.

## II. Racial Identity vs. Racial Classification 5/24 and 5/25

Race and ethnicity are fluid concepts, which raises confusion. When we use the word “race,” do we mean how an individual self-identifies? How others see that person? How they would be classified under a Census type question? Depending on the context, the word “race” can refer to something different, which raises confusion and can lead to unproductive conversations about race. In this section, we will distinguish between the different ways that race manifests in people’s lives to untangle the different ways that we use the word race when describing ourselves and the people around us.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Identify three ways the term “race” is often used
- Explain the differences between the three ways “race” is used
- Apply these three ways “race” is used to themselves

### Required Readings

Roth. Race Migrations: Latinos and the Cultural Transformation of Race. Chapter 1.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/detail.action?docID=10553326>

Waters. Black Identities. Chapter 3.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/detail.action?docID=10326119>

Current event topic: Rachel Dolzeal

### III. Race and Ethnicity as Social Constructs 5/29 and 5/30

Sociologists often refer to race and ethnicity as “socially constructed.” In this section, we will uncover what that means exactly and why sociologists are dismissive of biology as an explanation of race and ethnicity. We begin by defining race and ethnicity and unpacking why it is understood to be socially constructed.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Define race and ethnicity
- Explain the difference between race and ethnicity
- Explain what it means that race and ethnicity are socially constructed
- Explain the role of the State and the courts in defining race and ethnicity
- Use examples to illustrate the social construction of race and ethnicity

#### Required Readings:

“Race: The Power of an Illusion” Part 1. <https://berkeley.kanopystreaming.com/video/race-power-illusion-0>

Hattam. In the Shadow of Race. Chapter 1.

Molina. How Race is Made in America. Chapter 2.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/detail.action?docID=10777407>

Morning. “Everyone Knows it’s a Social Construct’: Contemporary Science and the Nature of Race”

Weber. “Ethnic Groups.” In Economy and Society Volume 1.

#### Optional Readings:

Fujimura, Duster, and Rajagopalan. “Race, Genetics, and Disease: Questions of Evidence, Matters of Consequence”

Haney Lopez. “The Social Construction of Race.”

Omi and Winant. Racial Formation in the United States. Chapter 1.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/detail.action?docID=10884826>



## IV. Whiteness and White Privilege

5/31 and 6/1

In this section, we will discuss the shift from ethnic identities with hierarchical positions to a collective “white” category among European Americans. Central to this unit will be establishing how whiteness imparts privilege regardless of class standing, gender, sexuality, religion, or other less privileged positions.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Describe the white ethnic hierarchy that existed prior to “white”
- Explain the shift to white as a racial category
- Identify examples of white privilege

### Required Reading

“Race: The Power of an Illusion” Part 3. <https://berkeley.kanopystreaming.com/video/race-power-illusion-0>

Haney-Lopez. White by Law. Chapter 1.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/detail.action?docID=10300404>

Ignatiev. How the Irish Became White. Chapter 6.

McIntosh. “Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”

### Optional Reading

Fox. Three Worlds of Relief. Chapter 2.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/detail.action?docID=10546016>

McDermott and Samson. “White Racial and Ethnic Identity in the United States.”

Waters. Ethnic Options. Chapter 2.

Current Event Topic: #AllLivesMatter

## V. Who is Black? 6/5 and 6/6

Black and white emerged in the racial hierarchy early in American history through slavery. While there were other people of color in the United States well before Africans were brought from the continent, the institution of slavery required a social hierarchy that justified the treatment of Africans as property and reinforced their social status in the United States as beneath that of the European descendants who owned both slaves and property. The emergence of the one-drop rule in the United States was the rule that distinguished between those who were free and those who were property and could be enslaved. However, post-emancipation, a similar rule of thumb has continued to apply. In this unit, we will discuss how blackness has changed over time and what ethnicity means for blacks.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain the one-drop rule including where it originated from, and how it continues to influence how blackness is defined in the United States
- Describe how black immigrants are racially “read”

### Required Readings

DuBois. “The Negro in the United States.” [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15359/15359-h/15359-h.htm#XI THE NEGRO IN THE UNITED STATES](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15359/15359-h/15359-h.htm#XI_THE_NEGRO_IN_THE_UNITED_STATES)

Hochschild and Powell. “Racial Reorganization and the United States Census 1850-1930: Mulattoes, Half-Breeds, Mixed Parentage, Hindoos, and the Mexican Race”

