

**Minority Group Relations**  
Sociology 208-03  
Rhode Island College, Spring 2009

Mondays 2-3:30 Craig-Lee Hall Room 201  
Wednesdays 2-3:30 Craig-Lee Hall Room 104

*Instructor Information*

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Office: Craig Lee Hall room 451  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 6-6:30, Thursdays 2-4, and by appointment

Course Website: <http://www.ric.edu/faculty/marthur/classes.html>  
(also accessible through the WebCT system)

*Required Materials:*

Ghlagher, Charles A. **2007**. *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*. Boston: McGraw Hill. Available at the RIC bookstore as well as online. Costs \$68 new. You must get the 2007 edition, but used texts should be available. A copy is available on reserve in the library.

Additional readings will be distributed through electronic reserves, email, or in class, as needed.

Why should we study race? Race does not “exist” in any physical or biological sense. The genes that dictate our skin color, our hair color, the shape of our eyes or our nose—these genes do not come in some neat little bundle that tells us who belongs to which group. Indeed, over history and still today there has not been a consensus on how to classify people into races or even how many races exist. However, race is extremely real in its effects on our lives as individuals and as members of society. By studying race, along with ethnicity (an idea which is often confused or conflated with race), we can unravel where race comes from, why it still matters, how it impacts us, and how it intersects with other sorts of inequality in society.

By the end of this course, you will have:

- Been introduced to sociology as a discipline and to sociological ways of understanding the world;
- Developed an understanding of the historical dynamics of race and ethnicity and the ways in which they have shaped the contemporary United States;
- Explored the complex interactions between race and other forms of inequality (class, gender, sexuality, disability) as well as between race and significant social institutions (education, employment, family, media, the criminal justice system) that shape our daily lives;
- Learned to analyze how the realities of race and ethnicity have shaped their own personal histories, their communities, and the policy debates that currently face our world; and
- Advanced your skills in writing about and discussing quantitative and geographical data as well as complex and controversial issues.

THIS SYLLABUS IS TENTATIVE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

## Grading

1. **PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE.** You are expected to come on time for every class meeting and let me know as soon as possible (preferably in advance) if you must miss class for a legitimate reason. Part of your attendance is the expectation that you will participate in class sessions by contributing something to our discussions. If you have significant problems speaking in class, I strongly urge you to come speak to me privately as soon as possible to develop alternative participation mechanisms (such as private meetings or e-mail discussions) so that you can meet this requirement. Remember that there are few stupid questions, but that all questions and comments should be made in a spirit of respect for other students and their contributions to the class. (10% of final course grade)
2. **ASSIGNMENTS.** Each week, there will be one or more short assignments in or out of class. These assignments will be graded on a check plus, check, check minus, zero basis. Missed assignments cannot be made up, but there will be opportunities to earn more points than you need. These assignments may take several forms. Some might be group activities completed in class. Others might be short quizzes asking you to answer a question about the assigned reading for that class session. Still others will require you to do some activity outside of class and submit the results to me via email, or to compose a paragraph or two in advance of class. (30% of final course grade)
3. **PAPERS.** During the course of the semester, you will complete two papers. Each paper will be approximately 4-6 pages in length. One paper will require you to use Census and other geographical data found on the Internet to address questions about race, residence, and inequality. The other will ask you to consider theories and concepts discussed in the course in light of your own family history (or that of another individual you interview). More details about these assignments will be handed out as they are due. Late papers will be accepted up until the date of the final exam, but will be subject to a grade penalty. (Each paper is worth 20% of the final course grade)
4. **FINAL EXAM.** During the regularly scheduled exam period, there will be an in-class, open-book/open-note, essay-style final exam. (20% of final course grade)
5. **READING.** You are expected to complete all assigned course readings prior to the date for which they are assigned. Remember that normal expectations for a college course are that you should do two to three hours of work outside class for every one hour in class—since you are spending three hours a week in this class, that means you should expect to work on reading, writing assignments, and studying for this class for six to nine hours a week outside of class. Reading assignments are generally kept under 100 pages a week, but are heavier in the first few weeks of the semester as we get off the ground. While you are not required to use them, practice tests on the readings in *Rethinking the Color Line* can be found online at [http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073135747/student\\_view0/](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073135747/student_view0/) to help you study.

## Schedule

(Reading assignments followed by a **T** can be found in *Rethinking the Color Line*; those followed by an **E** are available on e-reserves).

