

**Sociology 168.15: Introduction to Ethnic Studies (3 Credit Hours)**  
**Fall 2009: Tuesday and Thursday from 2:00-3:20 in CHSS 210**

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Office Hours: Tuesday 9:30-10:30; Thursday 12:30-1:30; or by appointment

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**Course Description**

This introductory course will examine historical and contemporary relations of difference and diversity in the United States from a sociological perspective. Specifically, we will examine the construction and meaning of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and religion, as well as relations between different groups. Thus, we will look at factors that unite people in social groups, as well as those that lead to conflict, prejudice, and discrimination between groups. In doing this, you will be introduced to key sociological concepts and theories that will help you understand not only the topics discussed in this course, but also your own lives and interactions. The hope is that you will begin to develop “sociological imaginations” that will help you understand the society that you live in (specifically relations of difference and diversity) and your movement through it.

Sociology by design is a **critical** endeavor. It often questions many of people’s taken-for-granted values and beliefs. It also critically examines many of the leading institutions of society, such as government, education, and family. The point is to stimulate debate and discussion of those values, beliefs, and institutions that are often assumed or unquestioned with the objective of making possible a better world for all peoples. Hopefully, we will be able to replicate sociology and have meaningful discussions and debates about the world in which we live in this class.

**Course Objectives**

- To develop sociological understandings of minority groups (racial, ethnic, gender, sexuality, and religious), their lived experiences, and their relations with other minority groups as well as majority groups.
- To develop an understanding of key sociological ideas, concepts, and theories that pertain to difference, diversity, privilege, prejudice, and discrimination.
- To begin to develop sociological imaginations and apply sociological ideas to societal events and your everyday lives.
- To enhance critical thinking capabilities.
- To learn to articulate and defend one’s perspective through speech and writing.
- To learn to understand and respect the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

**Course Format**

This class will use a mixed format. This means that there will be lectures, discussions, and individual and group projects. This class is also designed to use cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is the belief that students learn best when they are able to actively participate in class. Thus, students are expected to think critically about their own experiences,

as well as the materials presented in the course. To accomplish this, I will work to create an environment that encourages students to participate in class and interact with me and their fellow classmates. Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to share their own opinions, thoughts, and experiences from their lives. However, students will always be required to treat others with respect and never devalue or in any way “put down” others for their different opinions or experiences.

For this class to be successful, your cooperation is necessary. Thus, the more you put into the class, the more you will get out of it. As you will see below, participation counts towards your final grade.

**Lectures will not be posted online.** Learning the material entails engaging with it through listening, questioning, and writing it down. Downloading lectures discourages all of these and thus, lectures will not be posted online.

### **Classroom Policies**

1. You are expected to attend class, show up on time, and stay for the entire class (entering the classroom late or leaving early is distracting to your fellow students).
2. You are responsible for all the materials covered in class. This includes readings, lectures, movies, and in-class discussions. If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting the material. **I will not** provide lecture notes or class notes to students who do not attend class, unless the student has an official excuse.
3. You are expected to complete the assigned readings on time.
4. Cell phones and MP3 players must be turned off during class.
5. Laptops are allowed in class. However, if you are using them for non-class activities, you may be asked not to bring your laptop to class.

### **Assignments and Grading**

1. Three Exams
2. Three Quizzes
3. Participation

### **Exams**

There will be three exams. Exams will be multiple choice. They will not be cumulative. Exams will cover all materials. This includes readings, lectures, videos, and all in-class materials. Each exam will be worth 25% of your grade. **Please bring a scantron for exams.** Exam grades will be posted on blackboard.

- Exam 1: Chapters 1-4
- Exam 2: Chapters 5-11
- Exam 3: Chapters 12-15

All exams must be taken in-class at the scheduled time. Once the first student leaves, no new exams may be started. Make-up exams will only be allowed with a written official notice (i.e., from a doctor or from a university official in case of an official sporting or other event). To take a make-up exam, you will have to schedule a time as soon as possible. This needs to be done

within 24 hours of the original exam time. Make-up exams may differ from the original exam and may include essays or other questions that require written answers.

- Study outlines will be provided.

