**SOCI/ETHN 481/881: Minority Groups**

**Fall 2018 Syllabus**

Tuesday and Thursday 12:30-1:45pm.

Room: Oldfather Hall 707

Office Hours: MW 1:00-2:30pm, or by appointment

**Instructor:**

Dr. Marc A. Garcia

Office: 704 Oldfather Hall

[marcagarcia@unl.edu](mailto:marcagarcia@unl.edu)

402-472-3636

**Purpose of Course:** This course focuses on social science theory and research about two major groups, African Americans and Latinos in the United States. We will compare and contrast their diverse experiences, emphasizing topics of: historical backgrounds and development; social science theories of assimilation, racialization, and systemic racism; patterns of immigration; past and present patterns of discrimination; racial/class intersections; language issues; and group conflict and cooperation. We will review critically important books and scholarly articles dealing with these and related issues. The course will be discussion oriented.

**Objectives**:

* to provide students with a critical overview of the sociological literature on minority groups in the United States;
* to introduce students to theoretical perspectives and methodological tools necessary to understand historical and current debates in the literature;
* to help students understand the transformations taking place within the minority populations; and
* to help students appreciate the social, cultural, and economic contributions that minority groups have made to U.S. society.

Students will leave the course with a basic historical understanding of minority group histories and terminologies of self and external identification, be able to write a clear and sophisticated argument, develop individual research, and present this information to a large audience, building leadership skills as part of the curriculum.

**Prerequisites**:

9 hours of sociology or related social science courses

**Class Attendance and Participation**

Students are expected to attend every class meeting and are required to participate in course discussions. Please do so in a manner that respects the rights of others to also participate. More than three unexcused absences will result in the student being asked to drop the course or in the student failing.

**Use of Canvas**

It is my intention to use Canvas (https://canvas.unl.edu/login/cas) to help manage the course and to pursue interaction with students. I plan to use Canvas to make announcements, distribute information, communicate with students, and post grades. Students are encouraged to use Canvas to communicate and share comments and information. Please check your Canvas site regularly to look for communications from me or from other students in the class.

**Other University Notices and Policies**

**Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students**

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your email for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently—I recommend daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical.

**Services for Students with Disabilities**

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options privately. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). If you are eligible for services and register with their office, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so they can be implemented in a timely manner. SSD contact information: 232 Canfield Admin. Bldg.; 402-472-3787; acontreras3@unl.edu.

**Writing Center**

The Writing Center, located in 102 Andrews Hall and satellite locations from 5-7 pm in Adele Hall, is a free service for all UNL students, faculty, and staff. You can work with an individual writing consultant on any type of writing at any stage in your writing process. For an appointment, call 472-8803 or schedule online.

**Academic Support Services**

You can schedule free appointments for individual academic coaching with First-Year Experience and Transition Program staff through MyPLAN. You can also take advantage of study stops--which provide individual and group study with learning consultants in a variety of disciplines--and free group workshops on topics such as time management, goal setting, test preparation, and reading strategies. See https://success.unl.edu for schedules and more information.

**Classroom Climate**

Because the topics in this course may be emotionally charged or challenging for class members, I hope we can create an environment that is both intellectually productive and supportive for all. I realize there might be days when class members may choose to be silent. Beyond verbal participation, your active and supportive listening is also an important and valuable form of participation. I hope that we will continuously reflect upon our class processes so that we can build an inclusive intellectual community where all feel valued and supported in their learning.

**Discussing Controversial Topics**

Some of the topics we will discuss over the semester are likely to be sensitive and/or controversial. A variety of opinions, beliefs, and statements may surface during class discussions, some of which may be experienced as “racist,” or “anti-Semitic,” or “homophobic,” or “sexist,” or “fascist,” or “Islamophobic,” etc. You will be encouraged to express your opinions and beliefs, and to do so with respect for the opinions of other students who may hold different beliefs. In the event that controversial claims are made, you will be discouraged from labeling any classmate as “a racist,” or “an anti-Semite,” or “a fascist,” or “a bigot,” etc. Instead you will be encouraged to respond to opinions with which you disagree by saying, “I disagree with the statement you just made, and I experience it [i.e., the statement] as racist (or homophobic, or anti-Semitic, etc.) because...,” and then share your opinion with your classmates and me. All of you are encouraged to express your views and beliefs even when those views may be considered unpopular. If you have any concerns that you will have difficulty with voicing your opinions/beliefs insensitive language, feel free to consult with me during office hours and I will be happy to assist you.