### Optional Readings

Park. “Racial Assimilation in Secondary Groups with Particular Reference to the Negro”

Waters. Black Identities. Chapter 8.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/detail.action?docID=10326119>

Current Event Topic: Obama as the first black president

## **VI. Creating “Latino” 6/7 and 6/8**

The terms “Latino” and “Hispanic” define an ethnic identity that has been more bureaucratic than social to date. Encompassing a group of Central American, South Americans, and Caribbeans, the common experience of the peoples defined as Latino or Hispanic is language as most come from Spanish speaking countries. Where the vast majority of blacks are native born in the United States, Latinos include native born Americans, multi-generational Americans, and immigrants and refugees from culturally distinct nations. In this unit, we will discuss how and why the Latino/Hispanic ethnicity emerged.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain how the term Hispanic/Latino emerged
- Explain why Hispanic/Latino is an ethnicity
- Compare the salience of the Hispanic/Latino identity to the black identity

### Required Readings

Alcoff Martin. “Latino vs. Hispanic”

Cobas, Duany, and Feagin. “Racializing Latinos: Historical Background and Current Forms.” In How the United States Racializes Latinos.

Mora. “Cross-field effects and ethnic classification”

### Optional Readings

Fox and Guglielmo. “Defining America’s racial boundaries”

Jimenez. “Mexican-Immigrant Replenishment and the Continuing Significance of Ethnicity and Race”

Lee and Bean. “Reinventing the Color Line: Immigration and America’s New Racial/Ethnic Divide.”

Massey. “Immigration Enforcement as a Race-Making Institution.”

Current Event Topic: Immigrants as a code word for Mexicans

## VII. Asian Identity 6/12 and 6/13

Like Latino/Hispanic, Asian is a broad category that captures a diverse group of native-born Americans, immigrants, and refugees. However, Asian designates a race that corresponds with the geographic barriers of the continent of Asia. Furthermore, the option to select Asian as one's racial background on the Census pre-dates Latino/Hispanic. In this unit, we will discuss how the racial group "Asian" emerged and its salience as a racial identity.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain why Asian is a race and not an ethnicity
- Explain whether the category Asian holds salience amongst Asians
- Compare and contrast Asian, Latino/Hispanic, blacks, and whites as racial and ethnic categories

### Required Reading

Chang. *We Gon' Be Alright*. Chapter 7.

Espiritu. *Asian American Panethnicity*. Chapter 2. <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/45909/>

Kim. "The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans"

### Optional Reading

Espiritu and Omi. "'Who Are You Calling Asian?': Shifting Identity Claims, Racial Classification, and the Census"

Lien, Conway, and Wong. "The Contours and Sources of Ethnic Identity Choices Among Asian Americans"

Tuan. *Forever Foreigners or Honorary Whites?: The Asian Ethnic Experience Today* (Chapter 2)

Zhou. "Are Asian Americans Becoming 'White'?"

Current Event Topic: Undocumented immigrants and Asian Americans

## VIII. Race Theory 6/14 and 6/15

How have social scientists explained the emergence of racial and ethnic hierarchies? In this unit, we will cover theories of why the racial hierarchy is the way it is in the United States. We will explore what this means for both race and ethnicity.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain several theories of the formation of race and ethnicity
- Critique existing theories of the formation of race and ethnicity

### Required Readings

Bonilla-Silva. "From Bi-racial to Tri-racial: Towards a New System of Racial Stratification in the USA"

Omi and Winant. Racial Formation in the United States. Chapter 4.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/detail.action?docID=10884826>

Wimmer. "Elementary strategies of ethnic boundary making"

### Optional Readings

Alba. "Bright vs. Blurred Boundaries"

Barth. Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. Chapter 1.

Wimmer. Ethnic Boundary Making. Chapters 1 and 2.

Current Event Topic: Arab American discrimination post-9-11

## **IX. Racial Segregation and the Historical Legacy of Racism**

### **6/19 and 6/20**

Social scientists in several disciplines study the physical separation in where Americans live by race and ethnicity. Part of the modern day thinking about racial segregation is that it is a story of residential choice. That is, that whites choose to live with other whites, blacks choose to live with other blacks, Latinos choose to live with other Latinos, and Asians choose to live with other Asians. However, the current state of segregation is in fact a legacy of a history of the explicit exclusion of non-whites from neighborhoods where whites wanted to live. In this unit, we will discuss the trends of racial segregation over time, how those were influenced by policies and real estate practices to enforce racial segregation, and the laws and court decisions aimed at reducing racial segregation.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Describe the historical trends of racial segregation
- Identify the policies and practices used to enforce racial segregation
- Explain why efforts to reduce racial segregation have been ineffective

#### Required Readings

Charles. *Won't You be My Neighbor: Race, Class, and Residence in Los Angeles*. Chapter 5.

