

**Sociology 47**  
**Race and Ethnicity in the United States**

Winter 2019  
Dartmouth College

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Professor:	Emily Walton	Place:	Moore 150
Office:	Blunt 306B	Time:	MWF 10:10-11:15
Office Hours:	Tues 4:30-5:30pm and by appt.	X-hour:	Thurs 12:15-1:05
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*Race is a way of “making up people”.*

-- Michael Omi and Howard Winant, 2015

**Description of the course**

To many eyes, racial distinctions are self-evident, natural, and objectively-defined. In this course, we problematize this practice of defining racial categories based on phenotypic differences, instead taking a sociological approach to understanding the ways in which racial differences are socially constructed. Throughout this course, we explore the very real consequences of racial distinctions by interpreting the social science literature on inequality, considering the manifestations of interpersonal and institutional forms of racism, and discussing prospects for change in the future. Students will also examine their own racial and ethnic identity and experiences through the lens of a social scientist.

**Course Objectives**

Students who successfully complete Socy 47 will be able to:

- Analyze the social factors shaping individual and group experiences of race and ethnicity.
- Perform critical readings of assigned works, participate effectively in class discussion, and offer compelling oral arguments.
- Utilize their sociological imaginations to understand their own experiences with racial or ethnic identity within a larger structural context.

**Required reading**

All required readings are posted as PDFs on the course Canvas site. The reading load in this course is high, commensurate with an upper-level course. I expect you to read all course material, before class on the day that we are discussing it.

## Course requirements

We will practice active learning in this seminar. Active learning is student-driven, which means you will take responsibility for your learning. This seminar is intended to help you recognize analogies between the work of absorbing complex content (e.g., through reading and discussing) and that of constructing it (e.g., through discussing and writing). You will hone your capabilities related to thinking, research, and writing in the field of sociology. In order to ensure we accomplish our goals, you will be graded in a variety of ways.

### **1. Participation (20%)**

This is a seminar course; thus participation makes up an important part of your grade. Students who are not present for in-class participation will not receive credit for participation that day; there are no opportunities to make up in-class work. There are three ways to earn your participation grade.

*Reading journals (50 pts).* There are a few reading abilities that serve you well across a wide range of material: learning how to extract the key points from a text, to consider a text critically, and to remember what you read. To help cement these skills, I would like you to keep a reading journal, in which you write notes about the texts as you are reading them. Please bring your journal or a printed copy of your journal for the day to class; you may find it helpful to refer to your written reflections on the material. Please expect to turn these journals in to me for review twice during the term.

*Discussion facilitation (25 pts).* First, each student is required to facilitate one in-class discussion over the course of the term. You will sign up for a facilitation slot in the first week of class. Facilitating discussion requires some preparation before class. I would suggest reading the material carefully, considering the implications (academically, personally, socially, politically), and preparing some thought-provoking questions for the class. Discussion facilitators may consider being prepared with the following:

1. Questions that help us come to a common understanding of the readings' main arguments.
2. Outside information related to the topic. This can take the form of recent news articles, websites, examples of organizations that are taking up these issues in the real world, or other related materials that add depth to our understanding of the reading.
3. Questions that reflect on the greater implications of the findings.

*Discussion participation (25 pts).* Participation in class discussions and activities makes up an important part of your grade. You must be able to demonstrate verbally that you have read the material critically and are engaged in understanding it more deeply with your peers. I will keep track of your participation in our discussions and this record will comprise your discussion participation grade.

## 2. Critical writing (30%)

*Response Memos (120 pts).* You will have an opportunity to write nine Response Memos during the term, and I will grade eight of them (15 pts. each). You may choose to skip any memo, or I will drop your lowest grade. Each memo should be a one-page, single-spaced, critical, synthetic response to all of the readings for the day. I suggest that you spend less time summarizing the main arguments, and more time analyzing common threads you discover across readings. Please upload an electronic copy to Canvas before class (8am) on the day the readings are being discussed.

