COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES
This course introduces students to a sociological approach to race and ethnicity (with an emphasis on the U.S.). Taking a sociological approach requires (in part) that we understand race and ethnicity as socially constructed processes of categorization, meaning, and behavior that shift over time and operate at 1) the structural/institutional level; 2) the cultural level; and 3) the interpersonal level. We will explore the ways in which race and ethnicity permeate social life, in particular how race and ethnic hierarchies emerged historically and persist in the present. We will also tackle the difficult—and often controversial—task of defining and deconstructing the concepts of racism, prejudice, discrimination, ideology, privilege, etc. In doing all of the above we will also consider the consequences of race and ethnic hierarchy on the lives of real people, both those who are disadvantaged by, AND those who benefit from such a social system. Finally, we will consider alternative visions of race and ethnic justice, and the ways we might achieve them.

REQUIRED MATERIALS
There is NO textbook for this course; all required readings and other materials will be posted electronically to Canvas.

LEARNING GOALS
To get the most out of this course, you need to open yourself up to being challenged, perhaps even feeling uncomfortable at times; and of course, you need to do the necessary work! If you do, by the end of the semester you will be able to:

- Participate in informed conversations about issues relating to race and ethnicity with a variety of people.
- Articulate sociological perspectives, theories, concepts, and debates relating to race and ethnicity in the U.S. and use these to better understand the world around you.
- Demonstrate an understanding of race and ethnicity as a structural, not just an individual phenomenon.
- Develop a “sociological imagination”—that is, understand how your personal experience intersects with and is shaped by a larger social and historical context.
- Critically assess current issues in the news, politics, and your community using a sociologically-informed race and ethnicity lens.
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
We’re all responsible for creating a respectful, scholarly environment in which we grow as critical learners, informed citizens, and compassionate human beings. Each of us has something unique and valuable to contribute, based on our different identities and life experiences, varied college majors, and backgrounds; this diversity is a strength and a resource that we will draw upon to learn from one another. Please join me in creating an inclusive learning environment for students that supports a diversity of perspectives and experiences and honors one another’s identities (including race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, age, citizenship status, etc.). We will be exploring sensitive and challenging material in class, which may evoke strong emotions and opinions as well as disagreement. It is essential that we a safe and trusting atmosphere in the classroom, in which we can explore uncomfortable topics and diverse perspectives in a thoughtful, deep, and respectful manner. Students are invited to share their personal experiences and beliefs, always reflecting on how they relate to class material.

Part of fostering critical thinking skills is challenging assumptions—those of others and your own. You will get the most out of this class if you open yourself up to being challenged and feeling uncomfortable. You are welcome to disagree with one another (and me!), but let’s respectfully challenge each other’s argument/comment (not each other, personally). If someone unintentionally says or does something offensive or hurtful, let’s assume best intentions rather than demonize them, and use it as a collective learning opportunity to explain why what they said or did was offensive or hurtful.

EMAIL/CONTACT POLICY
I respectfully request that if you need to contact me about routine issues or questions (absences, technology issues, important dates; etc.), PLEASE CONTACT YOUR TA FIRST. If your TA is unable to resolve the issue, then by all means feel free to contact me, whether that be by email, in-person after class, at office hours, etc. Also, if you have a very important or sensitive issue that you'd rather address directly with me, that's also fine. I do my best to respond to all emails within 24 hours. If you haven't heard from me after that time, please send a reminder email and I'll see to it that I respond ASAP.

GRADE SCALE
92-100   A
87-91      AB
82-86      B
77-81      BC
70-76      C
60-69      D
< 60        F
GRADING
Your grade for the course will consist of the following components:

EXAMS (75% of total grade):
There will be three 50-question multiple choice exams (possibly including T/F questions). Exams cover both lecture and reading material. Although the exams combined make up 80% of your grade, THE EXAMS ARE WEIGHTED SO YOU GET MORE CREDIT FOR YOUR HIGHEST EXAM SCORE AND GET PENALIZED LESS FOR YOUR WORST EXAM SCORE. The breakdown is as follows:

Highest exam score: 30%
Middle exam score: 25%
Lowest exam score: 20%

LECTURE ATTENDANCE (10% of total grade)
I will take attendance for each lecture using the Acadly app (specific instructions will be discussed at our first class on Sept. 4). The app is free but of course only works if you have your smartphone with you in class, which I assume virtually all of you will. However, if you don't have a smartphone or for some reason can't get the app to work on your phone, you can see me or your TA after class so we can mark you as present manually.

