

SOCIOLOGY 108: MINORITY GROUPS IN AMERICAN SOCIETY FALL 2018

Instructor

PROFESSOR CATHERINE LEE

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Office: Sociology Dept – Davison Hall (Douglass campus), Room 141

Office hours: Thursdays 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. – Held at Zimmerli Art Museum

Course Description

This course will introduce you to sociological concepts and tools that will enable you to critically evaluate the term “minority group.” This course is NOT a survey course of different racial or ethnic groups in the United States, though we will spend a significant amount of time reading and discussing works related to racial and ethnic minorities. Instead you will learn the political basis for the term “minority” and how a construction that extends back in time to the nation’s founding continues to frame much of our political, economic, and social debates. We will explore how minority status is rooted in particular historical moments but persists to affect people’s life chances today. You will also learn that the term “minority” is contested; its meaning is shaped by people both inside and outside a particular “minority group.”

Prerequisites

None

Core Learning Goals

This course fulfills the following SAS Core Curriculum:

21st Century (21C)

- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experiences of and perspectives on the world.
- Analyze issues of social justice across local and global contexts

Areas of Inquiry: Social Analysis (SCL)

- Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
- Apply concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students should successfully be able to:

- Explain the political basis for the term “minority” and its relationship to historical development of race and ethnicity.
- Explain how minority status appears to endure due to political, social, and economic development in areas such as education, health, wealth, and crime.
- Explain how minority status along with ideas of race and ethnicity are contested and can change.
- Articulate, defend, and reflect critically on varying points of view held by those from differing positions within society.

Course Materials

All readings are available online on Sakai.

This will be a challenging course. I do not employ an introductory textbook. You will read journal articles and book chapters written by leading scholars. This means that you may have to go over the materials more than once. I provide weekly questions to help guide your reading. (These guides will be useful in preparing for the memos and exams). Please remember that I am available to assist you if you’re having difficulties understanding the materials. Some weeks require more reading than others. Pace yourself and plan accordingly. I have assigned an average of 40 pages of reading per week.

Assessment

Assignment Summary

Below are the required assignments and the percent value of each assignment for determining your course grade. Please refer to the course schedule (below) for additional details.

Assignment	Percent
Attendance	5
4 Quizzes (9/27, 10/11, 11/15, 12/06)	30
Midterm (10/25)	30
Final Exam (12/14 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.)	35
Total	100

Assignment Overview

Attendance

- I expect you to attend class and to be on time. You are responsible for all materials presented and/or discussed in lecture. Attending class regularly will help maximize your chances of doing well in the course. I will take attendance regularly. This is an easy way to earn 5% of the course points!
- Please arrive on time for class. Tardiness is disruptive to me and to your fellow students. If you are repeatedly late to class, I will deduct half of a letter grade from your final grade.

Quiz

- There are four, non-cumulative quizzes on 9/27, 10/11, 11/15, 12/06.
- Each quiz will include multiple choice and true/false questions covering all course materials, including the lectures, readings, and films.
- The four are worth 30% of your final grade.

Midterm and Final Exams

- Midterm and final exams include multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions.
- Midterm exam is on Thursday 10/25. Final exam is on Friday 12/14 (8:00 – 11:00 a.m.).
- Exam grades will be determined by how well course materials, including readings, lectures, and films, are incorporated into the answers.

Grading Criteria for Exams and Assignments

	Percent
Clear and logical statements; explanation and/or examples provided to support ideas; shows insight; complete references; submitted on time	100
Clear statements with appropriate explanations or examples	90
Clear statements with some explanation or examples	80
Some unclear statements or incorrect explanations or examples	70
Confusing, lacks explanation or reasoning. Not proofed for wording, punctuation, and other grammatical errors	60 or lower

Grading Scale

Grade	Range
A	90 – 100
B+	85 – 89
B	80 – 84
C+	75 – 79
C	70 – 74
D	60 – 69
F	Below 60