Response Memos should consist of two parts. First, you will work to determine the argument of the piece, and what strategies/evidence the author is using to support it. The first paragraph of your memo should *briefly* explicate how the authors convey and support their arguments. I suggest that this paragraph take the form of a critical synthesis, especially if there are more than one reading. The following questions may serve as a guide:

- What is the author's argument?
- What evidence does he or she use to support the argument?
- How do these ideas fit together in a larger argument that you are making in this Response Memo?

Second, you should focus on your analysis and reflections on the piece(s). The following questions may serve as a guide:

- What questions/reflections does this piece bring up for you? Take a stab at answering these questions yourself! Hypothesize ... it doesn't matter if you're right. If you had the best possible data to answer these questions, what would it look like, and what do you think it would tell you?
- Do the ideas in this reading relate to other concepts from the course, your life, ideas that are important to you, or current events? In other words, what do these authors' arguments *mean*? What are the implications?

*News reflections (30 pts).* Over the course of the term, I will post current news articles to the Discussion board on Canvas. You are responsible for reading the article and writing a brief (approximately one paragraph) critical reflection for group discussion.

## 3. Exams (20%)

*Midterm exam (50 pts).* This will be a 65-minute, take-home, open-book exam.

*Final exam (50 pts).* This will be a three-hour, take-home, open-book exam.

## 4. Final Paper (30%)

*Research paper (150 pts).* You will write research paper on a topic that interests you related to race and/or ethnicity. In support of this research project, you are also responsible for writing a one-page proposal describing your topic and your research approach; and a two-page outline containing your thesis statement (your argument), topic sentences (your main claims), and supporting bullet points for each body paragraph (your evidence). (8-10 pages, double spaced, 12 pt font.)

## Grading

I follow the grading conventions as defined by the Organization, Regulations, and Courses (ORC) at Dartmouth. [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~reg/transcript/grade\\_descriptions.html](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~reg/transcript/grade_descriptions.html)

- A Excellent** mastery of course material (student performance indicates a very high degree of originality, creativity, and excellent performance in analysis, synthesis, critical expression, and independence)
- B Good** mastery of course material (student performance indicates a high degree of originality, creativity, and good performance in analysis, synthesis, critical expression, and independence)
- C Acceptable** mastery of course material (student performance indicates some degree of originality, creativity, and acceptable performance in analysis, synthesis, critical expression, and independence)
- D Deficient** in mastery of course material (student performance indicates some degree of originality, creativity, and deficient performance in analysis, synthesis, critical expression, and independence)
- E Serious deficiency** in mastery of course material (student performance clearly lacking originality, creativity, and seriously deficient performance in analysis, synthesis, critical expression, and independence)

**I will determine your final letter grade according to the following percentage breakdown:**

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percent</u>
A	95-100%
A-	92-94.9%
B+	89-91.9%
B	83-88.9%
B-	80-82.9%
C+	77-79.9%
C	73-76.9%
C-	70-72.9%
D	60-69.9%
E	< 60%

Please note the following about grades: 1) I do not round grades; 2) I do not negotiate grades unless an error was made.

## **Important Notes**

### **Attendance**

It is my expectation that you will attend each class meeting—and that you will arrive to each class on time and stay for the duration. I will circulate an attendance sign-in sheet at the beginning of each class meeting; it is your responsibility to make sure you sign it each day. There are no opportunities to make up missed in-class participation work. If you miss more than three days of class, your course grade will decrease by one whole letter grade (e.g., A to B), and decrease by one step (e.g., B to B-) for each additional absence. If you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for getting notes from another student. As a general policy, I do not make my notes available. After you review your classmate's notes, I would be happy to meet with you to talk about the material or answer questions about anything that is unclear. If you anticipate missing class meetings because of athletic team participation, religious observances, or some other reason, please arrange a meeting with me at the start of the term and bring documentation of the expected conflicts.