**Video or Audiotaping Class Sessions**

So as to create a classroom environment in which everyone may feel comfortable participating in discussions, it is expected that no audio or video recordings of class will be made without the prior knowledge and consent of the instructor. Students with disabilities for which reasonable accommodation would include making such recordings should work with the Services for Students with Disabilities office and the instructor to make arrangements.

#### Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is essential to the existence and integrity of an academic institution. The responsibility for maintaining that integrity is shared by all members of the academic community. The University's [Student Code of Conduct](http://stuafs.unl.edu/DeanofStudents/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20May%20Rev%202014%20a.pdf) addresses academic dishonesty. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action and are granted due process and the right to appeal any decision.

students who plagiarize may receive a failing grade on an assignment or for an entire course and may be reported to the Student Judicial Review Board. The work a student submits in a class must be the student's own work and must be work completed for that particular class and assignment. Students wishing to build on an old project or work on a similar project in two classes must discuss this with both professors. Academic dishonesty includes:

• handing in another's work or part of another's work as your own.

• turning in one of your old papers (including something you wrote in high school) for a current class.

• turning in the same or similar paper for two different classes,

• using notes or other study aids or otherwise obtaining another's answers for a quiz or an examination.

Anything and everything you include in your papers that comes from another source must be attributed with proper citation. That includes ideas and opinions. Plagiarism consists of using phrases, sentences or paragraphs from any source and republishing them without alteration or attribution. The sources include, but are not limited to, books, magazines, newspapers, television or radio reports, Web sites and other students’ papers.

#### Diversity & Inclusion

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation.

**Course Requirements**:

**Reaction Papers**: Students will be expected to write 4 analytical reaction papers designed to have students synthesize the main ideas of each weeks reading. Reaction papers (2 pages, typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12) based on the week’s readings should be submitted on **Canvas 24 hours** prior to each class marked in bold on the syllabus. No late papers will be accepted. These papers should analyze critically one or two important issues in the reading assignment, issues which you find thought-provoking or problematical. Analyze in some detail an important issue of interest. Stay focused on that issue and present your analysis logically. (Outlining is recommended.) Some suggested approaches: 1) Develop a logical critique of the arguments you analyze (e.g., Does the evidence support the arguments?); 2) Compare and contrast material in one reading assignment with that in another; 3) Compare material in readings with theoretical or research material presented in class; or 4) Use material in reading assignment to assess other significant research or issues you have studied, including your own. The point of the papers is to demonstrate that you've thought through and analyzed important one or two important issues in the reading assignment. Your papers also provide a basis to support your participation in class discussions.

**Final Paper:**

Students will write a final paper of approximately 7-9 pages (10-12 pages for GRAD students) in length. Details on the final paper will be provided during the course of the semester.

Students will be required to conduct research on a social, cultural, economic or political issue affecting minority communities to be approved by the **instructor**. Students will learn how to develop a research question and develop an annotated bibliography on a topic approved by the instructor. The student will have to identify the relevant literature on their selected topic. A separate handout with instructions will be handed out during the semester.

There will be two class instruction days dedicated to preparing students to perform research and integrate it into the papers. The objective is to prepare students to develop their own original intellectual inquiries in this course and beyond.

Students are required to find two academic sources from outside of the course syllabus and integrate it into their pre-writing papers for the writing section day. The instructor will provide a sample of what this looks like as we prepare for research and writing. This exercise is meant to assist students on their final paper for the course.

**Pre-writing exercises for the Final Paper:**

In addition, two class periods in the semester will be set aside for students to develop their final paper for the course. Students are required to select a research project regarding minority groups. For each designated class meeting (Week 8) students will write a 1-2 page paper as noted below.

Paper 1: Concept paper—this paper identifies the topic(s) the student is considering for the paper project. The student will identify the topic(s), describe why it is of interest to the student, describe why it is an important topic for researchers to consider, and what significance the topic has for Minority Group Studies. This paper is due on September 20th.

