

# RACE & ETHNICITY

**SOCI 2340 | Section 001 | Fall 2021**

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**Professor:** Dr. Stephanie M. Ortiz

**Class Times:** MWF 12-12:50

**Email:** [Stephanie\\_Ortiz@uml.edu](mailto:Stephanie_Ortiz@uml.edu)

**Location:** DUG-209

**Office:** Dugan 205H

**Credit Hours:** 3

**In-Person Office Hours:** M 1-2; T 11-12

**Virtual Office Hours:** By Appt.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

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This course is an introduction to studying race and ethnicity (R&E) in the United States from a critical sociological perspective. Our task will be to investigate how: (1) R&E have been constructed as innate human characteristics and natural categories; (2) these categories are used to justify the unequal distribution of resources; and (3) groups negotiate, reproduce, and challenge these arrangements.

Note that this course is not an exploration of “different cultures.” As sociologists, our attention will be on issues of power. As such, explanations of race relations that rely on ideas of human nature, hatred, and ignorance will be problematized and critiqued.

We begin with an overview of how sociologists define and theorize R&E. We then examine the sociohistorical processes of racialization, paying special attention to the relationship between R&E, capitalism, and patriarchy. Each unit also connects past realities to present-day policies and dynamics.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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I take seriously the task of self-determination through education, and believe that a diverse set of intellectual traditions can empower students to transform their social world. Therefore, you will:

- gain frameworks with which to analyze how R&E have shaped cultural, political and economic issues in our society
- develop a vocabulary to better understand, engage in, and shape discussions and social action around R&E
- demonstrate critical thinking, through the ability to describe and evaluate complex arguments, as well as analyze empirical data
- practice effective communication skills by developing and defending an informed position on issues of R&E.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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### ***Group Research Presentation – 150 points/30% of course grade***

During the second week of class, you will be paired with 2-3 other students and assigned a topic. Your group will prepare a 30-minute presentation on the topic listed in the course schedule below. This presentation will discuss scholarly, sociological research on the topic. Following this presentation, your group will lead a 15-minute discussion with the class centered on this topic. The assigned reading for that day is meant to be a starting point and should be included in the presentation and/or discussion. You may also include analysis of media coverage of the topic in your discussion. I am **not** requiring in-person collaboration for this assignment, and I encourage you to use Zoom, Google Docs/Slides, etc. to plan and practice your presentation. It is your prerogative how you choose to divide up responsibilities (researching the topic; writing the talk; developing discussion questions; facilitating discussion). **Your group must email me your presentation and discussion questions by Thursday 2pm.** I will review the presentation and provide feedback on any issues you may need to correct before your presentation on Friday.

### ***Participation – 150 points/30% of course grade***

For each of the weeks of student presentations, you will be responsible for being present and engaged audience members. Pay attention to the presentation and be prepared to answer the presenters' questions. You must submit a 2-3 paragraph summary of what you learned by 10pm of the presentation date. You will not need to submit a summary for the week you present. Instead, you will provide a 1-2 paragraph summary of how you contributed to your group's presentation.

### **Exams – 200 points/40%**

Two open-book exams will be administered through *Blackboard*. The exams may consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Material from assigned readings/videos, lectures, discussions, and student presentations are free game and can appear on the exam. The exam is designed to be completed in 50 minutes, but all students will have 2 hours to complete the exam.

In addition:

- Check the *Blackboard* course page at least once/week, as information will be posted there
- Keep copies of all completed assignments & work until final grades are posted
- Be sure to discuss grade posting omissions and errors with me immediately
- Students are not to collaborate on graded work

### **GRADING**

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All grades in this course must be earned. You will be able to access grades in *Blackboard*.

In addition:

- I do not grade for effort or attendance
- I do not curve or offer extra credit
- I do not allow resubmissions of assignments
- I will have your assignments graded within 2 weeks of submission

### **Incompletes**

A grade of “Incomplete” will only be given in cases of emergencies late in the semester, when the majority of assignments have been submitted, and when official documentation is provided.