- Wednesday, January 21      **First Class Meeting**
- Monday, January 26      **Introduction to Race in the United States**  
Blank, “An Overview of Trends” (56-68) **T**  
Zinn, “Drawing the Color Line” (9-20) **T**  
Rodriguez & Cordero-Guzman, “Placing Race in Context” (85-91) **T**  
\*\*Student Information Sheets Due
- Wednesday, January 28      **The Development of Racial Identity**  
Lee and Bean, “Beyond Black and White” (122-129) **T**  
Waters, “Ethnic and Racial Identities” (518-534) **T**  
Espiritu, “Asian American Panethnicity” (113-122) **T**  
Wu, “The Changing Face of America” (554-572) **T**
- Monday, February 2      **History and Theory of Race**  
Wilkins, “Tour of Indian People & Indian Lands” (92-112) **T**  
Omi and Winant, “Racial Formations” (21-29) **T**  
Feagin and Feagin, “Theoretical Perspectives” (29-45) **T**  
Bonilla-Silva, “Racialized Social System Approach” (46-56) **T**
- Wednesday, February 4      **Race and Religion**  
Gilman, “Are Jews White?” *Theories of Race and Racism* (229-236) **E**  
McKee Evens, “From the Land of Canaan” *AHR* (15-43) **E**
- Monday, February 9      **Race and Science**  
Excerpts from Cartwright’s “Diseases and Peculiarities of the Negro Race” (*New Orleans Medical Journal & Surgical Journal*, 1851) online at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h3106t.html>  
The “Science” timeline on the “Understanding Race” site at [http://www.understandingrace.com/history/text\\_timeline.html#sci](http://www.understandingrace.com/history/text_timeline.html#sci) (try your best to read through all 10 time periods—they are short).
- Wednesday, February 11      **Race and Racism**  
Gallagher, “Color Blind Privilege” (130-142) **T**  
Guinier and Torres, “The Ideology of Colorblindness” (143-149) **T**  
Lipsitz, “The Possessive Investment in Whiteness” (201-214) **T**  
*Web Assignment:* Complete one or more Implicit Association Tests (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/>), including the one titled “Race IAT” found under “Demonstration.” Write one paragraph about it.
- Monday, February 16      **Patterns of Migration & Assimilation**  
Zhou, “The Changing Face of America” (477-498) **T**  
Ong, “The Ambivalence of Salvation” *Buddha is Hiding* (195-228) **E**

Wednesday, February 18	<p><b>Immigration and its Controversies</b>  Suleiman, “The Arab Immigrant Experience” (498-517) <b>T</b>  Huntington, “The Hispanic Challenge,” <i>Foreign Policy</i> (1-12) <b>E</b></p>
Monday, February 23	<p><b>Adoption</b>  Rothman, “Family” (3-8) &amp; “Hair” (206-224), <i>Weaving a Family</i> <b>E</b></p>
Wednesday, February 25	<p><b>Race and Family Life in Historical Context</b>  Moynihan, <i>The Negro Family</i>, entire. (Can be read online at <a href="http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/webid-meynihan.htm">http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/webid-meynihan.htm</a>.)  Dalmage, “Discovering Racial Borders” (542-554) <b>T</b></p>
Monday, March 2	<p><b>Intersectionality: Race/Gender/Sexuality/Disability</b>  McIntosh, “Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” <b>E</b>  Collins, “Pornography and Black Women’s Bodies,” <i>Race, Class, Gender, and the Media</i> (279-286) <b>E</b>  Samuels, “My Body, My Closet,” <i>GLQ</i> (233-255) <b>E</b></p>
Wednesday, March 4	<p><b>Race and Economic Inequality</b>  Shapiro, “Transformative Assets” (80-85) <b>T</b>  ***Family History Paper Due</p>
Monday, March 8	<p><b>No Class—Spring Break</b></p>
Wednesday, March 10	<p><b>No Class—Spring Break</b></p>
Monday, March 16	<p><b>Race and Health</b>  Zeek, “Why Are There No Supermarkets” (290-299) <b>T</b>  Williams and Collins, “The Color of Health” (69-79) <b>T</b>  Bullard, “Environmental Justice” (262-279) <b>T</b></p>
Wednesday, March 18	<p><b>Race and Residence</b>  Feagin, “The Continuing Significance of Race” (214-223) <b>T</b>  Massey, “Residential Segregation” (224-250) <b>T</b>  <i>Web Assignment:</i> Map segregation in your hometown on <a href="http://www.socialexplorer.com">http://www.socialexplorer.com</a> and turn in 1 paragraph about it.</p>
Monday, March 23	<p><b>Educational Segregation</b>  Kozol, “Savage Inequalities” (280-290) <b>T</b>  Shapiro, “Getting a Decent American Middle-Class Education” (155-182) <b>E</b></p>
Wednesday, March 25	<p><b>Other Educational Inequalities</b>  Steele, “Thin Ice: ‘Stereotype Threat’ and Black College Students,” <i>Atlantic Monthly</i> (44-47) <b>E</b>  Suzuki, “Asian Americans as the ‘Model Minority,’” <i>Change</i> (13-19) <b>E</b>  ***Deadline for withdrawing from this course</p>