Paper 2: Elaboration of Perspectives—this paper presents a description of different perspectives (views and arguments) on the selected topic that are given by researchers, policy makers, government officials, think tanks, advocates and opponents, and by other analysts. Research is required for this paper component to identify and elaborate on the different perspectives. This paper is due on October 9th.

These writing exercises will be graded and form the basis of discussion during the class session.

**Peer Review**

In order to provide the most supportive and productive learning environment possible, two (Week 7 and 13) will be dedicated to peer review. Students will be expected to submit their complete draft of their papers to the peer review group before the scheduled peer review section day. \***Students who do not turn in their papers via email by 5:00pm will automatically be excluded from the peer review process and lose this portion of the grade.\***

All students must read all the papers from their group and provide written comments. An evaluation form will be posted on Canvas so students know how to evaluate the work. Students will be graded on their detailed comments on the work and whether or not they completed evaluations of all of the papers from their group. In addition, the draft submitted will be graded as part of this category. Once the paper has been work-shopped in class, at the end of the session, the evaluators will turn over their comments to the author. **Students are expected to use the comments from the peer review session to improve their work.** This process is designed to help students produce the best work possible.

**Grading Course Outlines**

Letter grades intervals will be assigned based on percentage of total points, with +/- distinctions: A = 90%-100%, B = 80%-89.5%, C = 70%-79.5%, D = 60%- 69.5%, F = less than 60%, with plus and minus designations based on the percentages scored in decile intervals, e.g., 80-82 = B-, 83-86 = B, and 87-89 = B+.

Grades will be based on: attendance and class participation (10%); Response Papers

(30%); Pre-writing Assignments (10%); Peer Review Comments (10%); Final (40%)

**Required Readings:**

The material presented in the course will be uploaded to canvas and supplemented, when appropriate, with empirical data from a variety of sources.

\*\*\* THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE THE SYLLABUS DURING THE ACADEMIC SEMESTER \*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

**Course Schedule, Topics, and Important Dates**

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Week 1

Aug. 21 Introduction to Course

Aug. 23 What is Race? Measuring Race and Ethnicity

Week 2

Aug. 28 Theoretical Perspectives on Race

Aug. 30 Theoretical Considerations for Latinos

Week 3

Sept. 4 Demography of Latinos

Sept. 6 Historical and Contemporary Latino Immigration

Week 4

Sept. 11 Educational Patterns of Latinos

Sept. 13 Economic Patterns of Latinos

**1st Reaction Paper Due**

Week 5

Sept. 18 **Travel**- A Class Apart (documentary)

Sept. 20 **Travel**- Latinos in America (documentary)

**Concept Paper Due**

Week 6

Sept. 25 **Travel-** Race: The Power of an Illusion (documentary)

Sept. 27 Political Patterns of Latinos

Week 7

Oct. 2 Latinos: Mass Media and Culture

Oct. 4 **Travel** (Peer Review/Discussion Section)

**2nd*****R*eaction Paper Due**

Week 8

Oct. 9 **PRE-WRITING EXERCISE – no readings assigned**

**Elaboration of Perspectives**

Oct. 11 **PRE-WRITING EXERCISE – no readings assigned**

**Elaboration of Perspectives**

Week 9

Oct. 16 Fall Semester Break

Oct. 18 Latinos: Health and Health Care

Week 10

Oct. 23 Blacks/African Americans: Historical Perspective

Oct. 25 Blacks/African Americans: Residential and Social Segregation

**3rd Reaction** **Paper Due**

Week 11

Oct. 30 Blacks/African Americans: Educational Patterns

Nov. 1 Blacks/African Americans: Socioeconomic Patterns

Week 12

Nov. 6 Blacks/African Americans: Political History

Nov. 8 Blacks/African Americans: Mass Media and Culture

Week 13

Nov. 13 Blacks/African Americans: Health and Health

Nov. 15 **Travel** (Peer Review)

**4th Reaction** **Paper Due**

Week 14

Nov. 20 Crime and Victimization Care

Nov. 22 Thanksgiving Day Holiday

Week 15

Nov. 27 Presentations

Nov. 29 Presentations

Week 16

Dec. 4 Presentations

Dec. 6 Conclusions

Last Week of Classes

**Final Paper Due**