Student Participation Expectations

Your performance in the course will directly correlate with your attendance and time commitment. The following is a summary of everyone's expected participation:

- **Attendance**
You are required to attend all lectures.
- **Logging in:** **AT LEAST ONCE PER WEEK**
Be sure you log onto the course website on Sakai each week, including weeks with holidays or weeks with minimal online course activity.
- **Time Commitment**
To be successful in this course, you should plan to dedicate approximately 4-6 hours per week outside of lectures.
- **Office hours**
I encourage you to see me in office hours, especially if you are having any difficulty in the course.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY'S DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives among our faculty and students and seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue. We have zero tolerance for violations of these principles and have clear and respectful procedures for responding to such grievances.

Support and Policies

Device Policy – NO Laptops, Cell Phones, or Other Devices

We will go old school in lecture! No laptops, cell phones, or other devices are allowed in the classroom. They must be turned off or put in airport mode and put away. This is a strict policy. Overwhelming research evidence shows that we all learn better in a classroom without these distractions and when notes are taken by hand. I encourage you to bring print outs of the abridged lecture notes (more below). Feel free to bring paper, pens, pencils or stone tablets and chisels for note taking.

Again, I do NOT allow laptops, phones, or any other media devices in class. If you absolutely cannot bear the thought of being disconnected from your devices, please consider taking a different class.

Late Work

I do not offer make-up quizzes or exams without an approved excuse. Approved excuses include a medical excuse or family emergency that can be properly documented (e.g., doctor's note or police report). Please email me ASAP to discuss any missed assignments.

Faculty Feedback and Response Time

I am providing the following list to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course. (Remember that you can email sakai@rutgers.edu or call 848-445-8721 if you have a technical problem.)

Grading and Feedback

For quizzes, you can expect feedback within **7 days**. I will provide feedback on midterms within 12 days. Final exam and course grades will be available by the end of the semester.

E-mail

I will reply to e-mails within **24 hours on school days**. Always put "Soc 108" in the subject line.

Seek Help Early

If you are having difficulties keeping up with the class, please contact me as soon as possible. I can help you to read more effectively, take better class notes, and comprehend the materials more fully. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to talk to me.

Academic Integrity

The consequences of scholastic dishonesty are very serious. Please review the [Rutgers' academic integrity policy](#).

Academic integrity means, among other things:

- Develop and write all of your own assignments.
- Show in detail where the materials you use in your papers come from. Create citations whether you are paraphrasing authors or quoting them directly. Be sure always to show source and page number within the assignment and include a bibliography in the back.
- Do not fabricate information or citations in your work.
- Do not facilitate academic dishonesty for another student by allowing your own work to be submitted by others.

If you are in doubt about any issue related to plagiarism or scholastic dishonesty, please discuss it with your instructor.

Other sources of information to which you can refer include:

- [Rutgers' Academic Integrity website](#)
- [Code of Student Conduct](#)
- [Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity](#)

Academic Support Services

- Rutgers has a variety of resources for academic support. For more information, check the [Academic Support website](#).
- Rutgers has Learning Centers on each campus where any student can obtain tutoring and other help. For information, check the [Learning Center website](#).
- Rutgers also has a Writing Center where students can obtain help with writing skills and assignments. Learn more at the [Writing Center website](#).
- Many library resources are available online. Assistance is available through phone, email, and chat. For information, check the [Rutgers Libraries website](#).

Rutgers Health Services

- Rutgers Health Services is dedicated to health for the whole student body, mind and spirit. It accomplishes this through a staff of qualified clinicians and support staff, and delivers services at a number of locations throughout the New Brunswick-Piscataway area. For more information, check the [Rutgers Health Services website](#).

Accommodations for Accessibility

Requesting accommodations

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation. More information can be found in the [Documentation Guidelines](#) section of the [Office for Disability Services](#) website.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the [Registration Form](#) on the [Office for Disability Services](#) website.

