

Seminar in Minorities and Work

38:578:551:01 Fall 2012

Professor: Dr. Dickerson vonLockette
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Office: Room 151 Labor Education Center
office hours by appointment

Course description

The emphasis of this course will be the work experiences of blacks, Latinos, and Asians. The course will examine the evolving position of these workers in the U.S. economy, particularly in contrast to white workers: how it has changed at key points in U.S. history through the present day, and how racial economic inequality is produced at each of these junctures. We will explore the ways in which the social construction of race over time within the context of the development of the U.S. economy informs current racial stratification in the labor market. The course will cover various dimensions of racial labor market stratification (wages, mobility, benefits, poverty, unemployment, underemployment), as well as theories that explain this inequality. A key focus will be on systemic patterns of exclusion at the institutional level. We will disentangle the constructs of race and class, noting where they overlap and where they are distinct with regard to understanding these workers' experiences in the labor market. We will approach their economic position in the labor market with a comprehensive lens unpacking class differences within these groups, gender differences, and how inequality is configured at different occupational strata.

Readings

Readings are in the class coursepack, unless otherwise noted. The coursepack is available online on Sakai (<https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal>).

- 1) Go to <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal>
- 2) Log in using your RU ID
- 3) Click the tab for this class (575:551)
- 4) Course materials (readings, etc) are located under Resources (on the left hand column)

You must come to class having read the assigned reading for that class meeting and be prepared to discuss it.

Assignments:

Policy brief: This is a research project to investigate in detail a policy issue. The final product will be a 12-15 page paper, not including supporting materials and documentation. The goal of the project is to propose, research, and analyze a policy or trend related to employment and minorities drawing on relevant data sources and to develop a set of recommendations based on your research.

Expert Panels: We will hold expert panels based on the topics of your policy briefs. The class will be divided into groups based on their paper topics and will sit on a panel that will discuss the topic for the rest of the class and respond to questions from the professor and class regarding the topic.

Summaries, Discussion Leader, Short Paper Assignments: These exercises are designed to assess your understanding of the readings. You will be assigned short summaries of the readings

or a short essay assignment to answer questions about the readings. Periodically, on the day of the assigned reading, I will choose several people to lead the discussion of the reading by giving with a brief overview of the main points in the reading and posing several discussion questions to the class. You will also turn in assignments designed to help you write your final papers: an annotated bibliography, outlines, thesis statement.

Professional Engagement: In a course like this, attendance and class participation are absolutely essential. The attendance policy is as follows: each student is allowed two ‘excused’ absences. For every absence after that, one point will be deducted from your final grade. You must read the material and be prepared to discuss it in class, and lead some discussions. Read and think about all of the assigned readings *before* each class.

Please participate actively, thoughtfully, and respectfully—listen and engage appropriately.

Please be on time to class. Occasionally, lateness is inevitable but it is always disruptive.

Assignments are due in person on the days listed below; late assignments will be docked one letter grade each day beyond the due date. I do not accept papers over email.

Final Grades will be determined based on the following distribution:

35% Policy Brief

20% Summaries, discussion leaders, short paper assignments (annotated bibliography, outlines, thesis statement, etc)

20% Expert Panels

25% Participation and Professional conduct: timely attendance to each class, citizenship, collegial interaction with other students and instructor, engagement during class (including evidence of reading prep)

Class Schedule

Note: The readings listed under each week must be read in advance and you must be prepared to discuss the reading for the class meeting under which it is listed. Come prepared with a brief overview of the main points in the reading and several discussion questions.

Week 1 • September 6

Introduction to Course

- Introductions
- Course info and description
- Discussion of key themes and concepts used throughout the course
- Rules of engagement for class discussion
- Go over assignments

Week 2 • September 13

Race and the U.S. Economy: Basic Constructs, Introduction to Policy Analysis

Amer. Sociol. Assoc., “Race, Ethnicity, and the American Labor Market: What’s at Work?”

Um’rani and Lovell, “Unemployment Insurance and Welfare Reform”

Week 3 • September 20

Race and the U.S. Economy

Schulman, "The Political Economics of Labor Market Discrimination"

Topic due

Week 4 • September 27

Historical Formation of Race and Work in U.S. Economy

Nelson, "Introduction" to *Divided We Stand*

2. Massey and Denton, "American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass"

Week 5 • October 4

How to Conduct Policy Research

1. Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White*, Chapter 5

Week 6 • October 11

Latino Workers in the U.S. Labor Market

Bohon, "Latinos in Ethnic Enclaves: Immigrant Workers and the Competition for Jobs."

Week 7 • October 18

The Middle Class and Professional Workers

1. Dickerson and Johnson, "Latino Employment and Segregation in Metropolitan Labor Markets" http://journals.cambridge.org/repo_A78b4Z9N

2. Catanzarite, "Working with Co-ethnics"

Annotated Bibliography due

Week 8 • October 25

The Working Class, Working Poor, and the Unemployed

DiTomaso N, Post C, Parks-Yancy R. 2007. *Workforce Diversity and Inequality: Power, Status and Numbers*.

Thesis Statement due

Week 9 • November 1

Access to Work: Social Networks

1. Green, Tigges, and Diaz, "Racial and Ethnic Differences in Job-Search Strategies in Atlanta, Boston, and Los Angeles"

2. Bertrand and Mullainathan, "Are Emily and Greg more employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A field experiment on labor market discrimination"

Week 10 • November 8

Asian Workers in the U.S. Labor Market

1. Shin and Chang, 'Peripherization of Immigrant Professionals: Korean Physicians in the United States.' *International Migration Review*. 22(4) pp 609-626.

2. Toji and Johnson. 1992. *Amerasia Journal* 18(1) p83-91. 'Asian and Pacific Islander American Poverty: the Working Poor and the Jobless Poor.'

Outline due

Week 11 • November 15

Institutionalized and Structural Exclusion

1. Turner, Fix and Struyk, “Opportunities Denied”
2. Kirschenman and Neckerman, “We’d Love to Hire Them, But...: The Meaning of Race for Employers”

Expert Panels held today

Week 12 • November 29

Affirmative Action in Employment

Kalev et al, “ Best Practices or Best Guess? Assessing the efficacy of corporate affirmative action and diversity policies

Week 13 • December 6

Policy Brief due today

Week 14 • December 12

Wrap up