

**SOCI 3422**  
**Racial & Ethnic Minorities – Honors**  
**Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:40 AM – 11:05 AM**  
**Instructor: Zandria F. Robinson, PhD**

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Office Phone: 678-3778  
Office Location: Clement 309D  
Office Hours: By Appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

One of the most fundamental aspects of American life, as well as one of the primary values in American society, is racism. While the mechanisms by which racism is deployed have changed over time, the prevalence of those mechanisms has not decreased. In this course, we will engage major sociological theoretical paradigms, historical and contemporary theories of race, and the history of various racial/ethnic groups in the United States. Further, we will examine institutional inequalities and how they affect racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. Finally, we will think through how institutional inequalities are compounded by other social locations in the matrix of domination, including class, gender, and sexuality oppressions. The primary objective of this course is to facilitate critical thought about culture, ethnicity, race and racism with a sociological imagination. Through lectures, reading, writing, research, and discussion, we will learn to critically analyze these concepts and understand how they operate in U.S. society.

**COURSE MATERIALS**

Ronald Takaki, *A Different Mirror*  
Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore*  
Olson, *Native Americans in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*  
Juan Gonzalez, *Harvest of Empire*  
Ira Berlin, *The Making of African America*

**GENERAL COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

I expect you to come to class, to come to class on time, to come to class prepared, and to be attentive and engaged throughout class. I realize that you have classes beyond this class and lives beyond the University, but I expect that you will have done the necessary work before class, including the readings and other assignments as due, with care, effort, and diligence. I expect that you will have eaten before class and that you will not bring a value meal of any sort to class. Small snacks and beverages are permissible, but I expect that they will not be loud or disruptive. I expect that you will not talk while I am talking or while others are talking and that you will be respectful of me and of your colleagues. I expect that you will not use your cell phone in class for any purpose, and I expect that should you need to use your cell phone, you will excuse yourself from class with minimum disruption. I expect that you will take notes by hand in class to increase your cognitive engagement with course discussion and materials as well as to deter you from making Amazon purchases and tweeting during class. (If you have a compelling, learning-related reason why using a tablet or laptop is better for you, please discuss this with me.) I expect that you will not plagiarize. I expect that you will turn assignments in on time, as late assignments are only accepted in the event of the Zombie Apocalypse, and then only in the event that you survive. If I am taken in the Zombie Apocalypse, note that your assignment is still due.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

*Blog Posts.* In response to current events in the media, course discussions, and/or course texts, write four 750-word blog posts that critically and succinctly examine some aspect of the course content. Upload your blog posts to our course blog, [Racial and Ethnic Minorities](#). Your blog posts should include relevant pictures and hyperlinks to other blogs or texts as necessary. **The blog post assignment is worth 20% of the final grade.**

*Midterm Examination.* The midterm examination will cover all of the course material for the first half of the course, and will evaluate your ability to explicate theoretical concepts vis-à-vis course themes. **The midterm exam is worth 25% of the final grade.**

*Final Examination.* The final examination is comprehensive, although it will focus on course materials covered in the second half of the course, and will evaluate your ability to apply theoretical concepts to a range of course themes. The examination will occur in class during our scheduled exam time on May 6, 2014. **The final exam is worth 25% of the final grade.**

### **Choose Your Own Adventure**

*Research Paper.* In consultation with the instructor, you choose a research topic of interest to you and develop it over the course of the semester. Your topic should critically consider the intersections of race, gender, and region. You may draw on course texts, but your paper should draw on at least five outside scholarly sources. The research paper assignment consists of a one-page proposal and annotated bibliography, a draft, and a 15 – 20 page final paper. **The research paper is worth 30% of the final grade.**

*Documentary Project.* In consultation with the instructor, you will develop and execute a media documentary project (photo essay, website, or film documentary) that critically considers the intersections of race, gender, and region. It should draw on five scholarly sources. The documentary project assignment consists of a one-page proposal and methodology outline, a draft storyboard, and a final edited documentary project and accompanying explanatory write-up. You may collaborate with up to two other students on this project. **The documentary project is worth 30% of the final grade.**

## **COURSE CALENDAR**

Refer to this calendar for assignment due dates and the reading schedule. The “Major Text” is the text that will be central to our discussions in a particular section of the course, and you should have read the major text BEFORE each section of the course.