### **Late work**

Unexpected things will come up over the course of the term. To ensure you don't wind up in a difficult position, plan ahead: start your assignments early and finish them in advance of the deadline. Please speak with me at the beginning of the term if you anticipate any circumstances that might affect your ability to get your work in on time.

Response Memos are designed to help you prepare for in-class discussion, so we can make the most of our time together; therefore, they will not be accepted late.

For the paper (and all its components), the maximum grade you may earn will be reduced by one letter grade for each day late. In other words, if you turn your assignment in 1-24 hours after the deadline, the maximum grade you can receive is a B; if you turn your assignment in 25-48 hours after the deadline, the maximum grade you can receive is a C; if you turn your assignment in 49-72 hours after the deadline, the maximum grade you can receive is a D. I will not accept your assignment after 72 hours.

Extensions will only be given if a deadline was missed because of extreme circumstances beyond your control. For example: severe illness requiring a doctor's visit or hospitalization, or death in the family. Generally not feeling well, forgetting about the deadline, having computer problems, needing to help your friend or family member with something, scheduling conflicts with interviews, appointments, or exams in other classes, etc. are not considered extreme circumstances. If you believe you are eligible for an extension, it is your responsibility to notify me before missing the deadline, and explain in writing why your circumstances warrant an exception.

### **Accommodations**

Students requiring disability-related accommodations must register with the Student Accessibility Services office. Once SAS has authorized accommodations, students must show the originally signed SAS Services and Consent Form and/or a letter on SAS letterhead to their professor. As a first step, if students have questions about whether they qualify to receive accommodations, they should contact the SAS office. All inquiries and discussions about accommodations will remain confidential.

## **Communication**

My office hours are for you. You are welcome to come in and talk with me about anything during my posted hours. I am also available by appointment if my office hours do not coincide with your schedule. I regularly check e-mail during the school day (9am-4pm) and will make every effort to reply to messages as soon as possible. I expect students to regularly check their Dartmouth e-mail and Canvas accounts for class announcements and updates.

## **Academic Honor**

I will be following the Academic Honor Principle described in the Dartmouth College Student Handbook and will enforce this policy to the full extent. Students must do their own work—they will write their own papers and exams, prepare their own presentations, and cite the original sources of any material they draw on for their papers. Any student who submits work which is not his or her own, or commits other acts of academic dishonesty is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or separation.

## **Classroom Responsibility and Courtesy**

All students are expected to have a voice in our class dialogue. Class participation involves thinking carefully, listening, and posing questions to others as much as it involves sharing your own ideas. This requires us to be present, set aside distractions, and focus our attention on engaging with one another. Please put your cell phones on vibrate, do not text, and do not use your laptop during class.

The tone with which we engage one another is also extremely important and should come from a place of mutual respect and understanding. You are free to disagree with the views raised in the material or by others in the class but must do so with a reasoned critique based on a complete consideration of their argument. Your own argument should be supported by sociological evidence rather than opinion or anecdotes. Disrespectful behavior such as talking while others are talking, dominating the floor, or engaging in personal attacks will not be tolerated. You are always expected to treat one another and me with respect .

## **Additional Support for Learning**

*Student Center for Research, Writing, and Information Technology (RWIT):* At RWIT, you can meet one-on-one with an undergraduate tutor to discuss a paper, research project, or multimedia assignment.

*Academic Skills Center (ASC):* The mission of Dartmouth's Academic Skills Center is to assist students in achieving academic success through a wide variety of services and programs. The Center is available to all students who wish to improve their academic skills and ability to learn, thereby maximizing their academic experience and allowing them to achieve greater academic performance and personal fulfillment.

