

Sociology 168.20
Introduction to Ethnic Studies
(3 credit hours)

Fall 2009
Internet-Based Class

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Office Hours: The best way to reach me is via email. I will try to respond to your emails within 24 hours of receiving them. Or, you can also set up an appointment with me. I am also available Tuesdays/Thursdays from 11:00 AM to 12:00 noon, 2:00 PM to 2:30 PM at my office (CHSS 270I, 936-294-4432).

Course Description:

In this introductory class, we will examine a variety of social categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, and religious affiliation from a sociological perspective. We tend to simply understand these social categories as ways to classify people. However, through a sociological lens, these social categories actually influence our lives and experiences in a more fundamental way—that is, they shape the structure of US society in ways that privilege (and marginalize) certain societal members in their everyday experiences. Using a sociological framework, this class explores a variety of social categories in both historical and contemporary US settings. The hope is by taking this class students will learn to question often taken-for-granted societal norms and ideologies and start thinking critically. This course requires no prerequisite class.

This course is designed in an internet format. To enroll in this course students are required to have a SHSU student I.D. card and a SHSU email account. The course is designed using the Blackboard system. Blackboard is available under University Fast Links in the SHSU webpage.

To log on Blackboard:

- Type your SHSU email address and your password.
- Once in Blackboard, click on SOC 168 and you will enter the menu environment.

Once you enter the menu environment, you need to click on the items you wish to see to get the necessary information. The navigation menu for this course is located on the left-hand side of your browser window. To move to particular place in the course, you need to click on the navigation links in the menu (e.g., Get Started, Announcement, Lessons, Exams, etc.). For example:

- **Get Started:** You can find the overview of this online course in this tab. You also can find all the necessary information regarding how to get started this online course.
- **Announcements:** You can keep up with day to day information about the course in this tab. For example, you will receive a reminder from the professor regarding the dates of the exams and the dues of extra credit opportunities, if any.
- **Lessons:** You can find lecture slides and lecture notes for each chapter in this tab.
- **Exams:** Exams and quizzes are located in this tab.
- **My Grades:** Your grades will be available under this tab.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand principal sociological concepts and theories that include minority-majority relations, stratification, prejudice and discrimination.
- Explain social categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, and sexuality using sociological frameworks.
- Develop a “sociological imagination” and apply sociological ideas and concepts to understand historical and contemporary US trends and phenomena.
- Learn to think critically when evaluating the ways that the social environment impacts people’s lives.

Required Text:

Parrillo, Vincent N. 2009. *Strangers to These Shores: Race and Ethnic Relations in the United States*, 9th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

Course Requirements:

1. Exams

There will be three exams worth 100 points each during the semester. These exams will be a multiple-choice format and will test you on material from readings, lectures, films and discussion forums. Exams will be available on the days that they are to be taken under the Exams menu, which is on the left-hand side of your browser window. You must take the exam between 8:00 AM on the first day and 10:00 PM on the second day. You have only **90 minutes** to complete each exam. The exams are open-book, but you must complete the exam in 90 minutes. You will be penalized 2 points for each minute past 90 minutes. You can only take each exam once. Students need to make sure to answer all the exam questions before they submit the exam. For exams, I strongly recommend you to secure a stable internet connection. Dial-up phone line connections are often unstable and thus not recommended.

The three exams are scheduled to take on the following dates:

- Exam 1: September 24-25
- Exam 2: November 10-11
- Exam 3: December 14-15.

All students are required to take the exams during the scheduled time. If students cannot take one of the exams at the scheduled time, it is their responsibility to notify the professor prior to the scheduled exam time. Make-up exams will be allowed only in official cases. Students are required to provide verifiable documentation to justify their absence from the exam. Note that make-up exams may differ from the original exam and may include essays or other questions that require written answers. I will provide a study guide prior to each exam.

2. *Quizzes*

There will be 6 quizzes throughout the semester. The 5 highest grades out of the 6 quizzes will contribute to your final grade. All quizzes are in a multiple choice format and worth 5 points each. Quiz dates will be posted on the Blackboard calendar at a later date during the semester.

3. *On-line Discussion Participation*

Students will be asked to participate in on-line discussion groups. Throughout the semester we will organize 6 discussion forums. 5 discussion forum scores will contribute to your final grade. Thus, students are permitted to drop one discussion forum. If you participate in all 6 sessions, the 5 highest grades will be counted. Each discussion forum is worth 5 points. Please note that some discussion forums are mandatory.