Monday, March 30	<p><b>Race and Employment</b>  Newman and Ellis, “There’s No Shame in My Game” (363-378) <b>T</b>  Braverman, “Kristen v. Aisha” (349-350) <b>T</b>  Pager, “The Mark of a Criminal Record” (344-349) <b>T</b></p>
Wednesday, April 1	<p><b>Affirmative Action</b>  Duster, “Individual Fairness, Group Preferences, and the California Strategy,” <i>Race and Representation</i> (111-134) <b>O</b></p>
Monday, April 6	<p><b>Welfare</b>  Rhode Island Family Independence Program 2007 Annual Report, available at <a href="http://www.dhs.state.ri.us/dhs/reports/fip_2007.pdf">http://www.dhs.state.ri.us/dhs/reports/fip_2007.pdf</a></p>
Wednesday, April 8	<p><b>No Class—Passover</b></p>
Monday, April 13	<p><b>Race and Crime</b>  Cole, “No Equal Justice” (304-314) <b>T</b>  Davis, “Race and Criminalization” (314-323) <b>T</b>  Reiman, “...And the Poor Get Prison” (324-344) <b>T</b>  ASA, “Race, Ethnicity, and the Criminal Justice System” (1-31) <b>E</b>  <i>Web Assignment:</i> Email me ads, YouTube clips, other media sources that you feel represent race in a way worth discussing</p>
Wednesday, April 15	<p><b>Race in the Media I</b>  Lewis &amp; Jhally “Television &amp; Politics of Representation” (420-432) <b>T</b>  Lichter and Amundson, “Distorted Reality” (432-445) <b>T</b>  ***Demography paper due</p>
Monday, April 20	<p><b>Race in the Media II</b>  Klein and Naccarato, “Broadcast News” (415-420) <b>T</b>  Merskin “Winnebagos, Cherokees, Apaches, &amp; Dakotas” (446-455) <b>T</b>  Lapchick, “Sport in America” (456-465) <b>T</b></p>
Wednesday, April 22	<p><b>Race and Politics</b>  Lipsitz “Whiteness &amp; War” <i>Possessive Investment in Whiteness</i> (70-105) <b>E</b>  <i>Web Assignment:</i> Play the Redistricting Game, Mission 4, at <a href="http://www.redistrictinggame.org/">http://www.redistrictinggame.org/</a>. Write one paragraph about it.</p>
Monday, April 27	<p><b>Race and Social Change</b>  Akram and Johnson, “Race and Civil Rights” (185-200) <b>T</b>  Branch, “The Sit-In Movement” (27-31) and Cozzens, “Mississippi and Freedom Summer” (67-72), <i>Solutions to Social Problems</i> <b>E</b></p>
Wednesday, April 29	<p><b>The Future of Race</b>  Gans, “The Possibility of a New Racial Hierarchy” (149-165) <b>T</b>  Ghallagher, “Ten Simple Things You Can Do” (582-585) <b>T</b></p>
Monday, May 5	<p><b>Last Day of Class</b> Come to class with completed study guide</p>
Date TBA	<p><b>Final Exam</b></p>

## Course Policies

### *Academic Honesty*

All students enrolling in this course are expected to abide by the Rhode Island College guidelines on academic honesty, which can be located in the Student Handbook and other official documents. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- Plagiarizing written work, including copying some or all of your work from a book, a website, or another student's paper. Think about how you would feel if someone passed off your hard work as their own.
- Using sources without proper attribution. Remember that all claims in a paper that did not spring fully formed from your own head need attribution, regardless of whether or not they are paraphrased, and all direct quotes should appear in quotation marks. If you are unsure how to document sources, please see me or reference the sociology department term paper guide, available at <http://www.ric.edu/sociology/termpaperguide.php>.
- Turning in work completed for other classes without prior permission.
- Working together with another student on an assignment, or seeking assistance with the content of your work from professionals, parents, or peers, without prior permission. (The exception to this policy is proofreading.)
- Copying off of another student or off of materials you have brought without permission during an exam. This includes text messaging and use of the internet during exams.
- Destroying course materials or otherwise preventing other students from achieving fully in this course.

