ES 201- Inventing Ethnic America

Instructor: Padma Akkaraju Ph. D.
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Catalog Description:

Examination of contemporary America, focusing on the way elements of diverse ethnic societies--family, leisure, education, and employment--intersect, determine identity, and shape lifestyles.

Course Description

Race and ethnicity are closely tied to the understanding of one’s identity and experience of citizenship in the USA. In this course we will explore the invention of race and ethnicity in the United States of America through scientific, social, political, and legal means. We will study the impact of ideologies associated with race and ethnicity on the US society, through history to the present, at the individual and systemic (for example law and criminal justice) levels.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to

1. Analyze the concepts of race and ethnicity from American historical, political, and social perspectives.
2. Examine the ideologies associated with race and ethnicity, and their impact on the prevailing social inequality at the individual and systemic levels.
3. Distinguish between the legal and social aspects of ethnic and racial identities and examine their role in the experience of citizenship in the USA.

Required Texts

Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity, 7th Edition, ed. Charles A. Gallagher

Videos: 1. Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality making us Sick?
2. Race: The Power of Illusion – parts 1, 2 & 3
3. “White like me” – Tim Wise
4. US Prisons, the new Jim Crow
## Course Calendar

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<tr>
<th>Topics &amp; Assignments</th>
<th>Required Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1: Race and Ethnicity in the USA: Exploring the past and examining the change over time;</td>
<td>▪ Reading from the Textbook: Chapters 1-3; 12&lt;br&gt;▪ Forbes, Jack D. 1988. “African-Native American contacts and the modern re-peopling of the Americas” (Black Board)&lt;br&gt;▪ Online Exhibit: <a href="http://www.nmai.si.edu/exhibitions/indivisible/introduction.html">http://www.nmai.si.edu/exhibitions/indivisible/introduction.html</a>&lt;br&gt;▪ Video: Race: The Power of Illusion – part 2 (Black Board)</td>
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<td>Week 3: Race and Ethnicity in US society: (1) Color of health; (2) Color of crime and justice</td>
<td>▪ Required Reading&lt;br&gt;▪ Readings from the Textbook: Chapters 8, 18; 30; 31, 39; 47-49&lt;br&gt;▪ Oboler, Suzanne. 2000. “It must be a fake:” Racial ideologies and the question of rights”</td>
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Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation: This seminar will require careful reading, critical reflection, and participation on the online discussion forum that will be set up on Blackboard. Your attendance and participation in the class meetings on August 16, 18, 23, and 25 is mandatory.

Evaluation of Student Performance:

Weekly Journal (40 points): You will submit a journal that demonstrates your knowledge of the Week’s topics. Your journal must be minimum 2 pages long.

Participation and Discussion (20 points): Use the questions that arise out of your reflection in the weekly journal as springboards for discussion on the Blackboard.

Your participation would be evaluated on the basis of your participation in the blackboard discussions. You are expected to contribute two posts minimum per week. One of your posts must share your reflections/questions with the class and the other must respond to another student’s reflection/question.

Case Study Analysis (20 points): You will research current and recent news (2008-2010) and choose two news items that discuss or reflect the role of race and ethnicity in the US society. You will apply the knowledge you gained from the course materials covered in the first two weeks to analyze the news items and share your findings with the class using one of the following media: (a) Blog; (b) Video log; (c) Flickr

Final Exam (20 points): The Final exam will be in the short essay format. The exam will be posted online during the finals week.

Grading:

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<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Journal</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blackboard discussions</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Studies Analysis and Presentation</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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The course grade is based on straight percentages: A= 93 and above; A- = 90-93; B+ = 87-89; B = 84 – 86; B- = 80-83; C+ = 77-79; C = 73-76; C- = 70-72; D+ = 67-69; D = 63-66; D- = 60-63; F= 59 and below.
**Expectations and Guidelines for Student Success**

This is an accelerated course. Therefore it requires students to manage their time effectively, practice self-discipline, and take active ownership of their learning.

1. Be prepared and organized. Schedule a time for reading. Complete the assigned readings before the class meetings on August 16, 18, 23 & 25.
2. Submit the assignments on time.
3. Ask questions or contact the instructor if you are not sure about a topic, assignment, reading, etc.

**Guidelines for Student Conduct and Participation**

Please read and understand OSU policy on student conduct and academic integrity as published at the OSU web site: [http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/documents/conduct_code_2010.pdf](http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/documents/conduct_code_2010.pdf)

Please follow the following guidelines for creating the environment that is safe and conducive to learning:

1. This class covers many topics that question the status quo related race, ethnicity and privilege. Be open-minded.
2. Do not engage in personal attacks.
3. Follow the ground rules for in-class participation and Blackboard discussion.
4. Value diverse ideas, leaning styles and opinions.
5. Engage in active discussion with your peers while being respectful and sensitive to their ideas and perspectives.

**Student Assistance**

Computer Support: Contact OSU Help Desk at (541) 737-3474

Instructor help: You can email me at akkarajp@onid.orst.edu. Please allow adequate time for my response depending upon the time and the day.

**University and Departmental Policies**

**Diversity:** The instructor is dedicated to establishing a safe learning environment that promotes diversity of the students’ race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, and physical disability. Anyone noticing discriminatory behavior in this class, or if you feel discriminated against, please bring it to the attention of the instructor. Behaviors disruptive to the learning environment will not be tolerated and will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action.
Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities

Accessibility: Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations approved through Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know of, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible, no later than the first week of the term. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through SSD should contact SSD immediately at 541-737-4098.

Student Evaluation of Teaching

Course evaluation will be available toward the end of each term. Evaluation data are not released until the course is completed. Your course evaluation will help me improve the learning experience for students taking this course in the future.