

## **SOCIOLOGY OF DIVERSITY**

SOC 218: G11/Spring 2009 CRN# 40029

Instructor: Ms. Cathy Beighey

Office: WSTV 653A

Class Time: TR 10:45-12:00pm

Office Hrs: **M, W, F (in LV Rm. #211)** 1:30-3:00pm,

Where : WSTV #686

TR 12:00-2:00pm

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Minority group issues are among the most heated challenges facing the United States today. American minority groups are inseparable from American society; furthermore, the process of analyzing the sociology of diversity calls into question what it means to be a U.S. American. Prejudice, discrimination, and minority stratification as well as equality, freedom, and justice are woven into our national heritage. When people confront the emotionally charged material presented in this course they can react on a personal level with feelings of guilt, shame, and anger, but these feelings are not conducive to untangling the complex, multifaceted, and historic framework of majority-minority relations. On the other hand, sociology is the systematic study of the relationship between humans and society; therefore, it is broad in scope, eclectic, and provides a conceptual framework for a critical inquiry into race, ethnicity, class, and gender as interrelated systems of oppression. A base assumption of this course is that a color, ethnic, gender, or class blind society obscures oppression. People, and society at large, are affected by historical patterns of race, ethnicity, class, and gender, yet these socially constructed categories are not necessarily apparent to the participants and may be experienced differently depending upon the race, ethnicity, class, gender, socialization, and personal experiences of those involved. Lastly, the forthcoming issues and information are primarily presented from the social conflict tradition.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

While becoming well versed in sociological concepts, terms, and the founding assumptions central to the study of sociology, you will also: 1) develop a theoretical and conceptual frame to dissect minority group creation and perpetuation as well as the social construction of race, ethnicity, gender, and class, 2) survey the historical evolution and contemporary causes of social stratification, 3) examine the social, economic, and political experience of a range of U.S. minority groups as well as the diversity found within minority groups, 4) engage in a critical examination of the social damage that results from prejudice, discrimination, and ethnocentrism, 5) fine-tune skills that will be increasingly pertinent in the 21st century as societies around the globe undergo rapid social and cultural change, 6) express (written and orally) a well-informed interpretation of the social world surrounding us based on sound sociological reasoning that reflects critical thought. In addition, you will learn:

- the conditions under which groups first come together (colonized versus willing immigrants, economic prosperity versus great competition, etc.) are the most important factors in the creation of minority group status.
- racist ideology and institutional discrimination are created to sustain the respective position of the dominant group.
- because of the pervasive, persistent, and severe nature of oppressive systems, people

resist subordination with practices and behaviors that challenge the stratification system that perpetuates their limited opportunities for advancement.

- the nature of majority-minority group relations reflects the characteristics and subsistence technology of a society at a given historic, economic, and social time; therefore, majority-minority group relations do change.
- race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality intersect and operate on both a macro/ structural and micro level because people's everyday lives can reinforce, or challenge, macro-level social structures while these social structures influence individuals' lives.

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

Joseph Healey's "*Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Class: The Sociology of Group Conflict and Change*". 2008. Pine Forge Press, 5th Ed.

### **SELECTED WEBER READING**

They are 'On Reserve' in the Aims Library or available electronically via Web Services. Log into Web Services. Click on "My Courses" and select Soc 218:G11. The selected reading is on the "Weber Reading" page which is accessed via the Course Home Page.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL**

As a study tool, go to Healey's Study Guide at: <http://www.pineforge.com/healeystudy5/>. Select a chapter. Use the 'Flashcards' and take the practice quiz for each chapter.

**REQUIRED READING ARTICLES** (These articles are disturbed in class and 'On Reserve' in the Aims Library):

Reading #1- Snyder, Mark. "Self-Fulfilling Stereotypes".

Reading #2- Ehrenreich, Barbara. "Nickel and Dime: On (Not) Getting By in America".

