

SOC 324 Race & Nationality

3 credits

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SOC 324 Race and Nationality fulfills the requirement for a Foundational Area of Knowledge in Global and Cultural Contexts. Any course that fulfills that requirement will assure that students gain a greater understanding of the foundations of the modern world and interconnections of global cultures. Students may address complex questions about race, gender, nationality, religion, law, economics, business and/or politics in order to understand multiple cultural perspectives and will work to:

1. Understand the evolution and development of cultural frameworks in the context of historical, political, social, religious, economic and/or legal structures
2. Interpret intercultural experiences from the perspectives of more than one worldview and demonstrate the ability to appreciate other cultures beyond their own experience
3. Create a refined empathetic understanding of a multifaceted world

SOC 324 will seek to accomplish all of these outcomes.

TEXTBOOKS:

Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity 5th Edition: Authored by Charles A. Gallagher, 2011

ISBN 10: 0078026636

ISBN 13: 978-0078026638

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of racial and cultural minorities, with a special emphasis on intergroup, racial, and ethnic relations. This course examines myths, doctrines, and movements and reviews the processes and consequences of conflict, discrimination and prejudice.

In this course, students will explore a broad and comprehensive introduction to the human condition, and a critical analysis of mainstream North American structures, practices, and beliefs. Through the study of course materials, students will understand sociological issues in a format designed to stimulate student interest and develop critical thinking skills. Students will be introduced to a range of topical issues regarding race and ethnicity in a debate style format that encourages the development of critical thinking skills in students.

**IN ADDITION TO FAK LEARNING OUTCOMES, LEARNING OUTCOMES
SPECIFIC TO THIS COURSE:**

- Students will analyze current issues surrounding racial and ethnic relations and the historical, political, social, religious, economic and legal structures from which they developed as demonstrated in class reports, quizzes, intellectual sociological debate and dialogue.
- Students will interpret and discuss the interrelationship of past and present events and the consequences of conflict, discrimination and prejudice in today's society by exercising critical thinking in the evaluation of sociological concepts.
- Students will evaluate and articulate different perspectives and worldviews on multiculturalism, diversity, immigration and race relations in the United States and consider the question of values and culture when analyzing these areas.

TOPICS FOR LECTURE, DISCUSSION, GUEST PRESENTATIONS, VIDEO AND AUDIO, AND READINGS:

- **Overview of Ethnicity and Ethnic Relations** will include a brief survey of the meaning of race and ethnicity, ethnic and minority groups, ethnic discrimination, stratification and prejudice. How can a society that values equality and freedom engage in systematic discrimination against minority subpopulations? Can the accumulated effects of such discrimination be undone? Can the values of freedom and equality be used to justify efforts to compensate the descendants of past discrimination?
- **Overview of Ethnic Relations** will reference theories of ethnic relations including, assimilation, pluralism, biological, psychological, human ecological, power and stratification, and a unified theory of ethnic relations. Is assimilation the desired outcome of ethnic relations? Do most ethnic groups assimilate, and if so, to what degree? What are the consequences for society if assimilation does not occur? How can the remaining patterns of discrimination be eliminated, or at least reduced? If ethnic stratification is sustained by mutually reinforcing cycles, how can these cycles be broken?
- **The Anglo Saxon and Ethnic Antagonism and White Ethnic Americans** will trace the early colonization of America and the cultural and institutional legacy of early colonization, Anglo-Saxon hegemony and the dynamics of ethnicity. In addition, the resource shares of White ethnics, Irish Americans, Italian Americans, and Jewish Americans will be reviewed. How flexible is the Anglo-Saxon core in accommodating the key elements of other cultures and remain the core? Has the existence of blatant and established discrimination in America forced ethnic groups to discard assimilation as an option? Given their different history in the United States, is it possible for white people to understand what it is like to "stand out" and to be vulnerable to the prejudicial beliefs and acts of discrimination nonwhite encounter?
- **African Americans** and their share of resources, stratification, the dynamics of discrimination and responding to discrimination will be explored. Who are the *new African Americans*? Does white America owe black America compensation for past acts

of discrimination? If so, how much? Society tends to view the plight of African Americans in very individualistic terms, as a character flaw of blacks and not a structural flaw of society. Can white Americans continue to blame only the victims of discrimination and not also their own white ancestors?

