SOCIOL 190
Racial Arithmetic

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Office hours: Mondays, 3:30-5pm and Wednesday, 4-6pm
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Schedule at: calendly.com/mrodriguezmuniz

COURSE DESCRIPTION

We regularly consume statistics and data based on ethnoracial categories, whether demographic projections, survey data on political attitudes, and figures about crime, disease, immigration, and school achievement. Often taken for granted and treated as objective, this course explores the politics of racial knowledge. Bridging the sociology of race and the sociology of knowledge, students will critically interrogate the production, circulation, and consumption of racial statistics and meditate on the relationship between quantification, race-making, and social (in)justice.

A NOTE ABOUT THE ONGOING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

We are still in a global pandemic that continues to cause loss and suffering. *As such, I want us all to prioritize our physical and mental health throughout the semester.* I strongly encourage all students to wear a mask in class. Members of our community might have medical conditions or live with immunocompromised family members who they wish to protect from COVID. The course will take place in person. However, should circumstances change, we will adjust as needed. For the latest campus information and resource related to COVID-19, visit here.

EXPECTATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY

Ethics of Learning and Discussion
This course explores complex, contentious, and controversial issues. Course readings and discussions may generate discomfort and disagreement. I invite you to share your

perspectives and experiences and engage in open yet respectful dialogue with me and each other. We all have a responsibility to help build a space of learning, reflection, and community. To that end, there is no room for dehumanizing or demeaning language or gestures, as well as acts of intimidation or harassment.

Email Communication
Make sure to check your berkeley.edu email daily for announcements and class communication. I will try to respond within 48 hours to your emails, but please be patient.

bCourses
bCourses will serve as the hub for assigned articles, assignments, and announcements. You should check bCourses regularly. If you have any questions about class logistics or materials, please check bCourses and the syllabus before emailing me.

REQUIRED BOOKS

We will be reading <u>excerpts</u> from the following books. Click on hyperlinks to access e-books through the Berkeley library.

1. Brayne, Sarah. 2020. *Predict and Surveil: Data, Discretion, and the Future of Policing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Kukutai, Tahu, and John Taylor (editors). 2016. *Indigenous Data Sovereignty: Toward an Agenda*. Canberra: Australian National University Press.
3. Loveman, Mara. 2014. *National Colors: Racial Classification and the State in Latin America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
4. Stewart, Quincy Thomas. 2023. *Race in the Machine: A Novel Account*. Palo Alto: Stanford.
5. Wiggins, Benjamin. 2020. *Calculating Race: Racial Discrimination in Risk Assessment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

COURSE SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

Week 1 (January 18): INTRODUCTION

Week 2 (January 25): The SOCIOLOGY OF QUANTIFICATION
- Badiou, Alain. 2008. "Number Must Be Thought." Pp. 1-4 in *Number and Numbers*. Malden: Polity Press.

- Espeland, Wendy Nelson, and Mitchell L. Stevens. 2008. "A Sociology of Quantification." European Journal of Sociology 49(3):401-36.

Week 3 (February 1): RACIAL KNOWLEDGE
- Roberts, Dorothy. 2011. "Separating Racial Science from Racism." Pp. 26-54 in *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Create Race in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: The New Press.
- Goldberg, David Theo. 2009. "Racial Knowledge." Pp. 226-252 in *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*, edited by Les Back and John Solomos. New York: Routledge. [*Read pp. 226-229*]
- Morning, Ann. 2009. "Toward a Sociology of Racial Conceptualization for the 21st Century." *Social Forces* 87(3): 1167-1192.

ANGLES FOR ANALYSIS

Week 4 (February 8): THE POLITICS OF PRODUCTION
- Surdu, Mihai. 2019. "Why the 'Real' Numbers on Roma Are Fictitious: Revisiting Practices of Ethnic Quantification." *Ethnicities* 19(3): 486–502.
- Norris, Davon. 2021. "Embedding Racism: City Government Credit Ratings and the Institutionalization of Race in Markets." *Social Problems* 1-21.
- Hammer, Ricarda, and Tina M. Park. 2021. "The Ghost in the Algorithm: Racial Colonial Capitalism and the Digital Age." *Political Power and Social Theory*. 38: 221–249.

Week 5 (February 15): THE POLITICS OF DEPLOYMENT
- Zanger-Tishler, Michael. 2022. "Ethnoracial Classification and the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics: Constructing Palestinian Criminality in Israel (1990–2019)." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 45(15): 2867–91.
- Díaz McConnell, Eileen. 2019. "Numbers, Narratives, and Nation: Mainstream News Coverage of US Latino Population Growth, 1990–2010." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 5(4): 500-517.
- Hirschman, Daniel, and Emily Adlin Bosk. "Standardizing Biases: Selection Devices and the Quantification of Race." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*. 6(3): 348-364.

Week 6 (February 22): THE POLITICS OF CONSUMPTION
- Rodriguez-Lonebear, Desi. 2021. "The Blood Line: Racialized Boundary Making and Citizenship among Native Nations." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 7(4): 527–42.
- Kravel-Tovi, Michal. 2022. "Ambivalences of smallness: population statistics and narratives of scale among American Jewry." *Theory and Society*. 1-39.
- Roth, Wendy D., and Biorn Ivemark. 2018. "Genetic options: The impact of genetic ancestry testing on consumers' racial and ethnic identities." *American Journal of Sociology* 124(1): 150-184.

CASE STUDIES

Week 7 (March 1): CENSUS
- Mara Loveman, *National Colors: Racial Classification and the State in Latin America*

Week 8 (March 8): RISK AND INSURANCE
- Benjamin Wiggins, *Calculating Race: Racial Discrimination in Risk Assessment*

Week 9 (March 15): POLICING
- Sarah Brayne, *Predict and Surveil: Data, Discretion, and the Future of Policing*

CRITICAL QUANTITATIVE ALTERNATIVES

Week 10 (March 22): QUANTCRIT
- Zuberi, Tukufu. 2000. "Deracializing Social Statistics: Problems in the Quantification of Race." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 568(1): 172-185.
- Garcia, Nichole M., Nancy López, and Verónica N. Vélez. 2018. "QuantCrit: Rectifying Quantitative Methods Through Critical Race Theory." *Race Ethnicity and Education* 21(2): 149-157.
- Ryan Hatch, Anthony. 2022. "The Data Will Not Save Us: Afropessimism and Racial Antimatter in the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Big Data & Society* 9(1): 1-13.

Week 11: SPRING BREAK

Week 12 (April 5): INDIGENOUS DATA SOVEREIGNTY
- Tahu Kukutai and John Taylor (editors), *Indigenous Data Sovereignty: Toward an Agenda*

Week 13 (April 12): RETHINKING RACIAL QUANTIFICATION
- Quincy Thomas Stewart, *Race in the Machine: A Novel Account*

Week 14: (April 19): Research Presentations

Week 15: (April 26): Research Presentations

GRADED COMPONENTS

Weekly "What Do You Want to Talk About?" Posts (20%)
In advance of class, post on bCourses a brief reaction to the readings (roughly 50-150 words). Share anything you found interesting or confusing and would like to discuss. Your posts

should also include at least ONE question for discussion. **Post by 6pm every Tuesday**. You are allowed to skip one post per semester—choose at your discretion.

Discussion Facilitation (15%)
Each student will help facilitate a discussion during the semester. The objective is to highlight main arguments and contributions of readings, make linkages with prior weeks, and raise questions for class discussion. Your review of assigned texts should be 15 minutes at maximum. Make sure to engage questions posted on bCourses (see above). *Presenters do not have to submit a weekly post*.

Annotated Bibliography (20%)
Over the semester, you will develop an annotated bibliography of course readings. Each entry should be between 100-200 words long. While we will discuss this further in class, you may find this guide helpful. The annotated bibliography is due on **Friday, April 26**.

Online Mid-term (20%)
Between **Week 6** and **Week 7**, the class will take an online mid-term. The exam will cover key concepts and include multiple-choice and short essay questions. Access exam on bCourses. More details will be provided in class.

Final Paper (25%)
Drawing extensively on course readings and discussions, you will submit a final essay. Consider any of the following questions: What role should racial statistics have in our society? What do racial data help us see or not see? How would you recommend we engage with racial data personally and/or politically? How has the course challenged or changed your thinking about race and quantification? Your essay should be between 5-7 pages (double-spaced) and include citations and references. It is due on **Wednesday, May 10, 5pm**.

OTHER DETAILS

Attendance
You are expected to attend every session, barring a documented emergency or recognized religious holiday. However, things happen—and sometimes you just need a break. In any case, please let me know if you will not be attending class.

Academic Integrity and Ethics
Cheating on exams and plagiarism are examples of violations in the realm of ethics and integrity. Honesty, integrity, and ethical behavior are of great importance in all facets of life. They are so important that it is generally assumed that one has learned and internalized these qualities at an early age. As a result, these issues rarely get explicitly addressed by the

time one gets to be a university student. However, it cannot be overstated just how important honesty is to the academic enterprise.

Accommodations

The purpose of academic accommodations and supportive measures is to ensure that all students have a fair chance at academic success. Disability, or hardships such as basic needs insecurity, uncertain documentation and immigration status, medical and mental health concerns, significant familial distress, and experiencing sexual violence or harassment, can affect a student's ability to satisfy particular course requirements. Students have the right to accommodations and supportive measures and to resources, without having to disclose personal information to instructors. For more information, click here.

For disabilities-related accommodations, please enroll in the Disabled Students' Program (DSP). See me as soon as possible if you need particular accommodations, and we will make the necessary arrangements.

Other Community Services

Tang Center Counseling and Psychological Services supports the emotional, psychological, educational, social, and cultural development of all UC Berkeley students through a wide range of multiculturally based counseling, psychiatric, career, consultation, training, and educational services.

Path to Care is the campus's comprehensive resource for all support related to sexual violence/harassment, intimate partner violence, and stalking.

PartySafe@Cal is a program of University Health Services that collaborates with other campus and community organizations to reduce harm associated with drinking in the campus area.

University Health Services (UHS) provides comprehensive medical, mental health, and health promotion services to all Cal students and a variety of occupational health services to faculty and staff.

Student Learning Center (SLC) provides various academic resources and support, including peer writing tutors.

* Instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus. Changes will be announced in advance.