#### **Tested on Exam #1**

Reading #3- Davis, Angela. "Gender, Class, and Multiculturalism: Rethinking 'Race' Politics".

Reading #4- Steinberg, Stephen. "The New Darwinism".

Reading #5- Wilson, William Julius. "The World of the New Urban Poor."

Reading #6- Ehrenreich, Barbara and Arlie Hochschild. "Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy."

Reading #7- Anderson, Elijah. "The Code of the Streets".

#### **Tested on Exam #2**

Reading #8- Anderson, Elijah. "Streetwise: Race, Class, and Change in an Urban Community".

Reading #9- Lorde, Audre. "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference."

Reading #10- Kozol, Jonathan. "Savage Inequalities".

#### **Tested on the Final Exam**

**Class Format:** You are expected to have the reading for the week completed before the beginning of class so that you can effectively participate. Being prepared for class is crucial to your success so "stay on top" of the reading and assigned activities! In addition,

lectures and discussion are intended to supplement the reading, NOT substitute for it. The lecture notes (as well as the quizzes) are available via Web Services and the Course Home Page. Log into Web Services. Click on "My Courses" and select Soc 218:G11. To access the lecture notes, click on the "Power Point Slides" icon or on the navigation bar on your left. They are listed in order. Attendance and participation in class discussion as well as activities are worth a total of 25 points towards your final grade (8%). I suggest you make a concerted effort to: 1) ask and answer questions, 2) volunteer pertinent, thought-out discussion contributions, 3) comment based on the readings and, 4) in general, be an active, vocal participant of class. I cannot make anyone learn anything, I can only offer knowledge and facilitate learning.

So that you learn to more effectively state your opinions, beliefs, and ideas on controversial issues there will be several occasions for small group discussions, debates, and group exercises, which will count towards your participation grade. Be prepared that some discussion topics or comments may make you feel uncomfortable and challenge what you believe to be true or right. However, it is my belief that such confrontation is an integral part of learning and the classroom is the ideal forum for such an exploration. Also, listening to and learning from diverse views can enrich us all; therefore, one must feel safe to express oneself. The environment of this class must be one that facilitates open, non-judgmental discussion. No disparaging remarks will be tolerated in regards to ethnic background, gender, sexual preference, age, socioeconomic background, etc. This includes not repeatedly interrupting or talking during lecture (or when another student is talking), and having tolerance for differences of opinion. If you are what I consider discourteous to another student or myself, it will be reflected in your class participation grade and you may be asked to leave the class. (For further details please refer to the Standards of Student Conduct in the 2008-2009 Aims Community College Catalog). In return, I will do my best to uphold this tenet and treat everyone's interpretations/educated opinions with due respect. If you experience a particularly difficult time or feel uncomfortable with some issue, fellow student (myself included), interaction, commentary, or topic, PLEASE talk to me personally so we can work it out immediately. Lastly, students with disabilities that need accommodations are encouraged to contact the Disability Access Center in Horizon Hall #327 or call 339-6388 as soon as possible to ensure that these accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Students interested in tutoring are encouraged to contact the Academic Resource Center in Horizon Hall #301, or call 339-6465.

**Attendance Policy:** Obviously, you are unable to contribute to class if you are consistently absent; therefore, attendance is MANDATORY. Be forewarned that the nature of this course requires consistent attendance and involvement. You are entitled to TWO absences for whatever reason (sick, appointments, etc.) with no penalties reflected in your grade. (I average taking attendance once a week). If you have more than two absences, points will be subtracted from your participation grade. (Poor attendance/participation is the easiest way to lose points). If you experience an unforeseeable, extenuating problem (extended illness, death, injury, etc.), please inform me so that I am aware of your predicament and perhaps, with proper verification, we can arrange an additional excused absence. You are responsible for the material covered in class.

