Minorities in American Society (SYD 3700)

The 2000 U.S. census confirmed previous projections for the 21st Century that the United States would be and is more ethnically and racially diverse than ever before. This course is designed to look at the social construction of race and ethnicity, the history of racial, ethnic, class and gender relations in the United States with a focus on topics relating to power and dominance in the United States. In this class we will analyze the socioeconomic conditions that have impacted and continue to impact minority groups by exploring some of the origins of racial/ethnic/class conflict in the United States. In taking this approach, we will analyze the basis of group hate toward minority groups and the social conditions that favor and hinder acceptance of groups defined as outsiders versus insiders. We will also take into account gender and class issues, particularly as they relate to ethnic-race relations in the United States. Along with the text, a reader, and a novel to be read and discussed in class, we will look at films that further explore these issues.


This will be referred to as Text in the list of assigned readings for each class meeting.

(Additional Required Books)

Course Requirements:
- Midterm = 25%
- Final = 25%
- 3 Quizzes = 30%
- 1 typed 5-6 pg. research essay paper with bibliography and cited references = 20%

Total points = 100%

****Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

**** There are no make-ups on any of the exams or quizzes, except for Medical or other problems that may emerge and for which you will provide written documentation as proof of unforeseen emergency. There will be no exceptions for undocumented emergencies.

**** Assignments that are completed late will not receive full credit (for example, for each day a paper is late there will be a full grade deduction).

**** Cheating hurts other students who work hard in the course to earn their grades.

A first offense at cheating on an exam/quiz or plagiarism on a written assignment will incur a full grade reduction in the course. A second offense at cheating will incur a report to the university committee on academic misconduct that may lead to dismissal from the University of Florida.
Sociology 3700 Minorities in American Society

Week 1) Aug. 25 ... Text: Chapter 1 (Diversity in the U.S.).

Week 2) Sept. 3 ... Text: Chapter 1 (continued). No classes Sept. 1 (Labor Day).

Week 3) Sept. 8 ... Text: Chapter 2 (Assimilation and Pluralism).

Week 4) Sept. 15 ... Text Chapter 2 (Continued).

*** Monday, September 15\textsuperscript{th}, Quiz #1

Week 5) Sept. 22 ... Text Chapter 3 (Prejudice and Discrimination); and Zinn Chapter 1. Excerpts From Spike Lee “Do the Right Thing.”

Week 6) Sept. 29 ... Text: Chapter 4 (Early History of Dominant-Minority Relations) and, Zinn Chapter 2.

Week 7) Oct. 6 ... Chapter 4 continued; and, Zinn Chapter 5-6.

Week 8) Oct. 13 ... Text: 5 (Industrialization and Dominant-Minority Relations).

*** Wednesday, October 15\textsuperscript{th}, Quiz #2

Week 9) Oct. 20 ... Text: Chapter 5 continued.

No Classes Oct. 24\textsuperscript{th} (Homecoming)

Week 10) Oct. 27 ... Text: Chapter 6 (African Americans: From Segregation to Modern Racism).

***Monday, October 27\textsuperscript{th}, Midterm

Week 11) Nov. 3 ... Chapter 6 continued; and Zinn Chapter 3 and 9.

Week 12) Nov. 10 ... Chapter 7 (American Indians); and Zinn Chapter 7.

No Classes, Tuesday, November 11\textsuperscript{th} Veteran’s Day.

Week 13) Nov. 17 ... Text: Chapter 7 continued (American Indians); Text: Chapter 8 (Hispanic Americans)

*** Friday, November 21\textsuperscript{st}, Quiz #3

Week 14) Nov. 24 ... Text: Chapter 8 continued; Text: Chapter 9 (Asian Americans).

(No Classes November 27-29th, Thanksgiving Break).

Week 15) Dec. 1 ... Chapter 9 continued; and Zinn Chapter 11 and 18.

Research Essay Papers Due Wednesday, Dec. 3rd

Week 16) Dec. 8 ... Text: Text: Chapter 10 (New Americans) and Chapter 11 (The Future).

(Classes end Wednesday, December 10th)

*** Final is Wednesday Dec. 17 from 7:30 am to 9:30am
Topics for Week Debate/Issues
You May Consider the Following Topics for Your Research Papers

Prejudice in the 1990s and the Affirmative Action Debate
  1) Impact of Stereotypes on Society?;
  2) Impact of Prejudice on children?;
  3) How can Teaching Tolerance help Ethnic/Race Relations?;
  4) The impact of immigration and race in the U.S. today;

European Americans and the concept of Assimilation and Persistence of Ethnicity
  1) Conditions of Labor Exploitation, similar or distinct than that of African Americans and Native Americans?
  2) Have Irish, Italian, Jewish Americans, etc. Assimilated, Why or Why Not?;
  3) Film and other Media Images of Irish, Italian, Jewish Americans, etc.: Do these Images Persist?;
  4) The Political and Economic Enclaves that have Brought Successes and/or Failures for many European Americans.

Native Americans
  1) The Creation of the Reservation System and its Impact on Native America;
  2) Native Americans and the Continuing Education Dilemma;
  3) The Concept of Nationhood & Issues of Independence;
  4) Poverty and the State of Native America;
  5) Reservations & Environmental Issues;
  6) Issues of Economic Autonomy, such as, Gambling Establishments on Reservations;
  7) Film and other Images of Native Americans: Are the Images Changing?

Asian Americans
  1) What Were the Social Forces that Drove the Internment of Japanese Americans During World War II: Were the Fears Well Founded or Were the Actions Against Japanese Americans Racist?;
  2) Negative Stereotypes of People of Asian Descent: Do these images persist in U.S. Films Today?;
  3) Poverty Rates Among Asian Americans: Why Surprised?;
  4) The Impact of Images of Model Minorities for Asian Americans;
  5) The Impact of the Glass Ceiling for Asian Americans;

African Americans
  1) Is White and Black America as Divided as the Media Suggests?;
  2) Has the Civil Rights Movement Delivered Real Changes for the African American Community?;
  3) Single Parent Households: Are They as Damaging as some have Claimed?;
  4) The Changing Film Images of African Americans: Are the Images Really Changing?;
  5) Is there a bias in Incarceration Rates for African Americans, Why or Why not?
Latinas and Latinos in U. S. Society.

1) Images of Hispanic Americans in the Media;
2) A look at Social Factors in the Persistence of Poverty;
3) The Chicano Movements of the 1960s and 1970s: Are the Movements dead or alive today?
4) Does Bilingual Education Work?
5) Why is it said that Cubans are more successful than other Hispanic groups: Are they?
6) Some claim that Cubans are given special refugee status over Haitians: