

Columbia University: Arts & Sciences

A&S Fall 2018 Standard Evaluation

Course: ECONGU4438_001_2018_3-ECONOMICSOFRACEINTHEU.S.: ECONGU4438_001_2018_3 - ECONOMICS OF RACE IN THE U.S.

Instructor: Brendan O'Flaherty

TA: Bhargav Gopal * ,Lorenzo Lagos

Response Rate: 32/53 (60.38 %)

At A Glance : Overall Assessment

Excellent

Very Good

Good

Fair

Poor

3.81

Q4

Q4 - What is your overall assessment of the course?The answer to this question will generally be available in Vergil.

1 - What did you learn - in terms of knowledge, skills, or perspectives - in this course?The answer to this question will generally be available in Vergil.

Response Rate 13/53 (24.53%)

- Learned a lot about the history of education, crime, immigration and other similar topics. We compared US whites to blacks and hispanics.
- The economics of race in the US; how historical definitions and treatment of race has impacted the socioeconomic statuses and disparities between races today.
- Great and very interesting overview of numbers based research into Race in the US, application of economic methods to all sorts of aspects of society
- N/A.
- Learned the economics perspectives of racial inequalities in the US.
- How economists approach social issues. How to construct theoretical frameworks for empirical studies. The limitation of economic models.
- The wide range of subjects covered in Professor O'Flaherty's book, all surrounding the topic of the economics of race.
- I learned so much about what questions economists ask about race- what we "know," "dont know" and cant know.
- I learned about discrimination in different sectors such as healthcare, education, families, housing, or crime.
- Race, economics, crime rates,
- I learned a ton about how race impacts every facet of one's economic life -- from their housing, to their health, to their educational attainment, to their likelihood of incarceration. This class greatly informed and challenged many of my preexisting beliefs about topics such as affirmative action vs. civil rights legislation and reparations. It is a challenging course, both intellectually and academically, but it has informed a lot of my opinions of racial issues in America today.
- This is the best course I've ever taken in my four years of undergrad. I recommend this course to anyone who wants to understand how race plays a significant part in all our daily interactions, major life milestones, and institutions. The studies he shares in his book and in class are fascinating.
- That you can't just answer back with "that's racist" during discourse because 1) it's a logical fallacy on its face, and 2) there are reasons and data as to why the country operates in the way it does. There are racial variances in many aspects of life, and instead of ignoring or disregarding them we as a society should acknowledge them for what they are and work with what we have / what we know.

2 - What percentage of the work (including reading) assigned for this course did you complete on schedule?

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
All or almost all	(1)	15	46.88%	<div><div></div></div>				
Most	(2)	14	43.75%	<div><div></div></div>				
Some	(3)	3	9.38%	<div><div></div></div>				
This question is not applicable	(4)	0	0.00%	<div><div></div></div>				
				02550100				
Response Rate								
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3 - What is your overall assessment of the course? What are its strengths? In what ways might it be improved? In answering this question, you might address the value of readings and assignments, the structure of the course (including the relationship of sections to lectures), the contribution of the course to your knowledge of the subject matter and to the development of your analytical and reasoning skills, etc. We encourage you to use specific examples where possible.

Response Rate	10/53 (18.87%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good course, interesting material. The readings from the book relate very closely to what we cover in class. • N/A. • Strength of the course was the interesting nature of the subject material and the humor of the professor. Course could be improved by showing more of a connection between the different units as we learn them consequentially. I feel like I'm coming away from this course essentially with a bunch of facts about interesting economics studies and good dinner table conversation points but less of a comprehensive understanding of race economics as a whole. The ultimate message of the class was that race inequality is very complicated to fix. • One of the most inspiring classes. Elizabeth Andersen's book is difficult yet very well argued. • I like the format of the course. The philosophical aspect and the empirical aspect, however it didn't seem to reach many conclusions. • The reading is rather dense at times, mostly the additional pieces outside of the book. • It's strength is that the professor follows the book closely so if you didn't understand something in class, you can read about it in the book. We had a quite a few readings which some of them I didn't read when I had lots of assignments for other classes as well. It's good that we got the option of a final paper and easy final or no paper and harder final. • I think the class was really good and comprehensive. I liked that we started out with ideas of philosophers who talked about race in order to ground ourselves in the history and the inspiration for a lot of the policy that legislates race. I think the breadth of topics, as well as the philosophical grounding, are the greatest strengths of the course. The only improvements would be that there seemed, at times, to be a great disconnect between the complication of the math required for the problem sets versus the type of math we saw in class. This made some of the problem sets incredibly difficult, as there weren't examples from class to draw upon. • This is the best course I've ever taken in my four years of undergrad. I recommend this course to anyone who wants to understand how race plays a significant part in all our daily interactions, major life milestones, and institutions. The studies he shares in his book and in class are fascinating. • It's amazing. Please keep it. Professor O'Flaherty deserves a Nobel Prize. 	