## **Quizzes & Exams**

The exams will reflect the reading from the textbook, the required reading articles, lectures, films shown to illustrate the material, and poignant class discussions. Exams #1 and #2 will consist of 40 multiple-choice questions worth one point/question, and a brief two-three paragraph essay worth ten points. You will have the option to choose between at least two essay questions (you write one essay). You will not be graded on the length per se, but on how well you illustrate your knowledge of the subject matter. Specifically, your essay grade will be indicative of your critical and effective application of relevant sociological concepts, examples, or theories. The cumulative final exam consists of 100 multiple choice questions (no essay), and is worth 33% of your final grade. A chapter outline will be distributed before each exam. You are also required to take the 15 point Quiz #1 **OR** Quiz #2 immediately before Exam #1 or Exam #2 via Web Services. If you take both quizzes, half of the points you earn on Quiz #2 will be extra credit. (Log into Web Services. Click on "My Courses". Select our class. Click on "Quizzes" on the navigation bar on your left. The quizzes are listed in order.) **Each quiz must be completed by the end of the availability period, which is 11:55pm on the designated day.** Any form of cheating or plagiarism will result in a zero and perhaps an 'F' for the class.

**Exam Make-up Policy:** You must make arrangements with me prior to the exam in order to be eligible for a make-up exam. If a dire emergency befalls you immediately before the exam, I at least expect a voice message, or an e-mail. (Do not allow days to go by and then request a make-up exam). You may be required to submit verification of your emergency. Makeup exams will be taken in the Academic Resource Center Horizon Hall #301 as soon as possible.

## **Journals & Participation Activities**

Students will participate in several learning-centered activities throughout the semester that reflect involvement in the class and result in a deeper understanding of the course material as well as three group participation activities (which will be completed in class and reflected in your attendance/participation grade). This class will also entail writing assignments because advanced academic work demands writing skills necessary for effectively expressing oneself. You will be given five journal assignments, which should be typed, well-written in complete sentences, labeled and dated, 1.5 or 2.0 spaced, and should be no longer than 2-3 paragraphs in length. (Each entry can NOT exceed one page). Proper spelling and grammar are taken into consideration on all written assignments.

## **Reaction Papers**

Generally, you will be asked to explore your own perceptions, attitudes, and prejudices regarding race, ethnicity, gender, and class by using your 'sociological imagination' to link micro-level, individual experiences to the influence of macro-level social structures. This will be accomplished by helping you to use sociological 'tools' for the critical scrutiny of the assumed "inherently right" social world. Specifically, you will analyze the role of socialization, the mass media, mainstream cultural values, social traditions, and mass education in the acquisition of attitudes about 'other' groups as well as how racial,

ethnic, class, and gender inequalities are reproduced through the dominant ideology, social institutions, and our everyday interactions. Keep in mind that your reaction papers are to be based on sociological concepts, the reading, class discussion, and the reading material. You can interject your opinion, but it must be grounded in sound, sociological reasoning and reflect critical thinking skills. You will be graded on how well you illustrate your knowledge of the subject matter with critical and effective application of relevant sociological concepts, terms, examples, and/or theories. In most instances, it will be difficult to effectively answer all aspects of the question in less than one page, but it cannot be longer than two well-written pages. I expect you to type and double-space (1.5 space is acceptable) all your papers. Use font size 12. Proper grammar and spelling will be taken into account when assessing a grade. I realize that this can be a potentially frustrating or intimidating exercise, but I believe that writing is just that, an exercise in which one improves with practice and I am more than willing to assist anyone. Also, please feel free to utilize the Writing Center in Horizon Hall #305, and [Purdue University](http://owl.english.purdue.edu) (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>). Of the possible five reaction papers, you are required to submit three two-page reaction papers (12pts. x 3 papers). **You can NOT submit more than three reaction papers so do your best on each paper.** Lastly, I do not accept papers electronically (i.e., as email attachments), and unless you experience unforeseen extenuating circumstances and obtain prior approval, reaction papers will NOT be accepted late.