### **Quizzes**

There will be three quizzes, which may be announced or unannounced. The quizzes will consist of multiple choice questions. Quizzes may cover any material since the last exam. This includes material from in-class and the readings. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Thus, your best 2 quizzes will count towards your grade. Missed quizzes cannot be made up. Your best 2 combined quizzes will count for 15% of your grade. You are responsible for having scantrons for the quizzes. **Thus, please bring scantrons with you to class everyday.** Quiz grades will be posted on blackboard.

### **Participation**

Participation will count towards 10% of your grade. Your participation grade is based on your participation in class discussions, group discussions, and in-class exercises. In-class exercises will be collected and graded using a check system. Missed in-class exercises cannot be made up.

### **Grading**

• Exam 1	25%
• Exam 2	25%
• Exam 3	25%
• Exam Total	75%
• Quizzes	15%
• Participation	10%
• Total	100%

### **Grade Scale**

100-90 = A
89-80 = B
79-70 = C
69-60 = D
59-0 = F

### **Academic Dishonesty**

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. Students who participate in academically dishonest activities should be aware that they will receive an F for the course **at the minimum.**

### **Students with Disabilities**

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual

instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

- If you have a disability please come talk with me and notify the of Services for Students with Disabilities at the beginning semester so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

### **Religious Holidays**

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: “a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20....” A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

### **Visitors in the Classroom**

Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.

### **Instructor Evaluations**

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor form toward the end of the semester.

### **Required Text**

Parrillo, Vincent N. 2009. *Strangers to These Shores: Race and Ethnic Relations in the United States*. 9<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Pearson.

### **Class Schedule**

- All readings are to be completed by the day listed. If you do not do the reading, you should not expect to do well in this class.

<b><u>Week 1</u></b>	<b><u>Reading Pages</u></b>
August 25: Introduction	
August 27: Chapter 1. The Study of Minorities	1-21
<b><u>Week 2</u></b>	
September 1: Chapter 1. The Study of Minorities	21-28
September 3: Chapter 2. Culture and Social Structure	30-50
<b><u>Week 3</u></b>	
September 8: Chapter 2. Culture and Social Structure	50-58
September 10: Chapter 3. Prejudice and Discrimination	60-80
<b><u>Week 4</u></b>	
September 15: Chapter 3. Prejudice and Discrimination	80-90
September 17: Chapter 4. Intergroup Relations	92-103
<b><u>Week 5</u></b>	
September 22: Chapter 4. Intergroup Relations	103-123
<b>September 24: Exam 1</b>	
<b><u>Week 6</u></b>	
September 29: Chapter 5. Northern and Western Europeans	126-155
October 1: Chapter 5. Northern and Western Europeans	155-164
Chapter 6. Southern, Central, and Eastern Europeans	166-180
<b><u>Week 7</u></b>	
October 6: Chapter 6. Southern, Central, and Eastern Europeans	180-207
October 8: Chapter 7. The Native Americans	210-238
<b><u>Week 8</u></b>	
October 13: Chapter 7. The Native Americans	238-256
October 15: Chapter 8. East and Southeast Asian Americans	258-291
<b><u>Week 9</u></b>	
October 20: Chapter 8. East and Southeast Asian Americans	291-300
Chapter 9. Other Asian and Middle Eastern Americans	302-312
October 22: Chapter 9. Other Asian and Middle Eastern Americans	312-334
<b><u>Week 10</u></b>	
October 27: Chapter 10. Black Americans	336-357

October 29: Chapter 10. Black Americans 357-380

**Week 11**

November 3: Chapter 11. Hispanic Americans 382-401

November 5: Chapter 11. Hispanic Americans 401-423

**Week 12**

**November 10: Exam 2**

November 12: Chapter 12. Religious Minorities 426-452

**Week 13**

November 17: Chapter 12. Religious Minorities 452-465

November 19: Chapter 13. Women as a Minority Group 468-480

**Week 14**

November 24: Chapter 13. Women as a Minority Group 480-498

November 26: No Class Thanksgiving

**Week 15**

December 1: Chapter 14. Gays, People with Disabilities, and the Elderly 500-518

December 3: Chapter 14. Gays, People with Disabilities, and the Elderly 518-535

**Week 16**

December 8: Chapter 15. The Ever-Changing US Mosaic 538-554

December 10: Chapter 15. The Ever-Changing US Mosaic 554-573

**Final: Exam 3: To Be Announced**

- This syllabus is subject to modification.