## Course Plan and Readings

### Week One (Jan 4)

- Friday Introduction to the course**
- Mills (1959) “The Promise”

### Week Two (Jan 7-11): Patterns and theories

- Monday What is race? What is ethnicity?**
- Nagel (2017), “Constructing Ethnicity”
  - Desmond and Emirbayer (2016), “Race in the Twenty-First Century”
  - Response Memo 1 due

- Wednesday Demographic change (prof facilitates)**
- Lee and Bean (2004), “America’s Changing Color Lines”
  - <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/11/04/every-term-the-census-has-used-to-describe-americas-racial-groups-since-1790/>

- Friday Race as an action, not an essence (Student 1 facilitates)**
- Omi and Winant (2015), “The Theory of Racial Formation”

- Friday Optional: *The Hate U Give*, 7pm film at the HOP**
- This smart, entertaining adaptation of the YA bestseller centers on Starr (Amandla Stenberg), a girl caught between two worlds who finds her voice.
  - I will offer 5 pts of extra credit for anyone who would like to attend the film and write a one-page reflection (upload to Canvas by 8am, Sun, Jan 13.) Please let me know if you need financial assistance to purchase a ticket.

### Week Three (Jan 14-18): Group identity i

- Monday Race as a performance (Student 2 facilitates)**
- Thurston (2012), “When Did You First Realize You Were Black?” and “How Black Are You?”
  - Patel (2005), “Performative Aspects of Race”
  - Marvasti (2006), “Being Middle Eastern American”
  - Response Memo 2 due

- Wednesday Latina/o/@/x identity, racialization of “illegality” (Student 3 facilitates)**
- Rumbaut (2009), “Pigments of Our Imagination”
  - Aranda and Vaquera (2015), “Racism and the Immigration Enforcement Regime”

- Friday Asian American identity, marginalization (Student 4 facilitates)**
- Park (2008), “Continuing Significance of the Model Minority Myth”
  - Park (2016), “A Letter to My Sister and a Twenty-Five Year Anniversary”
  - Kao, Balistreri and Joyner (2018), “Asian American Men in Romantic Dating Markets”
  - Response Memo 3 due

**Week Four (Jan 21-25): Group identity ii**

**Monday No class, MLK Holiday**

- Monday Optional: MLK Keynote address, 7-9pm, Spaulding Auditorium at the HOP**
- Franchesca Ramsey is a social justice advocate, comedian, actress, writer, video blogger, sought-after speaker, and the host of the MTV webseries DECODED. <https://news.dartmouth.edu/events/event?event=50427#.XBOsZyBOmbh>
  - I will offer 5 pts of extra credit for anyone who would like to attend the keynote address and write a one-page reflection (upload to Canvas by 8am, Wed, Jan 23.)

- Wednesday Native American identity, boundary processes (Student 5 facilitates)**
- Schmidt (2011), “Blood Quantum in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”
  - Weaver (2001), “Indigenous Identity”
  - Hobson (1999), “I Don’t Think People Should Have to Prove Themselves”

- Friday Mixed-race identity, context and fetishization (Student 6 facilitates)**
- Sims (2016), “Reevaluation of the Influence of Appearance and Reflected Appraisals for Mixed-Race Identity”
  - Waring (2013), “They See Me as Exotic, That Intrigues Them”
  - Response Memo 4 due

**Week Five (Jan 28-Feb 1): Group identity iii**

- Monday Black bodies, social death (Student 7 facilitates)**
- Baldwin (1998 [1963]), “My Dungeon Shook: Letter to My Nephew”
  - Coates (2015), *Between the World and Me* (Selection from Ch.1, pp.5-33)

- Wednesday Whiteness as a structure of domination (Student 8 facilitates)**
- Lewis (2004), “What Group?”
  - Du Bois (1920), “The Souls of White Folk”
  - Response Memo 5 due

- Wednesday Optional: Indigenous Rising, 7pm and 8:30pm, Bentley Theater at the HOP**
- Indigenous Rising: An Evening of NextGen Native Artists. Spoken word, incisive theater and “Alter-Native” rock by a rising generation of indigenous artists.
  - I will offer 5 pts of extra credit for anyone who would like to attend the show and write a one-page reflection (upload to Canvas by 8am, Fri, Feb 1.) Please let me know if you need financial assistance to purchase a ticket.