Go to the [Student section of the Office of Disability Services](#) website for more information.

Accessibility and Privacy Links

Accessibility Statements

[Sakai](#)

Privacy Policies

[Sakai](#)

Course Schedule and Deadlines

Week 1: Tue 9/04, Thu 9/06

Introduction: What is a minority group?

- **Reading:**
 - ✓ Federalist Paper 10

Week 2: Tue 9/11, Thu 9/13

Are minority groups racial and ethnic groups? What are race, ethnicity, and group making?

- **Readings:**
 - ✓ Cornell, Stephen and Douglas Hartmann. 1998. *Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities in a Changing World*. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press (pp. 15-38).
 - ✓ Wade, Peter. 1997. *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America*. Chicago: Pluto Press (pp. 5-24).

Week 3: Tue 9/18, Thu 9/20

Race and group-making continued: Social closure and the historical roots of race-making in the U.S. What is the relationship between race and the history of slavery?

- **Readings:**
 - ✓ Davis, F. James. 2001. *Who is Black? One Nation's Definition*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press (pp. 1-18 and 31-58).
 - ✓ Film: "Race: the Power of an Illusion (Episode 2 - The Story We Tell)"

Week 4: Tue 9/25, Thu 9/27 – Quiz #1

Race and group-making continued: How do categorization and political action "create" race?

- **Readings:**
 - ✓ Lee, Jennifer and Frank Bean. 2010. "Chapter 3: What is this Person's Race? The Census and the Construction of Racial Categories." Pp. 35-54 in *The Diversity Paradox: Immigration and the Color Line in Twentieth-First Century America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
 - ✓ Nagel, Joane. 1995. "American Indian Ethnic Revival: Politics and the resurgence of Identity." *American Sociological Review* 60: 947-65.
- **Quiz #1 Thursday 9/27**

Week 5: Tue 10/02, Thu 10/04

How did the massive wave of immigration from Europe to the U.S. in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries challenge or affirm the meaning of minority, race, or ethnicity?

- **Readings and Film:**
 - ✓ Dinnerstein, Leonard and David Reimers. 1999. *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration*. New York: Columbia University Press (pp. 49-72: SKIM).
 - ✓ Ignatiev, Noel. 1995. *How the Irish Became White* (pp. 92-121).
 - ✓ Film: "Race: the Power of an Illusion (Episode 3 - The House We Live In)" - 1st Half

Week 6: Tue 10/09, Thu 10/11 – Quiz #2

How did immigration from Asia to the U.S. in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries challenge or affirm the meaning of minority, race, or ethnicity? Was it different from European immigration?

- **Readings:**
 - ✓ Almaguer, Tomás. 1994. *Racial Fault Lines: the Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California*. Berkeley: University of California Press (pp. 153-82).
 - ✓ Hing, Bill Ong. 1993. *Making and Remaking Asian America through Immigration Policy, 1850-1990*. Stanford: Stanford University Press (pp. 43-78).
- **Quiz #2 Thursday 10/11**

Week 7: Tue 10/16, Thu 10/18

Are today's immigrants different? How is this new immigration changing "minority" group relations?

- **Readings:**
 - ✓ Foner, Nancy. 2005. *In a New Land: A Comparative View of Immigration*. New York: New York University Press (pp. 11-42).
 - ✓ Lee, Jennifer, Frank D. Bean, and Gillian Stevens. 2003. "Immigration and Race-Ethnicity in the United States." Pp. 224-49 in *America's Newcomers and the Dynamics of Diversity*, edited by Frank D. Bean and Gillian Stevens. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Week 8: Tue 10/23, Thu 10/25 – MIDTERM

Does minority group status change? Are there ethnic options? What will a multi-racial identity mean?