### **Reaction Paper Options**

Paper #1: Choose any advertisement, newspaper or magazine article, cartoon, TV show, commercial, website, or policy that you feel is prejudicial, discriminatory, or perpetuates negative stereotypes towards a certain gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, or other minority group. To help outline the specific social stratification problem consider: 1) the general message and how it is biased and/or discriminatory, 2) what group was attacked as well as the targeted audience for it? Then compose a polite, typed letter to the respective company, radio/TV station, or organization about why you think they should reconsider in light of social stratification or inequality. (The letter is the paper you submit to me). It should include: 1) why you are writing them a letter, 2) an explanation of the problem, including two-three specific ways in which it is prejudiced, discriminatory, and/or harmful to others, 3) that you would like them to consider changing, removing, or stop using it due to its harmful effects, 4) lastly, thank them and that you look forward to their response.

Paper #2: In our society we do not systematically learn about the totality of subordinate group experiences via the mass media and entertainment industry; the experiences of oppressed groups can be distorted by being presented in limited, stereotyped ways. Yet Americans often assume that media representations and reports are unbiased and “free” of capitalistic or political agendas. Economic and political forces shape the dissemination of information and public opinion in general by controlling, or at least influencing, what stories are told, how they are told, and by voicing prejudicial, ideological assumptions. In addition, minority groups’ voices and alternative, oppositional messages are often silenced, skewed negatively, or only partially reported.

Use the depiction of gender, class, sexual orientation, or a racial/ethnic minority in a “cultural artifact” (i.e., cartoon, television show, commercial, advertisement, musical lyrics, website, etc.) to critically analyze the oppressive nature of stereotypical representations. Specifically, what cultural assumptions or stereotypes are illustrated (or implied), and how does it reflect prejudicial and/or discriminatory cultural themes? Or perhaps the representation confronts/challenges cultural assumptions? Secondly, sociologically explore how the depiction or illustration was influenced by race, gender, or class and perhaps perpetuates the best interests of the majority group. Lastly, what effect do you suppose this portrayal may have on the acquisition and development of someone’s attitudes about an out-group? For example, people often assume that all women are naturally maternal and the better “caregiver”, while all men are naturally aggressive, uncommunicative, and emotionless. Your paper must include the source, its date, title (if appropriate) and a brief summarization of your example's sociological relevance.

Paper #3: Based on TWO academic research sources (academic journals, government documents, scholarly literature, etc.), develop either an argument in favor of OR opposition to affirmative action. **Again, support and build your position by citing TWO research sources within your paper (Although helpful, your textbook is NOT a research source.)** A good place to start is:

<http://www.nytimes.com/library/national/race> or

<http://www.affirmativeaction.org/resources/index.html>

A) The U.S. should continue to practice Affirmative Action programs in order to counter-act the historic legacy of racial, ethnic, and gender discrimination in hiring, college admissions, etc. Secondly, the promise of a color and gender blind society is “hollow” because prejudice and discrimination are so deeply embedded in the fabric of U.S. society that simply endorsing the principle of color and gender blindness does not mean everyone will actually compete fairly.

Consider if:

1) Affirmative action should include only largely disadvantaged categories of people (i.e., Native Americans, Mexican-Americans, African-Americans) and exclude more affluent categories of minorities (i.e., Japanese Americans, Cuban-Americans).

2) Race-based affirmative action should be replaced with a class-based policy thereby eliminating preferences based on race, ethnicity, or gender.

**OR**

B) Affirmative Action should be abolished because it violates founding American cultural values (fair competition, individualism, etc.), and perpetuates self-doubt among minorities as a result of advantages in competition for limited resources in a merit-based society (the idea that they NEED preferential treatment). Furthermore, affirmative action has attained its goals as our society has attained “colorblindness” and has largely eliminated institutionalized discrimination; therefore, minorities can enjoy success when they have the talent and make the effort.

Consider if:

1) Giving entire categories of people special treatment inevitably compromises standards of excellence, and calls into question the real accomplishments of minorities.

2) It perpetuates hostile feelings among other group members as a result of the perceived advantages offered to minorities based on their race/ ethnicity, sex, etc.