- **Native Americans** have faced many years of trials. Should the lands, or at least portions of them, that were taken in violation of treaties be given back to the Native Americans, or should they be compensated for the loss of their most valuable asset? In a society that values the principal of justice within the rule of law and order, should past violations of the law be redressed in some way? Should Native Americans be encouraged to enter the mainstream of society or stay somewhat isolated on the reservations, preserving what is left of their cultures? Is it time to dismantle the Bureau of Indian Affairs and allow Native Americans to go their own way?
- **Latinos** are a rapidly growing segment of the population. What is the socioeconomic status of different groups of Latinos? Can English be maintained as the ascendant language, or are parts of the country to become bilingual? Should the use of language and other non-Anglo cultural traits be suppressed? Americans do not feel that they ‘owe’ Latinos compensation for past acts of discrimination in the same way that they owe African and Native Americans. This lack of “collective guilt”, coupled with rising fears about the Latinoization of American culture, may pose a real problem for non-Latino Americans who resent the perceived invasion of their territory, institutions, and cultural patterns. How is this resentment to be mitigated? Can it be reduced? Or are non-Latino Americans and Latinos on a collision course?
- **Asian, Pacific Island Americans and Arab Americans** can at times be forgotten in the discussion of race and nationality. What are the particular dynamics of discrimination against these groups? Is there a problematic nature in a multicultural America? Can we identify an ongoing struggle for social justice in U.S. society? Considering that Asian Americans are so successful, especially relative to other large minorities, should Asian complaints about subtle forms of discrimination limiting their further success be given the same attention as complaints from more disadvantaged minorities? Should programs to help Asians be of the same intensity as those to help less successful minorities?
- **What is the Future of Ethnicity in America?** This is a very salient and dynamic question. No society has ever remained integrated when ethnic identifications are strong, when the cultural core has eroded, and when ethnic conflicts are frequent. All Americans need to consider whether the U.S. is on the road to permanent partitions and the conflicts that these divisions generate. Liberal ideologies preach the virtues of diversity, conveniently ignoring the conflictual reality that they cause, whereas conservative ideologies demand rigid conformity to the cultural core and propose tension-producing, repressive means to ensure this conformity. Is there some middle way, as exemplified by the case of past immigrants – to open the avenues of opportunity to the new immigrants,

absorb portions of the immigrant culture into the cultural core, and eventually generate a revised core of old and new citizens?

STUDENT PROJECTS: Group and individual presentations will be made throughout the term. Student presentations will include both individual and group formats and will utilize film, DVD or You Tube clips, on line sources, and other media as appropriate. Each class will examine differences of opinion and will consider diversity and change in social dynamics, and will seek to further students' understanding of how social dynamics, such as prejudice and discrimination, have affected the participation of ethnic minorities in American society. Illustrations will accompany lectures and discussions are encouraged. The first class period will include a detailed discussion of the individual and group presentations and the topic choices.

SOME AREAS FOR RESEARCH AND PRESENTATIONS INCLUDE:

1. **RACE, ETHNICITY, AND AMERICAN IDENTITY IN A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS:** Is diversity an inevitable part of a new American identity? Is American moving toward a post-racial society? Is an American melting pot identity possible? Do Americans need a common identity?
2. **RACE STILL MATTERS:** Is racism a permanent feature of American society? Is affirmative action necessary to achieve racial equality in the U.S. today? Is race prejudice a product of group position?
3. **IMMIGRATION: NEW FACES, OLD QUESTIONS:** Does immigration contribute to a better America? Is today immigration debate racist? Does Latino immigration threaten African American workers?
4. **CHANGING AMERICAN IDENTITY:** Is the emphasis on a color-blind society an answer to racism and inequality? Do recent immigration trends challenge existing ideas of Americas White identity? Is the claim of White skin privilege a myth?
5. **THE GEOGRAPHY OF RACE AND ETHNICITY:** Is there a need for a permanent voting rights act? Is the reservation the sole source of community for Native Americans? Do minorities and Whites engage in self-segregation?

ASSESSMENT

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION: Students are expected to attend all classes. Each student is responsible for all work missed, regardless of the reason for the absence. If there is going to be an absence the student is expected to contact the instructor prior to the absence. Since this course is taught once a week it is critical that students attend every class. It will be very difficult to make up a class that is missed. Absence from class may jeopardize a student's understanding of the course and may result in a reduction of grade. Students are required to complete all assignments to meet the stated objectives of the course. Each assignment will

correspond to one of the stated course goals and objectives. There are assigned text readings for each class. Students will be expected to have read these prior to class and be able to discuss the material. Class discussion is a part of the class participation and in-class assignments grade.

CLASS PRESENTATIONS: Students will be responsible for group and individual presentations related to selected readings and topical discussions. Each presentation will reflect the research and course materials being studied. All individual and group presentations will be graded using both a participation and presentation rubric which will be distributed at the first class period. Student participation and interaction in the class will be a part of the final grade.

WRITING EXPECTATIONS: Students will respond to questions from the reading each week. Written responses will be comprehensive narratives and use APA style, 12 point font, double spaced, grammatically correct with proper use of citations and reference page.

GRADING SCALE:

100% - 95%	A
94% - 90%	A-
89% - 87%:	B+
86% - 84%:	B
83% - 80%	B-
79% - 77%	C+
76% - 74%	C
73% - 70%	C-
69% - 67%	D+
66% - 64%	D
63% - 60%	D-
59% & below	F

Academic Integrity Policy

The Doane College Academic Integrity Policy will be adhered to in this class. All projects and tests will represent your own work. Any use of others' ideas and words without proper citation of sources is plagiarism and will result in penalties to be determined by the instructor and/or the dean of undergraduate studies.