- Friday**      **Whiteness as individual identity and responsibility (Student 9 facilitates)**
- Morrison (2016), “Making America White Again”
  - McIntosh (1990), “White Privilege”
  - Hutcherson (2016), “What I Told My White Friend”
  - Reading journal due (1<sup>st</sup> half)

**Week Six (Feb 4-8): Colorblind racism**

**Monday**      **No Class: Midterm Exam (available for 90 mins from 8am Sat to noon Mon)**

- Wednesday**      **Colorblind racism as ideology (Student 10 facilitates)**
- Bonilla-Silva (2014), *Racism Without Racists* (Ch.1, 3)

- Friday**      **Colorblind racism in practice (Student 11 facilitates)**
- Chou, Lee and Ho (2015), “Love Is (Color)blind”
  - Mueller (2017), “Producing Colorblindness”

**Week Seven (Feb 11-15): Structural racism i**

- Monday**      **Settler Colonialism (Student 12 facilitates)**
- Nakano Glenn (2015), “Settler Colonialism as Structure”
  - Response Memo 6 due

- Wednesday**      **Fear and policing (Student 13 facilitates)**
- Hayes (2017), *A Colony in a Nation*, Chapters I, III, and IV
  - Research paper proposal due

- Friday**      **Punishment: mass incarceration (Student 14 facilitates)**
- Alexander (2012), *The New Jim Crow* (Ch.5 and 6)
  - Alexander (2018), “The Newest Jim Crow”

**Week Eight (Feb 18-22): Structural racism ii**

- Monday**      **Residential segregation (prof facilitates)**
- <http://www.vox.com/2016/6/6/11852640/cartoon-poor-neighborhoods>
  - Briggs (2005), “The Changing Geography of Race and Opportunity”
  - In class: watch segment of *The House We Live In*
  - Response Memo 7 due

- Wednesday**      **Educational inequality (Student 15 facilitates)**
- Kozol (2005), *The Shame of the Nation* (Ch. 2, 3)
  - Zernike (2016), “A Sea of Charter Schools”
  - Wong (2018a), “Parents Are Biased Against Even Quality ‘Urban’ Schools”
  - Green and Waldman (2018), “I Feel Invisible”
  - Research paper outline due

- Friday**      **What is Affirmative Action? (Student 16 facilitates)**
- Harper and Reskin (2005), “Affirmative Action at School and on the Job”
  - Hartocollis (2018), “Does Harvard Admissions Discriminate?”
  - Wong (2018b), “Actually, Race-Conscious Admissions Are Good for Asian Americans”

**Week Nine (Feb 25-Mar 1): So, what can we do about it?**

- Monday**      **Responses to Affirmative Action (Student 17 facilitates)**
- Moore and Bell (2011), “Maneuvers of Whiteness”
  - Massey and Mooney (2007), “America’s Three Affirmative Action Programs”
  - Taylor (2018), “Five Harvard Friends”
  - Response Memo 8 due

- Wednesday**      **Traditional solutions, contact and desegregation (Student 18 facilitates)**
- O'Brien and Korgen (2007), “It’s the Message, Not the Messenger”
  - Lewis, Diamond and Forman (2015), “Conundrums of Integration”
  - Pattillo (2014), “The Problem of Integration”

- Friday**      **Radical solutions, decolonization and reparations (Student 19 facilitates)**
- Steinman (2016), “Decolonization Not Inclusion”
  - Coates (2014), “The Case for Reparations”
  - Response Memo 9 due

**Week Ten (Mar 4-6): Go forth into the world!**

- Monday**      **Systematic and institutional change (Student 20 facilitates)**
- Reskin (2012), “The Race Discrimination System”
  - Brunsma, Brown and Placier (2012), “Dismantling the Walls of Whiteness”
  - Reading journal due (2<sup>nd</sup> half)

- Wednesday**      **Course wrap-up**
- Lopez (2016), “Ways to Reduce Racial Bias”
  - Research paper due
  - Receive final exam

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