Paper #4: As you know schooling is a very powerful, wide spread agent of socialization that greatly impacts one's self image, concept of viable or attainable aspirations, and later life decisions. Perhaps more significantly, the process of schooling 'grooms' people (or tracks people, depending on your perspective) for later occupational 'choices'. By utilizing relevant sociological concepts and terms, how may the U.S. educational system perpetuate the status quo (i.e., the current social stratification system) and perhaps latently serve the best interests of the more powerful? (Keep in mind the current economic climate, job growth as well as the shift in loans versus grants). Include an example of the relationship between an inequitable U.S. education system and the reproduction of the current socio-economic (i.e., class) hierarchy. Then, offer policy recommendation(s) designed to address specific causal factors that result in an inequitable U.S. education system.

Paper #5: Popular culture in all its forms (i.e., art, literature, music, poetry, etc.), often reflects our social world; therefore, it provides an opportunity to apply the knowledge you have gained throughout the semester by specifically identifying the sociological content of a specific popular culture form, film. By analyzing a movie for the illustration or expression of relevant sociological concepts, you will further appreciate their utility and application. Choose ONE film from the films listed below to analyze for sociological content that is central to the study of racial/ ethnic stratification, majority-minority relations, minority groups, and/or diversity. In the introductory paragraph, what film did you analyze and what applicable sociological concepts, terms, etc., did you see expressed? In the body of your paper fully define and describe the illustrated sociological concepts. (Defining the applicable sociological concepts and terms will help you establish how they are relevant as well as expressed in the film). In addition, specifically explain how and why this film illustrates (either directly or implied) those sociological concepts and terms. Include brief references to the movie in order to support your assertions. (I have already seen all the movies on this list so I will be at least somewhat familiar with the 'story'). You will not be graded on how many sociological concepts you see illustrated but how well you establish their relevance to the study of racial/ ethnic stratification, minority groups, majority-minority relations, etc.; make sure that you interpret the sociological nature of the film and explain how the film reflects relevant sociological concepts (not writing a movie review or the 'cliff notes').

"Do the Right Thing"; "A Civil Action"; "The Pianist"; "Playing for Time"; "El Norte"; "Life is Beautiful"; "Sophie's Choice"; "Schindler's List"; "Mi Familia"; "The Color Purple"; "Black & White"; "Next Friday"; "Rosewood"; "Mississippi Burning"; "Amistad"; "Malcolm X"; "Kids"; "Philadelphia"; "Hurricane"; "Boys Don't Cry"; "Blood Diamond"; "Brave Heart"; "Hotel Rwanda"; "Rabbit Proof Fence"; "Crash"; "North Country"; "The Pursuit of Happiness"; "Kite Runner" OR "American History X"

### **Reaction Paper Grading Guidelines:**

12-11 points- Use an excellent, well-thought example (s), illustrate applied theory, exhibit insight by making connections to the lectures and/or reading material with only minimal grammar mistakes, 10 points- An excellent example (s), including a solid reference to class material and related concepts, minimal grammar errors, 9 points- Very good example(s) that expand upon textbook and class discussion material, but exhibit a lack of conceptual or theoretical understanding, 8 points- A satisfactory example (s) that illustrates concepts, but a weak connection to class material or the reading, several writing errors, 7 points- Failing to make connection(s) to class/ lecture, appearing to have minimal understanding of terms, many writing errors, did not follow reaction paper guidelines, 6-1 points- Substantively false comments, or seeming to have no sociological understanding of terms, poorly written.

