

SOC 344: Racial and Ethnic Relations

Unique Course ID: 44915

Fall 2021

Class Meets

WHEN: Monday and Wednesday 1pm-2:30pm

WHERE: RLP 0.102

Professor: Dr. Robert L. Reece

Office: RLP 3.736

Email: Robert.L.Reece@gmail.com

Phone: 512-232-6318

Office hours:

Online by appointment

Teaching Assistant:

Felipe Vargas – varrio@gmail.com

Course Description

This course will introduce students to the sociological study of race and ethnicity. It is designed to help students understand and learn to interrogate the origins and social production of race and racial inequality and how both continue to shape the world that we all live in. Topics will range from the multiplicative origins of the idea of race and racial classification to the breadth and depth of racial inequality and how even racial inequality is stratified further by skin shade to theories and speculations about the future of racial demographic change. This is an upper division course that has been designed to be collaborative and student led. Although I offer a scaffolding for the course and will serve as a guide and moderator, the specific directions of the learning will rely heavily on student input.

This course carries the flag for Cultural Diversity in the United States. The purpose of the Cultural Diversity in the United States Flag is for students to explore in depth the shared practices and beliefs of one or more underrepresented cultural groups subject to persistent marginalization. In addition to learning about these diverse groups in relation to their specific contexts, students should engage in an active process of critical reflection. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one underrepresented cultural group in the U.S.

You must have completed 60 hours of coursework to enroll in this course.

Attendance Policy

I encourage you all to attend class each day. I do not track attendance; however, studies show that class attendance is highly correlated with grades so it is in your best interest to log on every day.

Course Materials

I will provide all of your readings through Canvas. ***Please pay attention to page numbers!***

Videos listed on the syllabus are available online through the library website with your UT login.

SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH FAIR NOTICE

Assignments and Grading (all assignments will have a Canvas submission portal; please do not email them to us)

Documentary Summaries – 20%

Over the course of the semester, at your own pace, you are required to watch and summarize **three** documentaries from the list on page 5 of the syllabus. Each summary should be **300 words** and explain what the documentary was about and any insights you gained from it. All documentaries are available through the library website with your UT login.

Current Events – 10%

Each week a group of students (as indicated on the syllabus) will be responsible for completing a current events assignment in two parts. First, each student must identify a current event broadly related to that week's topic and write a **300-word summary** explaining the event, its implications, and how it's related to that week. Submit the summary on **Canvas prior to Monday's class**. Second, at the start of each Monday's class, each student will **briefly discuss** their summary with the class. *Everyone will do this once per semester.*

NOTE: This is not a group assignment. The groups are to indicate which of you are responsible for that week.

Article Summaries – 10%

Each week a group of students (as indicated on the syllabus) will be responsible for completing an article summary assignment in two parts. First, each student must select an article from the journal **Sociology of Race and Ethnicity** on any topic of their choice and write a **300-word summary** explaining the article's primary argument, its methodology, its findings, and its conclusions. Submit the summary on **Canvas prior to Wednesday's class**. Second, at the start of each Wednesday's class, each student will **briefly discuss** their summary with the class. *Everyone will do this once per semester.*

NOTE: This is not a group assignment. The groups are to indicate which of you are responsible for that week.

Monday Learning Check – 15%

At the end of each Monday's class everyone will write 1-2 sentence responses to the following questions:

What did you learn from the readings?

What did you learn from the lecture?

What remains confusing or unanswered?

Wednesday Learning Check – 15%

At the end of each Monday's class everyone will write 1-2 sentence responses to the following questions:

Is your question from Monday still unanswered?

What do you hope to learn next week?

Letter to the Government – 30%

The final project is a **letter to a government official** of your choice urging them to address a **race-related social problem** of your choice. You will use sources such as peer reviewed papers and reports from think tanks and government organizations to frame your argument and demonstrate the severity of the problem you proposed along with possible solutions. Your letter should be **750 words** and is due on the date of the final exam. Refer to the rubric at the end of the syllabus for specific details.

Late Work and Makeup Policy

I understand that sometimes things happen, particularly in the middle of a global pandemic. If you need to makeup an assignment, contact us as soon as possible and we will try to make accommodations.

