

**Black Workers in American Society**  
**37:575:303:01**  
**Wednesday, 7:40 pm to 10:30 pm, Scott Hall Room 116**

Instructor: Debbie L. Hines  
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By appointment, if before or after class does not work well

**Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department Goals:**

This course will examine the evolving position of black workers in the U.S. economy and demonstrate understanding of the perspectives, theories and concepts in the field of labor and employment relations. We will evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies and management decisions. Demonstrate how to apply concepts and substantive institutional knowledge of contemporary work developments and relevant theories of particular work situations necessary for effective work performance.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

**Goal A:** Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experiences of and perspectives on the world.

**Goal B:** Analyze a contemporary global issue from a multidisciplinary perspective.

**Goal D:** Analyze issues of social justice across local and global contexts.

**Goal I:** Understand the bases and development of human and societal endeavors across time and place.

**Goal M:** Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems and other forms of social organization.

**Goal N:** Apply concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.

**Grading Criteria:**

*Credit also extended for attendance and in-class contributions (group discussions). Please note that excessive unexcused absences will lower your grade. Unexcused absences in excess of 3 classes may result in a failing grade.*

- 05 Points Ice-breaker
- 10 Points Questions
- 05 Points Informal Affirmative Action Debate
- 10 Points Interview
- 30 Points Mid-term Exam
- 40 Final Exam

**Laptop/Recording Policy:**

- Laptops use is permitted for coursework in this class only. Students are not permitted to record, videotape, or photograph any classroom lecture or activity, absent prior express consent and authorization by the Instructor.

**Course Materials:**

Course reading materials may be found on Sakai under "Resources," and assignments may be found on Sakai under "Assignments." The instructor reserves the right to supplement, substitute, and/or modify the listed reading selections.

## **Black Workers in American Society**

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**Week 1: January 17, 2017**

*Course Overview*

*Introduction: Discussion of key themes and concepts used throughout the course*

*Lets Talk About Race: Lets Talk About Race: Film "A Class Divided"*

**Week 2: January 24, 2017**

**Assignment Due: Icebreaker**

*Understanding Racial Economic Stratification in the U.S.*

Readings:

1. Spivack, Amer. Sociological Assoc., "Race, Ethnicity, and the American Labor Market: What's at Work?"
2. Russell Sage Foundation, "Equal Employment Opportunity in America"

**Week 3: January 31, 2017**

*The Historical Formation of Race and Work in U.S. Economy: Post-Emancipation*

Documentary "Unchained Memories: Stories from Slave Narratives"

Readings: Steinberg, "The Reconstruction of Black Servitude After the Civil War"

Video: Jim Crow Laws

**Week 4: February 7, 2017**

**Assignment Due: Questions (1)**

*The Historical formation of Race and Work in U.S. Economy: The Industrial Era*

Readings:

1. Nelson, "Divided We Stand: American Workers and the Struggle for Black Equality. Introduction
2. Katznelson, When Affirmative Action Was White, Chapter

**Week 5: February 14, 2017**

*Black Workers, Labor Unions and the Civil Rights Movement*

Readings: Honey, "Labor and the Civil Rights Movement at the Crossroads: Martin

Luther King, Black Workers and Memphis Sanitation Strike"

Film "At the River I Stand"

**Week 6: February 21, 2017**

**Assignment Due: Interview**

*Working Class and Poor Blacks*

Readings:

1. Isaacs, "Economic Mobility of Black and White Families"
2. Kozol, "Shame of a Nation"

**Week 7: Mid-Term February 28, 2017**

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**Week 8: March 7, 2018**

*Black Workers, Education and Management Professionals*

Readings:

1. Jones and Schmitt, "Has Education Paid off for Black Workers?"
2. Collins, "Black Mobility in White Corporations"

**Week 9: March 21, 2017**

**Assignment Due: Project Implicit IAT (Race and Skin Tone and Religion Test)**

*Access to Work*

1. Bertand and Mullainathan, "Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment of Labor Market Discrimination"
2. Pager, "The Mark of a Criminal Record"

**Week 10: March 28, 2017**

*Black Women Workers (Behaviors that influence gender equity and earning potential)*

Readings:

1. Ortiz and Roscigno, Discrimination, Women, and Work: Processes and Variations by Race & Class"
2. National Women Law Center "Closing the Wage Gap Especially Important for Women of Color in Difficult Times"

**Week 11: April 4, 2017**

**Assignment Due: Questions (2)**

*Institutionalized and Structural Exclusion*

Readings:

1. Kasinitz and Rosenberg, "Missing the Connection: Social Isolation and Employment on the Brooklyn Waterfront"
2. Chima and Wharton, "African Americans and the Workplace: Overview of Persistent Discrimination"

**Week 12: April 11, 2017**

*Black Workers, Education and Management Jobs*

Readings:

1. Dickerson, "Black Employment, Segregation, and the Social Organization of Metropolitan Labor Markets" (**read up until the "Data and Methods Section"**)
2. Readings: EPI, "The Kids Aren't Alright: A Labor Market Analysis of Young Workers"

**Week 13: April 18, 2016**

**Assignment: Affirmative Action Debate**

*Understanding Discrimination and Social*

Reading:

1. Quane, Julius Wilson and Hwang, "The Urban Job Crisis"

**Week 14: April 26, 2017 FINAL EXAM**