**Please inform me of any difficulties or hardships negatively affecting your class performance as soon as possible to maximize the amount of time available to manage the problem.**

Letter grades will be assigned based on total points earned. The grading scale is as follows:

<b><u>Grade Component</u></b>	<b><u>Points</u></b>	<b><u>Percentage</u></b>
Presentation	150	30%
Participation	150	30%
Midterm Exam	100	20%
Final Exam	100	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b><u>Course Grade</u></b>	<b><u>Point Range</u></b>
<b>A</b>	470 or more
<b>A-</b>	450-469
<b>B+</b>	435-449
<b>B</b>	420-434
<b>B-</b>	400-419
<b>C+</b>	385-399
<b>C</b>	370-384
<b>C-</b>	350-369
<b>D+</b>	335-349
<b>D</b>	320-334
<b>D-</b>	300-319
<b>F</b>	0-299

## **CLASS CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS**

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Sociology is a set of theoretical and methodological tools that we use to understand and intervene in our social world. The sociology of race and ethnicity is an increasingly necessary and important subdiscipline to be well-versed in. In order for me to do my job well, I have these expectations for the class:

### **Expect to be Uncomfortable**

I believe the learning process should be an empowering one, and I understand that this process can be personally challenging and uncomfortable. Learning about the depth and scope of racism within United States history, and within contemporary society, can cause strong emotional responses. You may find some theories in this course controversial or their explanations may challenge your beliefs. An understanding of sociological frameworks with which you may disagree will help you gain a competency in navigating difference, which you will continue to experience throughout your time at the university, as well as within your career.

### **Do The Work**

Your assumptions and opinions about racial/ethnic relations and ideas about racism are not necessarily the same as how the sociology of race defines and studies these concepts. The aim of this course is for you to learn and engage with the facts presented, understand them, and apply them in ways that demonstrate a well-rounded skillset. You can only do this if you review lecture notes and complete all readings and documentaries assigned, otherwise your submissions are merely anecdotal, with little grounding in social science research. Anyone on the street can give me an opinion about race, white privilege, #BlackLivesMatter, or any of the other topics we will explore. But this is a social science class—you are reading expert sources, which means **you now know more than the average person on the street.**<sup>ii</sup> When completing assignments, you must use critical evidence that does not rely on personal beliefs, observations, or opinions.

### **Keep It All In Good Faith**

In addition to following the guidelines of a sociological imagination (to be reviewed Week 1), I expect all submitted work be completed in good-faith and refrain from derogatory comments and dehumanizing language about other people, cultures, and groups. While critical engagement with course material is required, interrupting, attacking and passive-aggressive trolling are not conducive to the learning outcomes. Discussions are to be framed using rules of evidence and should always be presented in a respectful and civil manner. This is paramount to a quality educational experience.

If a student is being disruptive or disrespectful (rude, inappropriate, and/or harmful to others) either in the classroom or during class-related communications online or in-person, they will receive

one verbal warning from the instructor. If the behavior is viewed as seriously disruptive, no warning will be issued, and action will be taken. If negative behavior persists following a verbal warning, the instructor will request a meeting with the student and Department Chair to discuss and document a plan for changing behavior. Further infractions will immediately involve the Department Chair and the Academic Dean.

### **Email Etiquette**

Please use your campus email address to contact me at [Stephanie\\_Ortiz@uml.edu](mailto:Stephanie_Ortiz@uml.edu). Use a detailed subject line when contacting me; include the name of the course and a basic description of what you need. This will help me locate and respond to student emails first. For example: **SOCI 2340 Exam Help** or **R&E Class: Question about Lecture**.

Barring some personal catastrophe, I will respond to emails sent during workday hours (9am-5pm, Monday-Friday) within 24 hours. Please schedule online meetings with me **at least 2 days** in advance using my [Calendly link](#) on *Blackboard*.

In your emails, please be respectful in tone, even if you're frustrated by something going on. I'm solution-oriented and you'd be surprised how quickly I can hash something out if you give me the information I need, enough time, and little bit of grace.

### **Attendance**

I expect you to come to class prepared and ready to participate, but as we are still neck-deep in a pandemic, I will not be grading for attendance. I understand that you may have to miss class due to illness. You do not have to email me to inform me of your absence, nor do you have to provide me with documentation explaining your absence. The only exception to this is for exam days and on your scheduled class presentation; if you are sick and need to miss class on these occasions, you must email me ASAP.

# COURSE SCHEDULE

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## Week 1: Foundational Concepts

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Wednesday, September 1 – Welcome! Syllabus review; expectations; Q&A

Friday, September 3 – A review of key sociological concepts

 Chin. 2013. "Fuck Political Correctness: Please Say What You Mean."