Grading Scale

A	94%
A-	90%
B+	87%
B	84%
B-	80%
C+	77%
C	74%
C-	70%
D	65%
F<	65%

Course Schedule

WEEK 1 – AUGUST 25 – INTRODUCTION AND SYLLABUS

WEEK 2 – AUGUST 30, SEPTEMBER 1 – WHAT IS RACE? CATEGORIES

Current Events – Group 1; Article Summaries – Group 6

Smedley – *Race in America* ch.1

Strimic-Pawl et al 2018

WEEK 3 – NO CLASS SEPTEMBER 6 (LABOR DAY), SEPTEMBER 8 – WHAT IS RACE? BIOLOGY

Current Events – Group 2; Article Summaries – Group 7

Roberts – *Fatal Invention* – ch.2

VIDEO: Race the Power of an Illusion pt.1

WEEK 4 – SEPTEMBER 13, 15 – RACIAL INEQUALITY

Current Events – Group 3; Article Summaries – Group 8

State of Black America Black-White Index 2020

State of Black American Hispanic-White Index 2020

Kawai 2005

VIDEO: Race the Power of an Illusion pt.2

WEEK 5 – SEPTEMBER 20, 22 – THE CREATION OF WHITENESS

Current Events – Group 4; Article Summaries – Group 9

Gross 1998

Barrett and Roediger 2005

WEEK 6 – SEPTEMBER 27, 29 – COLORISM

Current Events – Group 5; Article Summaries – Group 10

VIDEO: A Question of Color

Reece 2017

Hunter 1997

WEEK 7 – OCTOBER 4, 6 – HEALTH

Current Events – Group 6; Article Summaries – Group 11

Braun et al 2007

Williams and Mohammed 2013

Malat et al 2018

WEEK 8 – OCTOBER 11, 13 – BODY SIZE

Current Events – Group 7; Article Summaries – Group 12

Reece 2017

Strings 2015

WEEK 9 – OCTOBER 18, 20 – GUEST SPEAKERS

WEEK 10 – OCTOBER 25, 27 – ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

Current Events – Group 8; Article Summaries – Group 1

Bergman 2019

Emanuel 2016

WEEK 11 – NOVEMBER 1, 3 – TECHNOLOGY

Current Events – Group 9; Article Summaries – Group 2

Buchanan 2018

Cook et al 2019

Benjamin 2019

Angwin et al 2016

WEEK 12 – NOVEMBER 8, 10 – LEGACY OF SLAVERY

Current Events – Group 10; Article Summaries – Group 3

Darity et al 2010

Baptist 2016

WEEK 13 – NOVEMBER 15, 17 – SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Current Events – Group 11; Article Summaries – Group 4

Bell 1992

Ray and Seamster 2016

NOVEMBER 22, 25 – NO CLASS FOR THANKSGIVING

WEEK 14 – NOVEMBER 29, DECEMBER 1 – THE FUTURE OF RACE

Current Events – Group 12; Article Summaries – Group 5

Alba 2018

Reece 2021

WEEK 15 – DECEMBER 6 (OPTIONAL) – FINAL PAPER Q&A

FINAL DUE: DECEMBER 13th

Documentaries

- *Slavery and the Making of America (choose 2 parts)*
- *Unnatural Causes (choose 2 parts)*
- *Speed Sisters: The First All-Women Race Car Driving Team in the Middle East*
- *A Life Worth Living: Suicide Prevention in Native American and First Nations Communities*
- *Slavery By Another Name*
- *I Am Not Your Negro*
- *Black and Cuba*
- *Hoop Dreams*
- *Concerning Violence: Nine Scenes from the Anti-Imperialistic Self Defense*
- *Freedom on My Mind*
- *The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross*
- *Harvest of Empire*
- *Precious Knowledge*
- *The Murder of Fred Hampton*
- *Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution*
- *The Color of Fear*
- *Say Her Name: The Life and Death of Sandra Bland*
- *White Like Me: Race, Racism, and White Privilege in America*
- *First Person Plural*
- *Awake: A Dream from Standing Rock*
- *People Like Me: Social Class in America*
- *Paris is Burning*
- *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin*

Appendices and Policies

Student Rights & Responsibilities

- You have a right to a learning environment that supports mental and physical wellness.
- You have a right to respect.
- You have a right to be assessed and graded fairly.
- You have a right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- You have a right to privacy and confidentiality.
- You have a right to meaningful and equal participation, to self-organize groups to improve your learning environment.
- You have a right to learn in an environment that is welcoming to all people. No student shall be isolated, excluded or diminished in any way.

With these rights come responsibilities:

- You are responsible for taking care of yourself, managing your time, and communicating with the teaching team and with others if things start to feel out of control or overwhelming.
- You are responsible for acting in a way that is worthy of respect and always respectful of others. Your experience with this course is directly related to the quality of the energy that you bring to it, and your energy shapes the quality of your peers' experiences.
- You are responsible for creating an inclusive environment and for speaking up when someone is excluded.
- You are responsible for holding yourself accountable to these standards, holding each other to these standards, and holding the teaching team accountable as well.

Personal Pronoun

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. We will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise us of this preference early in the semester so that we may make appropriate changes to our records.

University Policies

Academic Integrity

Each student in the course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code: "As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity." **Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT.** Therefore, if you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. You are responsible for understanding UT's Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

University Resources for Students

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. There are also a range of resources on campus:

Services for Students with Disabilities

This class respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities. If there are circumstances that make our learning environment and activities difficult, if you have medical information that you need to share with me, or if you need specific arrangements in case the building needs to be evacuated, please let me know. I am committed to creating an effective learning

environment for all students, but I can only do so if you discuss your needs with me as early as possible. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of these discussions. If appropriate, also contact Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329- 3986 (video phone). <http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/about/>

Counseling and Mental Health Center

Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. <http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/individualcounseling.html>

The Sanger Learning Center

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/slc> or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Libraries: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

ITS: <http://www.utexas.edu/its/>

Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

Important Safety Information:

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call BCAL (the Behavior Concerns Advice Line): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn't feel right – it probably isn't. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

Letter to the Government Grading Guidelines

	GRAMMAR AND MECHANICS	DESCRIBE THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM	WORD COUNT	DEVELOP POLICY SOLUTIONS
25 POINTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal grammatical errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triangulate the problem from multiple sources (4-5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets word count, 750 words \pm 20 words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes how policy fixes the problem Describes how policy should be implemented
20 POINTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate grammatical errors that do not detract from overall readability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triangulate the problem from a few sources (2-3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 700 words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets word count Moderate grammatical errors Describes how policy fixes the problem Describes how policy should be implemented
15 POINTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate grammatical errors that obscure readability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relies on minimal sources (1-2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 650 words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes how policy fixes the problem Fails to describe how policy should be implemented
10 POINTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe grammatical errors make the manuscript unreadable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No sources or unreliable sources (blogs, conspiracy sites, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Below 650 words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fails to describe how policy fixes the problem Fails to describe how policy should be implemented
0 POINTS	No work	No work	No work	No work