

**Sociology 47**  
**Race and Ethnicity**

Fall 2012  
Dartmouth College

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Professor: Emily Walton  
Office: Silsby 108  
Office Phone: 646-2552  
email: [Emily.C.Walton@Dartmouth.edu](mailto:Emily.C.Walton@Dartmouth.edu)

Place: Thornton 104  
Time: MWF 11:15-12:20  
X-hour: Tues 12:00-12:50  
Office Hours: T/Th 10:30-11:30

**Description of the course**

To many eyes, racial distinctions are self-evident, natural, and objectively-defined. In this course, we problematize this practice of defining racial categories based on phenotypic differences, instead taking a sociological approach to understanding the ways in which racial differences are socially constructed. Throughout this course, we will explore how race matters by studying racial identity and experience, immigration and assimilation, diversity, and inequality.

**Required reading**

- Thurston, Baratunde. 2012. *How To Be Black*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

All other required readings are posted in electronic format on the course blackboard site. The reading load in this course is high, commensurate with an upper-level course. I expect you to read all course material, before class on the day that we are discussing it. Discussion is a frequent part of this course and everyone is expected to contribute.

**Assignments**

**1. Participation (100 points)**

Participation in class discussions and group work makes up a very important part of your grade. You must be able to demonstrate in class – verbally in discussion, through group work, and through in-class writing – that you have read and understood the material. I will keep track of your participation in our in-class work, and this record, in addition to your participation in class discussions will comprise your participation grade. Any students not earning an “A” in participation by Week 5 will receive an email from me in order to give you time to improve the grade.

**2. Critical Memos (100 points)**

Everyone is expected to contribute to the classroom’s collective learning experience. For each class meeting indicated with ☀ on the assigned reading list, you will have the opportunity to bring a one page (single spaced) critical memo. This will consist of a list of critical comments, reactions, and related questions that you developed from reading and reflecting on the assigned readings for that class. There will be 10 opportunities to write memos; you must choose 5 of them. Please bring two copies of your memo to class; turn one in to me at the beginning of class and keep one for your use during our class discussion.

The aim of these commentaries is more than simply to gauge your understanding of the assigned readings. It is to help you develop your critical thinking skills. I want you to think creatively. It is fine to also include in your list any specific questions or comments regarding material that you find unclear or confusing (and why that is so)—however, your list should not be a summary of the reading and must contain critical ideas and questions that the reading raised for you. You will be expected to raise these critical ideas and questions during class and contribute to the classroom discussions.

### **3. Exams (200 points)**

We will have two exams in the course; both in-class, closed-book and closed-notes exams. The exams will be entirely essay-based, and you will be graded on how well you incorporate all elements of course material into your essay answers. Exam questions will require you to synthesize and analyze the course readings and lecture material.

### **4. Final paper (80 points) and presentation (20 points)**

Throughout the quarter, please read *How To Be Black*, by Baratunde Thurston. I would like you to write a 5-7 page paper in which you reflect on your own racialization experiences and critically analyze how they tie in with the themes of the course. **The paper is due Mon, Nov 12<sup>th</sup>**. Papers turned in after the start of class on the day they are due will have 5 points deducted; Papers will have an additional 10 points deducted for each day they are late. Additionally, you will share your reflections with the class in a 5-minute presentation during the final week. **The presentations will occur in class on Wed, Nov 7<sup>th</sup> and Fri, Nov 9<sup>th</sup>**.

### **Final Course Grade**

<b>Points</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Grade</b>
470-500	94-100%	A
450-469	90-93%	A-
435-449	87-89%	B+
420-434	84-86%	B
400-419	80-83%	B-
385-399	77-79%	C+
370-384	74-76%	C
350-369	70-73%	C-
335-349	67-69%	D+
320-334	64-66%	D
300-319	60-63%	D-

## **Important notes**

### **Attendance**

It is my expectation that you will attend each class meeting—and that you will arrive to each class on time and stay for the duration. I will circulate an attendance sign-in sheet at the beginning of each class meeting; it is your responsibility to make sure you sign it each day. Please do not email me when you are missing class. There are no opportunities to make up missed work, or missed in-class assignments; and there is no need to seek my approval for any absences. You must get the notes that you miss from a fellow student. Because it is necessary to be in class to participate, **missing more than four class periods without a valid medical excuse will result in failure of the course**. In case of extended absences, please inform me as soon as possible. We will discuss whether you can successfully complete the class.

### **Health and Well-Being**

Please use your best judgment about coming to class if you have any of the symptoms of the flu (e.g. fever, cough, body aches). None of us want to be contaminated!

### **Accommodations**

Students requiring disability-related accommodations must register with the Student Accessibility Services office. Once SAS has authorized accommodations, students must show the originally signed SAS Services and Consent Form and/or a letter on SAS letterhead to their professor. As a first step, if students have questions about whether they qualify to receive accommodations, they should contact the SAS office. All inquiries and discussions about accommodations will remain confidential.

### **Communication**

My office hours are for you. You are welcome to come in and talk with me about anything during my office hours. I regularly check e-mail during the school day (8am-5pm) and will make every effort to reply to messages as soon as possible. Please use your Dartmouth email address to correspond with me this quarter. This course has a blackboard site. I expect students to regularly check blackboard and their Dartmouth e-mail accounts for class announcements and updates. This is especially important if you miss class.

### **Academic Honor**

I will be following the Academic Honor Principle described in the Dartmouth College Student Handbook and will enforce this policy to the full extent. Students must do their own work—they will write their own papers and exams, prepare their own presentations, and cite the original sources of any material they draw on for their papers. Any student who submits work which is not his or her own, or commits other acts of academic dishonesty is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or separation.