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## Week 2: Race and Ethnicity Defined

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Monday, September 6 – **Labor Day, University Closed**

Wednesday, September 8 – Lecture

Friday, September 10 – In-class viewing of *Race: The Power of an Illusion*

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## Week 3: Theories

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Monday, September 13 – Lecture

Wednesday, September 15 – Discussion

 Bonilla-Silva and Baiocchi. 2001. "Anything But Racism: How Sociologists Limit The Significance of Racism"

 Golash-Boza. 2016. "A Critical and Comprehensive Sociological Theory of Race and Racism."

Friday, September 17 – **Student Presentation on Critical Race Theory**

 Fleming. 2019. "The Idiot's Guide to Critical Race Theory."

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## Week 4: Native Americans

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Monday, September 20 – Lecture

Wednesday, September 22 – Discussion

- 📖 Williams Jr. 2005. "The Savage as The Wolf: The Founders Language of Indian Savagery."
- 📖 Masta. 2019. "I Am Exhausted: Everyday Occurrences of Being Native American."

Friday, September 24 – **Student Presentation on Decolonization and Justice**

- 📖 Gurr. 2011. "Complex Intersections: Reproductive Justice and Native American Women."

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### Week 5: African Americans

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Monday, September 27 – Lecture

Wednesday, September 29 – Discussion (to be conducted over Zoom)

- 📖 Stuart and Benezra. 2018. "Criminalized Masculinities: How Policing Shapes the Construction of Gender and Sexuality in Poor Black Communities."
- 📖 Owens. 2017. "The Birth of American Gynecology."

Friday, October 1 – **Student Presentation on The Black Freedom Struggle & #BlackLivesMatter**

- 📖 Garza. 2014. "A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement."

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### Week 6: Asian Americans

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Monday, October 4 – Lecture

Wednesday, October 6 – Discussion

- 📖 Trieu and Lee. 2018. "Asian Americans and Internalized Oppression."
- 📖 Ocampo. 2016. "The Latinos of Asia: How Filipino Americans Break the Rules of Race."

Friday, October 8 – **Student Presentation on The Model Minority Stereotype**

📖 Noor-Oshiro. 2021. "Asian American Young Adults and Suicide."

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### Week 7: MIDTERM EXAM

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Monday, October 11 – **Columbus Day, University Closed**

Wednesday, October 13 – Review for midterm

**Friday, October 15 – Midterm Exam Day.** The exam will be available starting at 7am and will close at 10pm. You will have two hours to complete the exam once you begin.

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### Week 8: Latina/o/x Americans

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Monday, October 18 – Lecture

Wednesday, October 20 – Discussion

📖 Flores-Gonzales et al. 2014. "Doing Race: Latino Youth's Identities and the Politics of Racial Exclusion."

📖 Marquez et al. 2021. "Discourse of Deservingness: Racialized Framing During Rumored ICE Raids."

Friday, October 22 – **Student Presentation on Latinx Americans and Pop Culture**

📖 Vargas. 2009. "Representations of Latina/o Sexuality in Popular Culture."

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### Week 9: Middle Eastern/North African Americans

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Monday, October 25 – Lecture

Wednesday, October 27 – Discussion

📖 Maghbouleh. 2017. "The Limits of Whiteness: Iranian Americans and the Everyday Politics of Race."

📖 Gowayed. 2020. "Resettled and unsettled: Syrian Refugees and the intersection of

race and legal status in the United States.”

Friday, October 29 – **Student Presentation on Media Representation of MENAs**

 Green. 2016. “American Sniper and Arab Stereotypes.”

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### Week 10: European Americans and Whiteness

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Monday, November 1 – Lecture

Wednesday, November 3 – Discussion

 Anderson. 2015. “The White Space.”

 Gallagher. 2003. “Playing the White Ethnic Card.”

Friday, November 5 – **Student Presentation on White Nationalism & The Alt-Right**

 Charles. 2020. “White Noise: How White Nationalist Content Creators Reproduce Narratives of White Power and Victimhood on YouTube.”

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### Week 11: “Colorblind” Racism

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Monday, November 8 – Lecture

Wednesday, November 10 – Discussion

 Bonilla-Silva. 2020. “Colorblind Racism in Pandemic Times.”

 Miles. 2020. “How a Democracy Killed Tamir Rice.”

Friday, November 12 – **Student Presentation on Colorblind Racism in Institutions**

 Gallagher. 2020. “How Institutions Perpetuate and Promote Racism through Color Blindness.”