Coates. "The Case for Reparations"

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

Logan. "The Persistence of Segregation in the 21st Century Metropolis"

#### Optional Readings

Fischer et al. "Distinguishing the geographic levels and social dimensions of US metropolitan segregation, 1960–2000"

Massey et al. "The changing bases of segregation in the United States"

Vose. *Caucasians only*. Chapter 1

Current Event Topic: Gentrification by race and the role of the non-white middle-class

## X. Modern Day Racism, Racial Attitudes, and Microaggressions 6/21 and 6/22

Everyday experiences of overt racism are arguably an problem of the past. However, that does not mean that racism is an issue of the past. In this unit, we will discuss how the word “racism” has gotten a bad rep and what modern day racism actually looks like. Given the era of political correctness and its influence on how racism manifests, how does racism operate on a day-to-day basis? What is the modern day experience of racism look like?

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Define racism and microaggression
- Explain what modern day racist experiences “look like”
- Identify examples of microaggressions

### Required Readings

Anderson. *White Rage*. Chapter 4.

Bobo et al. “The Real Record on Racial Attitudes.”

Bonilla-Silva. *Racism Without Racists*. Chapter 3.

Kang. *The Managed Hand*. Chapter 5.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/detail.action?docID=10535639>

Coates. *Between the World and Me*. Pages 5-25.

### Optional Readings

Blumer. “Race Prejudice as Sense of Group Position”

Bonilla-Silva. “Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation.”

Chang. *We Gon’ Be Alright*. Chapter 6.

Feagin. “The Continuing Significance of Race: Anti-Black Discrimination in Public Places.”

Hirsch and Jack. “What we Face: Framing Problems in the Black Community.”

Norton and Sommers. “Whites See Racism as a Zero-Sum Game that they are now Losing”

Pager and Shepherd. “The Sociology of Discrimination: Racial Discrimination in Employment, Housing, Credit, and Consumer Markets”

Current Event Topic: Race and victims of police violence

## XI. Coalition and Competition

6/26 and 6/27

The future for race in America depends largely on whether Americans work together to fight racism or continue to support oppression and systematic racism. In an effort to end on a positive note, this final unit focuses on coalition building with readings and discussions on allyship. Many of the sources for this week were inspired by the #BlackLivesMatter movement, but these examples of allyship apply to us all. No one person understands the lived experiences of all other people around them. Blacks are allies to Latinos and Asians and Latinos and Asians are allies to blacks. Together, maybe we can make change in the world.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Define allyship
- Identify traits of good allies
- Identify ways in which they can be better allies

### Required Readings

Code Switch podcast. "A letter from young Asian Americans to their families about Black Lives Matter." <http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2016/07/27/487375314/a-letter-from-young-asian-americans-to-their-families-about-black-lives-matter>

Semiproper blog. "A beginner's guide to becoming an ally to the black community." <http://semiproper.com/how-to-become-an-ally-to-the-black-community/>

### Optional Readings

Kim. "Imagining Race and Nation in Multiculturalist America"

Zamora. "Framing Commonality in a Multiracial, Multiethnic Coalition." Chapter 10 in Just Neighbors? Research on African American and Latino Relations in the United States: <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/detail.action?docID=11169244>



## Reading Response Prompts

1. Racial identity vs. Racial classification – Due 5/24  
Identify one way that sociologists study race and explain how it contributes to our understanding of race.
2. Race and ethnicity as social constructs – Due 5/29  
Explain why sociologists say race and ethnicity are socially constructed.
3. Whiteness and white privilege – Due 5/31  
Explain “white privilege” and how it relates to racial inequality.
4. Creating “Latino” – Due 6/7  
Explain who is classified as Latino/Hispanic and why.
5. Race theory – Due 6/14  
Explain how racial hierarchies emerge.
6. Racial segregation and the historical legacy of racism – Due 6/19  
Explain the relationship between past and present racial segregation.