### **Classroom Responsibility and Courtesy**

This is a course in which we will often discuss sensitive topics. Students are welcome to express their opinions, but they should be expressed (and received) respectfully. Please put your cell phones on vibrate (or off!), do not text, and limit laptop use to note-taking. It is distracting to me and to your fellow students when you 'abuse' technology during class. Fair warning - if it becomes an issue, I may ban laptops altogether. I know it is tempting to check email/facebook/twitter during class but it ultimately harms everyone's experience and learning (not to mention that it irks your professor). There will also be many times during the quarter when I ask you to close your laptops so we can have a better discussion. Thus, you may wish to have an alternate way of taking notes.

## Course Plan and Readings

### PART I: THEORIZING RACE AND ETHNICITY

#### Week One: Social Construction and Social Significance

**Mon., Sept. 10** Introduction to the course

**X-hour**            **Film: *The Difference Between Us***

**Wed., Sept. 12** Race is a social construct

- Harris, "How Our Skins Got Their Color"

**Fri., Sept. 14**    **Race as continuous, not discrete** ☀

- Omi and Winant, "Racial Formations"
- Lewis, "Everyday Race-Making"

#### Week Two: Race, ethnicity, and change

**Mon., Sept. 17** Racial and ethnic distinctions ☀

- Cornell and Hartmann, *Ethnicity and Race* (Ch.2)

**X-hour**            **Film: *The Story We Tell***

**Wed., Sept. 19** Racial and ethnic demography of the U.S.

**Fri., Sept. 21**    **Race and ethnicity in the Census over time**

- Snipp, "Defining Race and Ethnicity"
- Bring Census 2010 homework to class

#### Week Three: Racialization and ethnic experiences

**Mon., Sept. 24** Racialization and intermediate groups

- Rumbaut, "Pigments of Our Imagination"
- O'Brien, "Not White or Black, but In Between"

**X-hour**            **Film: *The House We Live In***

**Wed., Sept. 26** Asian American experiences ☀

- Wu, *Yellow* (Ch.1)
- Tuan, *Forever Foreigners* (Ch.1, Ch.7)

**Fri., Sept. 28**    **Whiteness** ☀

- Waters, *Ethnic Options* (Ch.1, Ch.7)
- Brodwin, *How Jews Became White Folks* (Ch.1)

## PART II: RACISM AND INEQUALITY

### Week Four: Racism

- Mon., Oct. 1**    **What is racism?** ☀
- Yetman, “Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism”
- X-hour**                      **Film: *Black. White.***
- Wed., Oct. 3**    **Why does racism happen?**
- Blumer, “Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position”
  - Waldinger, “When the Melting Pot Boils Over”
- Fri., Oct. 5**            **Exam #1 in class**

### Week Five: Race and social institutions

- Mon., Oct. 8**    **Schools** ☀
- Kozol, *Savage Inequalities* (Ch.5)
  - Ferguson, *Bad Boys* (Ch.1, field note “self-description, Ch.4)
- X-hour**                      **Film: *Black. White.***
- Wed., Oct. 10**    **Workplace**
- Newman and Ellis, “There’s No Shame in My Game”
  - Kandel and Parrado, “Hispanics in the American South”
- Fri., Oct. 12**    **Criminal justice system**
- Pager, “The Mark of a Criminal Record”
  - Alexander, “The New Jim Crow”

### Week Six: Space and Place

- Mon., Oct. 15**    **Segregation**
- Briggs, “More Pluribus, Less Unum?”
  - Charles, “Can We Live Together?”
- X-hour**                      **Film: *Black. White.***
- Wed., Oct. 17**    **Inner city life** ☀
- Anderson, “The Code of the Streets”
  - Duneier, *Sidewalk* (“Introduction” and “How Sixth Avenue Became a Sustaining Habitat”)

- Fri., Oct. 19 Ethnic neighborhoods**
- Small, "Four Reasons to Abandon the Idea of the 'Ghetto'"
  - Aguilar-San Juan, *Little Saigons* (Ch.5)

### Week Seven: Interpersonal racism

- Mon., Oct. 22 Laissez-faire racism**
- Bobo, "Laissez-Faire Racism"

**X-hour Film: *Black. White.***

- Wed., Oct. 24 Daily experiences ☀**
- Feagin, "The Continuing Significance of Race"
  - McIntosh, "White Privilege"

- Fri., Oct. 26 Stereotypes and racist violence ☀**
- Staples, "Just Walk On By"
  - Sun, "Ling Woo in Historical Context"
  - Hwang, "The Interrelationship between Anti-Asian Violence and Asian America"

## **PART III: RESISTANCE AND CHANGE**

### Week Eight: Resistance and change

**Mon., Oct. 29 Civil rights**

**X-hour Film: *February One***

- Wed., Oct. 31 Color blindness**
- Gallagher, "Color-Blind Privilege"
  - Guinier and Torres, "The Ideology of Color Blindness"

- Fri., Nov. 2 Affirmative action ☀**
- Pincus, "What is Affirmative Action?"

### Week Nine: Looking forward

- Mon., Nov. 5 Superdiversity**
- Rodriguez, "Horizontal City"
  - Vertovec, "New Complexities of Cohesion in Britain"

**X-hour Film: *What's Race Got to Do with It?***

**Wed., Nov. 7    Action steps (presentations)**

**Fri., Nov. 9      Action steps (presentations)**

**Week Ten: Putting it all together**

**Mon., Nov. 12    Course wrap-up**

- **Final paper due in class**

**Sun., Nov. 18    Final Exam, 3:00pm**

**References**

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