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## Week 12: Race & Health

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Monday, November 15 – Lecture

Wednesday, November 17 – Discussion

- 📖 Metzl. 2019. "Dying of Whiteness: How The Politics of Racial Resentment is Killing America's Heartland."
- 📖 Pulido. 2016. "Flint, Environmental Racism, and Racial Capitalism."

Friday, November 19 – **Student Presentation on Race and The Impact of COVID-19**

- 📖 Cooper and Williams. 2020. "Excess Death from COVID-19, Community Bereavement, and Restorative Justice for Communities of Color."

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## Week 13: Fall Recess

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Monday, November 22 – Class Choice of Topic!

**Wednesday, November 24 – Fall Recess, No Class**

**Friday, November 26 – Fall Recess, No Class**

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## Week 14: Beauty Politics

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Monday, November 29 – Lecture

Wednesday, December 1 – Discussion

- 📖 Hughes. 2020. "I'm Supposed to be Thick: Managing Body Image Anxieties Among Black American Women."
- 📖 Walters. 2017. "They'll Go With the Lighter: Tri-Racial Aesthetic Labor in Clothing Retail."

Friday, December 3 – **Student Presentation on Race, Beauty, and Social Media**

- 📖 Brucculieri. 2018. "Snapchat Dysmorphia and Plastic Surgery."

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## Week 15: Hope, Healing, and Radical Care

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Monday, December 6 – Lecture

Wednesday, December 8 – Discussion

- 📖 Lorde. 1978. "A Litany of Survival."
- 📖 Ginwright. 2018. "The Future of Healing: Shifting From Trauma Informed Care to Healing Centered Engagement."
- 📖 Duncan-Andrade. 2009. "Hope Required When Growing Roses in Concrete."

Friday, December 10 – Review for final exam

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## Week 16: FINALS WEEK

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### FINAL EXAM TBA

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<sup>i</sup> Official course description: A survey of the sociohistorical perspective in the area of intergroup relations; the role of minorities in contemporary society. Emphasis placed on cross-cultural comparisons.

<sup>ii</sup> Dr. Michael D. Wilson | Professor American Indian Studies at UWM | AIS 101 syllabus

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## UNIVERSITY-WIDE POLICIES & STATEMENTS YOU NEED TO KNOW

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### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY STATEMENT

All students are advised that there is a [University policy regarding academic integrity](#). Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work.

### DISABILITY SERVICES

If you have a documented disability that will require classroom accommodation, please notify me as soon as possible, so that we might make appropriate arrangements. Please speak to me during office hours or send me an email, as I respect, and want to protect, your privacy. Visit the Student Disability Services webpage for further information. Additionally, Student Disability Services supports software for ALL students. Read&Write Gold is literacy software that allows you to read on-screen text aloud, research and check written work, and create study guides. You can download the software from the IT Software webpage on the UML website: [IT Software page](#)

### STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

We are a campus that cares about the mental health and well-being of all individuals in our campus community, particularly during this uncertain time. If you or someone you know are experiencing mental health challenges at UMass Lowell, please contact [Counseling Services](#). They will be offering free in-person counselling for all students.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY

The safety and health of the UMass Lowell community is our shared priority. In seeking to provide the fullest academic and campus life experience possible, UMass Lowell will rely on all members of our community to act responsibly. For the latest updates on UMass Lowell's COVID policies, please visit [www.uml.edu/coronavirus](http://www.uml.edu/coronavirus).

UMass Lowell has implemented reasonable health and safety protocols in accordance with national and state public health guidelines. These standards apply to anyone who is physically present on campus or participating in a UMass Lowell-sponsored activity.

- **Daily Symptom Checker:** All campus community members should use the [daily symptom checker](#) ([www.uml.edu/alert/coronavirus/COVID-19-symptom-review.aspx](http://www.uml.edu/alert/coronavirus/COVID-19-symptom-review.aspx)) every day prior to leaving your home, apartment or room.
- **Vaccination:** COVID-19 vaccination is required for ALL students (with rare and approved exceptions). Please visit Mass. Vaccine Finder ([vaxfinder.mass.gov](http://vaxfinder.mass.gov)) to find vaccine locations.
- **Face Coverings:** Face coverings are required for all faculty, staff, students, vendors and visitors regardless of vaccination status in nearly all indoor common spaces, including classrooms, instructional laboratories, meeting rooms, work areas, break rooms, hallways, elevators and restrooms. Face coverings are not required outdoors. Faculty may opt to remove face coverings when teaching.