You should be aware that I have caught many students who have engaged in academic dishonesty. Cheating successfully is often harder than you think, and you might as well just put your effort into doing the assignment legitimately. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe, and include receiving a 0 on the assignment for the first minor offense, receiving an F for the class for a repeated offense, and report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs at RIC. If you feel the urge to engage in academic dishonesty, stop and think about what you are doing, and then come see me so we can work out a plan together to ensure your success in the course.

### *Extensions, Absences, and Attendance*

You are expected to attend class regularly, but I am aware that emergencies do come up and that this class is not the only priority in your life. If you know in advance that you will be absent for a legitimate reason, please let me know via email so that you can be excused. If something unavoidable comes up, it is your responsibility to let me know as soon as possible afterwards. Regardless, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate (I do not provide notes to students) and to meet with me to clarify what you have missed. If you must be late to a class or if you must leave early, you should try to let me know in advance, and you should always be sure not to disturb other students with your comings and goings. Be aware that repeated absences, even if excused, may imperil your ability to do well in the course, and that you cannot earn participation points if you are not present.

All assignments are due in class at the start of class. While I understand that you may occasionally experience printer problems, these are not an excuse for late work. It is my preference that all work be turned in on paper, but in unavoidable situations you may email me your work. If you must email me your work, it must be sent at least 15 minute prior to the start of class (you may not skip class to finish your work) in \*.rtf, \*.doc, \*.docx, \*.pdf, or \*.html format (try "Save As" to select one of these formats). I will

write back to you letting you know that I received and could open your work. If I do not receive it or cannot open it, it does not count as having been submitted, so I encourage you to try your best to get me a paper copy. If unavoidable circumstances require you to seek an extension on your work, I am generally open to providing one. However, you will need to request the extension via email at least 24 hours prior to the due date unless the extension is due to a major emergency (health crisis, death in the family, etc.) – so plan ahead.

### *Course Technology*

Students are expected to check their RIC email addresses frequently, at a minimum twice a week before each class meeting. If you primarily use another email account, I would suggest you arrange for your RIC email to be forwarded, as I do use email to disseminate important information about the course. Students are also responsible for being able to access the WebCT site for this course (through which you can access the course website), as course documents and information will be made available there. If you are not able to access email, WebCT, or the course website, you should seek assistance from User Support Services (<http://www.ric.edu/uss/> or x8886) right away so that you do not fall behind in the course.

### *Students with Disabilities*

If you have a disability that might interfere with your ability to perform at your best in this course, it is your responsibility to come and speak with me as early as possible in the semester so that we can develop a plan together. All reasonable accommodations will be made. Students with disabilities should be sure that they are registered with Disability Services in order to ensure access to the full range of services available at Rhode Island College. Information about these services and about registration is available at <http://www.ric.edu/disabilityservices/>.

### *Supplemental Services*

During the semester, you may discover that you would benefit from supplemental services of various kinds. I would encourage you to take your written work to the writing center at least once this semester—information about the writing center is available at <http://www.ric.edu/writingcenter/>. Spending time thinking about writing and revising your writing will only help you learn and perform at your best. If you find yourself struggling academically, OASIS can help you with test taking, reading comprehension, note taking, time management, and/or ESL skills, and you can find out more about OASIS at <http://www.ric.edu/oasis>. Sociology courses in particular have the capacity to bring up emotionally troubling issues, and if this occurs I encourage you to visit the Counseling Center. Information about the Counseling Center, which provides confidential services, can be found online at <http://www.ric.edu/counselingctr/>, and there are even online screening tests available.

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**Student Information Sheet**

Please complete this sheet and return it to me at the second class meeting of the semester, or if you join the class late please turn it in as soon as possible after you join the course.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approximate Class Year (circle one):**    Freshman        Sophomore        Junior        Senior

**Major:** \_\_\_\_\_

**2<sup>nd</sup> Major/Minor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred email address (I will send vital course information to this address. You should expect to receive a test email from me by the third week of the semester; if not, please email me to confirm your address):**

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**One thing you'd like me to know about you (can be an interesting personal fact, a detail about your life or work responsibilities, a concern or strength you have with respect to the course, or anything else you want to tell me):**

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**Please be sure to provide me with a (recent, if possible) photo of yourself. You may attach a printed photo or a photocopy of your ID to this form, or you may email me a digital picture. Be sure that any email clearly identifies your name, and if there are multiple people in the photo tell me which one is you.**