4 - What is your overall assessment of the course?The answer to this question will generally be available in Vergil.

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
Excellent	(5)	11	34.38%			3.81		
Very Good	(4)	9	28.13%					
Good	(3)	8	25.00%					
Fair	(2)	3	9.38%					
Poor	(1)	1	3.13%					
				0 25 50 100	Question			
Response Rate				Mean	STD		Median	
32/53 (60.38%)				3.81	1.12		4.00	

5 - Would you recommend this course to another student?The answer to this question will generally be available in Vergil.

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
Definitely recommend	(1)	15	46.88%					
Probably recommend	(2)	8	25.00%					
I'm not sure I'd recommend	(3)	7	21.88%					
Probably not recommend	(4)	1	3.13%					
Definitely not recommend	(5)	1	3.13%					
				0 25 50 100				
Response Rate								
32/53 (60.38%)								

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6 - Please qualify your recommendations if you wish:The answer to this question will generally be available in Vergil.

Response Rate	6/53 (11.32%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A. • Least stressful economics course that I've taken so far at this school. Course readings are extremely interesting and the economics of race, particularly racial inequality, is a very relevant topic in society today. • Definitely a fascinating subject and new insight into the economics of race in the world we live in today. Very interesting applications of course material. • Very interesting coursework. Gives background and hard data to important issues in our society. • This is the best course I've ever taken in my four years of undergrad. I recommend this course to anyone who wants to understand how race plays a significant part in all our daily interactions, major life milestones, and institutions. The studies he shares in his book and in class are fascinating. • If you want to truly be "woke" and have a better understand as to why "racist/racism" should not be used so flippantly in today's world, then please take this class. This class will enable students to understand the nuances of race and have you thinking more critically about why things are the way they are. Even if you feel you "intellectual discomfort" during the course, THIS IS GOOD. THIS IS VERY GOOD. This means that instead of shaking your head yes at everything that you hear in an echo chamber, you may be able to listen to, analyze, break down, and thoroughly understand a topic that you would otherwise disagree with. (and by "may be able" I mean you will; if you don't miss class, pay attention, and ask questions if you truly are not grasping something) 	

7 - How does the workload in this course compare to Columbia courses with a similar structure (e.g. a lecture, seminar, laboratory, or language course)?

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
Much heavier workload	(1)	1	3.13%	■				
Heavier workload	(2)	2	6.25%	■				
Similar workload	(3)	18	56.25%	■■■■■				
Lighter workload	(4)	9	28.13%	■■■■				
Much lighter workload	(5)	1	3.13%	■				
No basis for comparison	(6)	1	3.13%	■				
				0 25 50 100				
Response Rate								
32/53 (60.38%)								

8 - How many hours a week did you devote to this course? (Note: Please include all time spent on this class including class time, discussion sections, readings, assignments, studying, etc.)The answer to this question will generally be available in Vergil.

Response Rate	10/53 (18.87%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 2. • 5 • 4. The readings for this course were generally quite fascinating. • 6-7 • 8 hours • About 4-5 hours for the readings, and a couple days to write the final paper There were no recitations, but I did go to a couple office hours • 7 • 2.5 hours in class, ~4 hours for a problem set, and a significant amount of time for the final paper, should you choose to write one. • 8 	

9 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of Bhargav Gopal (discussion section leader, lab section leader, grader) as an instructor, and how might Bhargav Gopal's teaching be improved?

Response Rate	6/53 (11.32%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very friendly and helpful. No recitation, but was very knowledgeable and clear in econometrics review session and when asked questions • Great! Very helpful at office hours and availability through email. Very knowledgeable about economics in general and was able to explain concepts better than the professor. • Bhargav was awesome! Very approachable and helpful with explaining course material. Sat down with me after class to help explain concept I was confused about in the problem set and related it also to what the professor had discussed in class. • He was extremely helpful when I had questions and always took the extra time to help me out. He was a fair grader and had good enthusiasm for the material. • Bhargav was amazing! Super nice, approachable, and helpful. Would love if he could be a TA in all of my classes! • I haven't approached the TAs much in the course, but he's very approachable when I have approached him with problem set issues and clarifications, as well as very responsive to emails. 	

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10 - What is your overall assessment of the effectiveness of Bhargav Gopal?							
Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means		
Excellent	(5)	11	73.33%	<div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div>4.60</div></div>		
Very Good	(4)	2	13.33%	<div><div></div></div>			
Good	(3)	2	13.33%	<div><div></div></div>			
Fair	(2)	0	0.00%	<div><div></div></div>			
Poor	(1)	0	0.00%	<div><div></div></div>			
				02550100	Question		
Response Rate				Mean	STD	Median	
15/53 (28.30%)				4.60	0.74	5.00	