January 16: Theoretical Introductions

### **Part I: Sociohistorical Review**

*Major Text: A Different Mirror*

Week 1: January 21 & 23: Theoretical Introductions, continued

Week 2: January 28 & 30: Part I; **Blog Post I Due January 30**

Week 3: February 4 & 6: Part II

Week 4: February 11 & 13: Part III; **Final Project Proposals Due February 13**

Week 5: February 18 & 20: Final Project Proposal Workshop Week

Week 6: February 25 & 27: Part IV; **Blog Post II Due February 27**  
Week 7: Midterm Examination Week

**Part II: Native Americans & the Architecture of Racial Discrimination in the West**

Major Text: *Native Americans in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*

Week 8: March 18 & 20

**Part III: The Souls of Black Folks & the Continuing Significance of Race**

Major Text: *The Making of African America*

Week 9: March 25 & 27; **Blog Post III Due March 27**

Week 10: Draft Week: NO CLASS, April 1 & 3

**Documentary Project Storyboard & Research Paper Draft Due by April 4<sup>th</sup> at Noon**

**Part IV: Beyond the Model Minority: Asian Americans and the American Dream**

Major Text: *Strangers from a Different Shore*

Week 10: April 8 & 10

**Part V: *Nuevo* Minorities? The Long Latin@ History in/of the U.S.**

Major Text: *Harvest of Empire*

Week 11: April 15 & 17

Week 12: April 22 & 24; **Blog Post IV Due April 24**

**Individual Project Meetings**

April 29:

**Course Wrap-Up**

**Research Papers and Documentary Projects Due**

**\*\*\*The final exam will be held May 6, 2014 from 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM.\*\*\***

**KEY DATES**

**Blog Post Due Dates: Jan 30, Feb 27, March 27, April 24**

**Paper and Project Proposal: Feb 13**

**Midterm: March 6**

**Paper and Project Drafts: April 4**

**Final Papers and Projects: April 29**

**Final: May 6**

**Blog Post Assignment**  
**Due January 30, February 27, March 27 & April 24**

Bloggging is increasingly the way new ideas are communicated, especially in our fast-paced social media society. However, blog writing can be complex, as you must convey a new idea in a critical and compelling way that attracts readers. **For this course, you will complete four blog posts consisting of 750 words of original content that critically evaluate some topic related to the course content.** Feel free to respond to current events and events in popular culture. Your blog should have a clear point of view, make an argument, and implicitly demonstrate a relationship to course content. Although blog writing is in some ways less formal than traditional essay writing, treat your blog posts as more or less formal commentaries. You should include links to other blog posts, articles, photos, and/or YouTube videos in your post to direct readers to the content with which you are in conversation. You should also include tags for your post, which blog writers use to help readers easily search the subject matter of posts. Posts will be graded on originality of content, critical thought, grammar, and integration of course materials, ideas, and resources. For more blog inspiration, see [New Black Man](#), [Red Clay Scholar](#), [Racialicious](#), and [Tressie McMillan Cottom](#).

**Research Paper Assignment**  
**Proposal Due February 6<sup>th</sup>; Draft Due April 4<sup>th</sup>; Final Paper Due April 29<sup>th</sup>**

The research paper gives you the opportunity to explore a topic in which you are interested in more depth and receive expert feedback focused towards improving your writing and research skills. This assignment is ideal for students working on a thesis or independent study project and is essential for students planning to attend graduate school. Research papers can be critical evaluations of the existing literature on a topic and/or can draw on original research. The assignment consists of three components:

*Paper Proposal.* The paper proposal should briefly describe the topic you are going to explore, the method by which you intend to explore it, and most importantly *why this topic is important*. Before selecting a topic, you should consult with the instructor and also do some preliminary research of your own. Even if your topic has been “done” before, what new or unexplored view do you plan to bring to it?

*Paper Draft.* Drafts are essential to the writing process. Good writing requires multiple drafts. To get you into the habit of writing drafts for yourself, you will submit a draft of your work. The draft should be more than a skeleton outline but does not necessarily have to be completely finished. It should, at the very least, include your major arguments and method, and I should be able to clearly follow what you are planning to argue and accomplish in the paper. I will provide you with thorough feedback on your draft. The more work you do on the draft, the less work you’ll have between the draft and the final paper.

*Final Paper.* The final paper should include a title page, an abstract, the text of the paper, and a bibliography page. The required citation style is APA or ASA.

**Documentary Project**  
**Proposal Due February 6<sup>th</sup>; Draft Due April 4<sup>th</sup>; Final Paper Due April 29<sup>th</sup>**

Documentary is a method of investigation and presentation of information that draws on texts—written, aural, or visual—to answer a set of research questions or tell a story. Documentary methodologies bring together media and traditional forms of research inquiry in the humanities and social sciences to increase the accessibility, creativity, and depth of our engagement with important research questions. For this project, you can complete an oral history, launch a new blog with a minimum of 10 comprehensive posts, complete a photo essay, or film and edit a documentary.

*Project Proposal.* The project proposal should briefly describe the topic you are going to explore, the method by which you intend to explore it, and most importantly *why this topic is important*. Before selecting a topic, you should consult with the instructor and also do some preliminary research of your own. Even if your topic has been “done” before, what new or unexplored view do you plan to bring to it? Why is this question best answered with documentary methods?

*Storyboard Draft.* Your draft should include sample photographs or footage, a website design plan, or audio of oral history interviews. You should also include a written narrative about your draft submission, highlighting the sources on which you are drawing to situate the research questions you are asking through your work, and outlining how you envision the final project coming together.

*Final Project.* The final project should include a brief paper outlining the project rationale and methodology with a title page, abstract, and bibliography. You should also submit a link to your work.