Discussion groups will be open for a period of one week. This should provide students with busy schedules ample time to participate. To do well in discussion groups, students will need to be familiar with the readings/notes prior to participating. I will provide more information on discussion forums during the semester.

4. *Application Exercise: Media Analysis*

This assignment is created to give students an opportunity to “apply” the sociological ideas and concepts they are learning in the course. Students are required to search and analyze a particular media material (e.g., videos, cartoons, magazines, music, etc.) to supplement the sociological ideas and concepts covered in this course. Your task is to explain how the media item is related to the topics we covered in class. I’ll create space where every student can present one’s assignment. This media analysis assignment is worth 50 points and more detailed guidelines will be provided at a later date in class.

Grading:

Your final grade will be based on the following:

• Exam 1	100 points
• Exam 2	100 points
• Exam 3	100 points
• 5 Quizzes	25 points
• 5 Discussion Participation	25 points
• Media Analysis	50 points
Total	400 points

Grading will be on the straight scale. The scale is:

360 – 400 points = A
320 – 359 points = B
280 – 319 points = C
240 – 279 points = D
0 – 239 points = F

Classroom Policies:

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.

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*.

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.

Instructor Evaluations

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

Study Tips:

- Read chapters carefully prior to class.
- Make a list of questions that you did not quite understand from the chapters.
- Visit and go over the Chapter lecture slides (under “Lessons” menu).
- Visit and go over the Chapter lecture notes (also under “Lessons” menu).
- After studying both slides and notes, try to answer the list of questions you developed. If you cannot answer, go back and reread the chapter carefully.

Do not hesitate to ask questions to the professor. If you need clarification, please feel free to communicate with me at anytime. Please note that I enjoy communicating with students.

Please note that the SAM Center is available for students with academic difficulty. If you fail the

first test, I recommend that you contact the SAM Center at 294-4444 for assistance.

Tentative Course Outline:

Changes in the schedule may occur and will be announced in class. Students are responsible for keeping up with the modified schedule.

Date and Topic	Reading Pages
Week 1 (8/24-8/28) Introduction to the course Chapter 1: The Study of Minorities	1-21
Week 2 (8/31-9/4) Chapter 1: The Study of Minorities Chapter 2: Culture and Social Structure	21-28 30-50
Week 3 (9/7-9/11) Chapter 2: Culture and Social Structure Chapter 3: Prejudice and Discrimination	50-58 60-80
Week 4 (9/14-9/18) Chapter 3: Prejudice and Discrimination Chapter 4: Intergroup Relations	80-90 92-103
Week 5 (9/21-9/25) Chapter 4: Intergroup Relations Exam 1 is scheduled on 9/24-25.	103-123
Week 6 (9/28-10/2) Chapter 5: Northern and Western Europeans Chapter 6: Southern, Central, and Eastern Europeans	126-164 166-180
Week 7 (10/5-10/9) Chapter 6: Southern, Central, and Eastern Europeans Chapter 7: The Native Americans	180-210 210-238
Week 8 (10/12-10/16) Chapter 7: The Native Americans Chapter 8: East and Southeast Asian Americans	238-256 258-291

Week 9 (10/19-10/23)	
Chapter 8: East and Southeast Asian Americans	291-300
Chapter 9: Other Asian and Middle Eastern Americans	302-334
Week 10 (10/26-10/30)	
Chapter 10: Black Americans	336-380
Week 11 (11/2-11/6)	
Chapter 11: Hispanic Americans	382-423
Week 12 (11/9-11/13)	
Exam 2 is scheduled on 11/10-11.	
Chapter 12: Religious Minorities	426-452
Week 13 (11/16-11/20)	
Chapter 12: Religious Minorities	452-465
Chapter 13: Women as a Minority Group	468-480
Week 14 (11/23-11/27)	
Chapter 13: Women as a Minority Group	480-498
Week 15 (11/30-12/4)	
Chapter 14: Gays, People with Disabilities and the Elderly	500-535
Week 16 (12/7-12/11)	
Chapter 15: The Ever-Changing US Mosaic	538-573
Exam 3 is scheduled on 12/14-15.	