**Quiz #1 or #2: 15 points (5%)** (1/2 of the points from Quiz #2 are extra credit)

**Exam #1: 50 points (17%)**

**Exam #2: 50 points (17%)**

**Cumulative Final Exam: 100 points (33%)**

**Three Critical Thinking Papers: 36 points (12%)** (12 pts. x 3 papers)

**Five Journal Entries: 25 points (8%)**

**Class Attendance & Participation: 24 points (8%)**

**Final Grade:** Will be determined on the percentage of the total points (300) you obtain throughout the semester: 300-269 total points = 100%-90%= A, 268-239= 89%-80%= B, 238-209= 79%-70%= C, 208-179= 69%-60%= D, 178= 59% = F

\*\*\* Per Aims' policy, I can NOT grant Administrative Withdrawals (AW) after the withdrawal date.

## **READING, EXAM, & CLASS SCHEDULE**

<u><b>DATE</b></u>	<u><b>TOPIC</b></u>	<u><b>ASSIGNMENTS</b></u>
1/13	Orientation	Read Syllabus
1/15	U.S. Minority Groups & Stratification	Ch. #1
1/20	What Race & Ethnicity are You?	In-Class Journal Entry
1/22	Internalized Oppression & Its Costs	Weber #1
1/27	Domains of Oppression	Reading #1
1/28	****Last Day to Drop****	
1/29	Prejudice & Discrimination	Ch. #3
<b>2/3</b>	<b>Group Work: Analyze Biases &amp; Prejudice</b>	
<b>2/5</b>	Theories of Prejudice	<b>Journal Entry #1 Due</b>
<b>2/10</b>	<b>Group Work: Facilitating Class Learning</b>	
<b>2/12</b>	Watch "Beyond Hate"	<b>Paper #1 Due</b>
2/17	Social Constructions & The Dominant Ideology	Weber #3-#5 & Reading #2
<b>2/19</b>	The Mass Media & Stereotypes	<b>Paper#2 Due for Peer-Review</b>
		Quiz #1 Available On-Line
<b>2/24</b>	The Truth about Stereotypes	<b>Journal Entry #2 Due</b>
<b>2/25</b>		<b>Quiz #1 Due On-Line</b>
<b>2/26</b>	<b>Exam #1</b>	

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENTS</u>
3/3	Assimilation & Multiculturalism	Ch. #2 & Reading #3
<b>3/5</b>	<b>Group Work- English Only: A Threat to American Unity or Diversity?</b>	<b>Journal Entry #3 Due*</b>
3/10	The Experience of Minority Group in Pre-Industrial America	Ch. #4
<b>3/12</b>	De Jure Segregation	<b>Journal Entry #4 Due*</b>
3/16-3/20	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS
3/24	Maintained Inequality in Industrial America	Ch. #5 & Reading #4
3/26	The Impact of Economic Globalization	Readings #5-#7
3/31	Indictors of Oppression	Study 'Indictors of Oppression' Lecture Notes Quiz #2 Available On-Line
<b>4/2</b>	Who are the American Poor?	<b>Journal Entry #5 Due</b>
<b>4/6</b>		<b>Quiz #2 Due on-Line</b>
<b>4/7</b>	<b>Exam #2</b>	
4/9	De Facto Institutional Discrimination & Modern Racism	Ch.#6
4/10	****Last Day to Withdraw****	
4/14	Race, Class & Sex	Readings #8-#9
4/16	Latinos: 'Illegal Aliens' or Today's New Immigrants?	Chapter #8
<b>4/21</b>	<b>Group Work: Why Continued Stratification?</b>	
<b>4/23</b>	Watch " <i>Tough Guise</i> "	<b>Paper #3 Due</b>
4/28	Education: Savage Inequalities	Weber Ch. #7-#8, Reading #10
<b>4/30</b>	Watch " <i>The Breeding of Impotence</i> "	<b>Paper #4 Due</b>
<b>5/7</b>	<b>CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM</b>	<b>Paper #5 Due</b>

\* You can submit Journal Entries #3 & #4 this class.

\*\*\* **BOLD-TYPE HIGHLIGHT EXAMS AND DUE DATES.** These dates are subject to change.

**Ch.#=**Healey Chapter **Weber#**= Weber Chapter **Reading#**=Required Reading Article  
**Paper #**= Reaction Paper