Everyone is allowed ONE UNEXCUSED ABSENCE with no penalty. After that, each unexcused absence will lower your attendance score by 10%. For example, if you wind up with two unexcused absences, your overall attendance grade would be 90%; if you have three, 80%; etc. Illness is of course an excused absence, but anyone who misses MORE THAN TWO classes due to illness needs to see me or their TA and we may, depending on the circumstances, ask for some documentation for your illness. This is to acknowledge that people get sick and miss class for which they shouldn't be penalized; at the same time, we want to ensure that people don't abuse the policy by routinely claiming an illness so they can skip class with no penalty. The honor system works best: if you're honestly sick, then stay home; if you're not, don't claim otherwise!

DISCUSSION GRADE (15% of total grade)
Your discussion grade will be based on 1) attendance (same rules apply as for lecture attendance); 2) weekly summaries of the readings; and 2) any additional discussion/participation activities throughout the semester. Your TA will have specific details at your first discussion meeting.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison’s community of scholars in which everyone’s academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/
ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

McBurney Disability Resource Center syllabus statement: “The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.”

http://mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/syllabus.php

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Institutional statement on diversity: “Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.” https://diversity.wisc.edu/

WEEKLY TOPICS AND READINGS

WEEK 1 (Sept. 4): Introduction to the class; no readings

WEEK 2 (Sept. 9, 11): A Sociological Framework for Race and Ethnicity

READINGS
- Coates, “What We Mean When We Say Race is a Social Construction.” (from The Atlantic);
- Omi and Winant, “Racial Formations,” pp. 19-26
- Podcast: Racial Categories in Brazil

WEEK 3 (Sept. 16, 18): Racism, Prejudice, and Discrimination: The Discourse and Social Psychology of Race and Ethnic Hierarchy

READINGS
- Hayasaki, “The Pathology of Prejudice” (from The New Republic)
- Beinhart, “Republican is not a Synonym for Racist.” (from The Atlantic)

WEEK 4 (Sept. 23, 25)

Sept. 23: A Brief History of Race and Ethnic Group Formation in the U.S.

READINGS
- Steinberg, “The Melting Pot and the Color Line,” pp. 375-81

Sept. 25: Representations of Race and Ethnicity in Popular Culture

READINGS
- Dirks and Mueller, “Racism and Popular Culture,” pp. 322-33
- Thakore, “Must-See TV: South-Asian Characterizations in American Popular Media,” pp. 341-46

WEEK 5 (Sept. 30, Oct. 2): Representations in Popular Culture (cont’d)

Sept. 30: NO NEW READINGS

Oct. 2: EXAM 1

WEEK 6 (Oct. 7, 9): Wealth and Employment

READINGS
- White, “Why Black Families Struggle to Build Wealth.” (from The Atlantic)

WEEK 7 (Oct. 14, 16): Education

READINGS
- Mary Crow, “Civilize them with a Stick, pp. 235-40
- Pedalino Porter, “The Case Against Bilingual Education.” (from The Atlantic);
- Kohli, “Modern Day Segregation in Public Schools,” (from The Atlantic)

WEEK 8 (Oct. 21, 23): Housing

READINGS
- Massey and Denton, “Segregation and the Making of the Underclass,” pp. 177-90
- Cooperman, “The Story of Segregation in St. Louis."
- Frey, “Glimpses of a Ghetto Free Future,” (from The Atlantic)

WEEK 9 (Oct. 28, 30): Crime and Punishment

READINGS
- Thompson, “Inner-City Violence in the Age of Mass Incarceration.” (from The Atlantic)
WEEK 10 (Nov. 4, 6): Crime and Punishment (cont’d)

Nov. 4: NO NEW READINGS

Nov. 6: EXAM 2

WEEK 11 (Nov. 11, 13): Affirmative Action

READINGS
- *Grutter v. Bollinger*, brief of Center for Individual Freedom in opposition to Affirmative Action
- Wong, “Asian Americans and Affirmative Action,” (from *The Atlantic*)

WEEK 12 (Nov. 18, 20): Race and Ethnic-Based Social Movements

READINGS
- Video “The Time Has Come” (from *Eyes on the Prize*)
- Video “White Right” (Netflix)
- Schreckinger, “The Alt-Right Comes to Washington,” (from *Politico*)
- Gitlin, “What Will it Take for Black Lives to Matter?” (from *The American Spectator*)

WEEK 13 (Nov. 25): Race/Ethnic Identity and Stereotype Threat

READINGS

WEEK 14: (Dec. 2, 4): Race, Ethnicity, and Social Interaction

WEEK 15 (Dec. 9, 11): TBA

DEC. 13: Final Exam