- **Readings:**
 - ✓ Waters, Mary. 2005. "Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only?" Pp. 29-41 in *The Social Construction of Difference and Inequality: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality* (2nd edition), edited by Tracy E. Ore. New York: McGraw-Hill.
 - ✓ Lee, Jennifer and Frank Bean. 2010. "Chapter 8: From Racial to Ethnic Status: Claiming Ethnicity through Culture." Pp. 137-54 in *The Diversity Paradox*.
- **MIDTERM Thursday October 25.**

Week 9: Tue 10/30, Thu 11/01

What happens when there is enduring minority group status? Criminal Justice System

- **Readings:**
 - ✓ Hartney Christopher and Linh Vuong. 2009. "Created Equal: Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the U.S. Criminal Justice System." *National Council on Crime and Delinquency*.
 - ✓ Kahn, Andrew and Chris Kirk. 2015. "What It's Like to Be Black in the Criminal Justice System." *Slate, August 9*.
- ✓ Selections from *The New York Times*

Week 10: Tue 11/06, Thu 11/08

What happens when there is enduring minority group status? Labor participation and wealth accumulation.

- **Readings:**
 - ✓ Pager, Devah, Bruce Western, and Bart Bonikowski. 2011. "Discrimination in a Low-Wage Labor Market: A Field Experiment." Pp. 364-87 in *The Social Construction of Difference and Inequality: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality* (5th edition).
 - ✓ Shapiro, Thomas M. 2011. "Chapter 7: Transformative Assets, the Racial Wealth Gap, and the American Dream." Pp. 49-52 in *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity* (5th edition), edited by Charles A. Gallagher. New York: McGraw-Hill
 - ✓ Selections from *The New York Times*
 - ✓ Film: "Race: the Power of an Illusion (Episode 3 - The House We Live In)" - 2nd Half

Week 11: Tue 11/13, Thu 11/15 – Quiz #3

What happens when there is enduring minority group status? Education.

- **Readings:**
 - ✓ Farkas, George. 2004. "Black/White Test Score Gap." *Contexts* 3(2): 12-19.
 - ✓ Magnuson, Katherine and Jane Waldfogel. 2008. "Introduction" in *Steady Gains and Stalled Progress: Inequality and the Black-White Test Gap*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
 - ✓ Selections from *The New York Times*.
- **Quiz #3 Thursday 11/15**

Week 12: Tue 11/20, Thu 11/22 – Thanksgiving – No Class

What happens when there is enduring minority group status? Health

- ✓ Film: "Unnatural Causes" (Episode 1)

Week 13: Tue 11/27, Thu 11/29

What happens when there is enduring minority group status? Health (Cont'd)

- **Readings:**
 - ✓ Williams, David R. and Pamela B. Jackson. 2005. "Social Sources of Racial Disparities in Health." *Health Affairs* 24(2): 325-34.
 - ✓ Reuss, Alejandro. 2011. "Cause of Death: Inequality." Pp. 401-05 in *The Social Construction of Difference and Inequality: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality* (5th edition).
 - ✓ Selections from *The New York Times*.

Week 14: Tue 12/04, Thu 12/06 – Quiz #4

How do people redefine or challenge minority group status? Youth culture and social movements

- **Readings:**
 - ✓ Warikoo, Natasha. 2005. "Gender and Ethnic Identity Among Second-Generation Indo-Caribbeans." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28(5): 803-31.
 - ✓ Terriquez, Veronica. 2015. "Training Young Activists: Grassroots Organizing and Youths' Civic and Political Trajectories." *Sociological Perspectives* 58(2): 223-242.
 - ✓ King, Jay Caspian. 2015. "'Our Demand is Simple: Stop Killing Us': How a Group of Black Social Media Activists Built the Nation's First 21st Century Civil Rights Movement." *The New York Times Magazine*, May 4.
 - ✓ Morning, Ann. 2017. "Kaleidoscope: Contested Identities and New Forms of Race Membership." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*
- **Quiz #4 – Thursday 12/06**

Week 15: Tue 12/11

Conclusion

- **No Readings**

FINAL EXAM - Friday 12/14 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.