

**SOC 215: Race and Ethnic Relations in the United States, Summer 2013**  
**M-F 11am-12pm, Lawson 201**  
**Instructor: Kristi Brownfield**

If you need to contact me:

Faner Hall 3433

Mon, Tues, Wed: 8-10am

kabrownf@siu.edu (preferred) or 453-7620 (office)

Sociology Dept. Phone: 453-2494

Class blog: <http://soc215.wordpress.com> (be sure to check this page frequently for updates, reading lists, and other information – you will also have an assignment based on the blog)

**Required Texts:**

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America*.

Healey, Joseph. *Diversity and Society: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition.

Also recommended by not required:

*Blazing Saddles*. 1974.

*Girlfight*. 2000.

Elliott, Zetta. *A Wish After Midnight*.

*Smoke Signals*. 1998

You will NEED to get a copy of the required books to pass the class. The recommended works are all pieces of popular culture you will need to read/watch to complete review assignments. However owning the books/movies is not necessary so long as you are able to get copies to read (e.g., from the library, from a friend, etc.).

**Course Objectives:**

Students will be able to: (a) demonstrate an understanding of such concepts as assimilation, pluralism, ascribed and achieved statuses, prejudice, and discrimination; (b) display basic knowledge of historical, socioeconomic, and political demographics of the U.S.; (c) demonstrate critical thinking about different theories and perspectives pertaining to race, class, gender, and sexuality; and (d) apply sociological concepts to the analysis of race and ethnicity to personal and/or family experience.

Race is in everything we do: what we wear, what media we consume, our interactions and relationships, and even in who we believe ourselves to be. This course is designed to introduce you to a new way of looking at the world – and the instances of race in it – than you may have been previously exposed to. When you leave this class at the end of the semester, you should be able to think critically and questions the assumptions you had about race and what “being white” or “being black” or identifying with a particular ethnicity means. We will explore what we know about race and how we know what we know through readings, discussions, observations, movies, and online blogs and other websites.

**Plagiarism:**

See the student handbook for a definition of plagiarism. Taking another person's work and passing it off as your own will not be tolerated in this class. You will receive an immediate zero for plagiarized work. The second attempt at plagiarism will be reported to the university and I reserve the right to give a failing grade for the course at that point.

**Electronics:**

Electronics are welcome and, on some days, will be encouraged in this class. However, your electronics use should be *related to* this class and should not be disruptive to other students. This means please turn off cell phone ringers. Do not play music or videos. No headphones. Be respectful of the classroom as a learning environment. Please note that if you're being disruptive or I notice your inattention you will be required to write a thousand-word essay about a sociological concept of my choosing.

**Acknowledging Differences:**

During the semester students will be able to share thoughts, opinions, and beliefs about their own experiences. We will also read articles and books that will offer academic perspectives. The differences in these perspectives will add depth and richness to this course. Please be respectful of those differences.

**Support Services Available:**

The university does have a policy in place to help accommodate religious observance by students. Please read the policy online in the catalog:

<http://registrar.siu.edu/pdf/ugradcatalog1112.pdf>

To meet the expectations of this course, persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations are encouraged to bring this to my attention as soon as possible. Written documentation of the disability should be submitted during the first week of the semester along with a request for special accommodations. Contact the SIU Disability Support Services (DSS) to facilitate requests:

Woody Hall B-150, Carbondale, IL 62901, Mail Code: 4705

DSSsiu@siu.edu Ph: (618) 453-5738 Fax: (618) 453-5700 TTY: (618) 453-2293

Saluki Cares: The purpose of Saluki Cares is to develop, facilitate and coordinate a university-wide program of care and support for students in any type of distress—physical, emotional, financial, or personal. By working closely with faculty, staff, students and their families, SIUC will continue to display a culture of care and demonstrate to our students and their families that they are an important part of the community. To make a referral to Saluki Cares click, call, or send: [www.salukicare.siu.edu](http://www.salukicare.siu.edu); (618) 453-5714, or [siucare@siu.edu](mailto:siucare@siu.edu).

Writing Center: I urge you to take advantage of SIUC's writing center throughout the semester. They offer free tutoring services to improve writing skills. You can find more information online: <http://write.siu.edu/>

**Emergency Procedures:**

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, on BERT's website at [www.bert.siu.edu](http://www.bert.siu.edu), Department of Safety's website [www.dps.siu.edu](http://www.dps.siu.edu), and in Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

The instructor will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The BERT Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

Midterm Exam: 100 points

Final Exam: 100 points

Blog Discussion Participation: 12.5 points each x 8 weeks = 100 points

Response Papers: 25 points each x 4 papers = 100 points

In-class Exercises, Quizzes: 50 points

Presentations: 25 points each x 2 presentations = 50 points

Total possible points: 500 points

**Grading Scale:**

450 or above – A

400 to 449 – B

350 to 399 – C

300 to 349 – D

299 or below – F

*Participation and Attendance:*

I expect students to attend class every day and to come to class on Tuesdays having reviewed the assigned readings for that week, which we will discuss as the week progresses. I keep track of attendance, participation in classroom discussions, and visits to my office, all of which I take into consideration if your final grade is borderline. The more often you are here, participate, and come see me if needed, the more likely I am to raise a borderline grade. The more frequently you are absent without telling me why, or you come in late, the less likely I am to raise a borderline grade. Do not be late for class. Being late is disruptive and disrespectful.

While there is no official attendance policy -- you will lose points on classroom activities by not being here. These activities cannot be made up and must be completed in class on the day they are assigned. In class activities will count for ten percent of your grade! Further, missing lectures and discussions will result in lower grades on the assignments you have to complete outside of class. If you want a good grade in this class, be in your seats.

*Midterm and Final Exams:*

You will have 2 take home exams during the semester, each worth 100 points. The exams will be a mix of short answer questions and essay. Exams should be typed using 12-point, double-spaced font. Our exams will cover material from the readings, lectures, class discussions, movies, or online materials and *will be cumulative*. Do your own work! No blocks of quotes from the course materials! No use of Wikipedia!

*Blog Discussion Participation:*

Students are expected to finish all the readings before class and participate in the discussion of the reading materials in class. In addition to in class discussions, the readings will be posted weekly on the class blog. Everyone is expected to post a 150-word response analyzing aspects of the readings due by 9am on Fridays. Some suggested topics to write about:

Questions the readings raised for you

Videos, articles, or other interesting internet-based material that is related to the readings (along with a discussion of how they are related)

Applying sociological theories and ideas in the readings to race in your life (e.g., how you act, popular culture you consume, etc.)

Responses and thoughts – connected to the readings – to things other people have posted to the group

You are required to post to the blog at *every week* to receive full credit. You may post comments using your Twitter or Facebook accounts, if you have them, or through a WordPress account. You may also use a name and email combination to post comments. If you choose to use a pseudonym please make sure I know what that pseudonym is. I need to know that “saluki13” is actually “Jane Smith” to ensure you get proper credit for your responses. I will ask you to turn in your account names on a sheet of paper on Wednesday 06/11/2013.

*Response Papers:*

There will be four short out-of-class writing assignments, each worth 25 points, this semester as well. These are reflective writing assignments based on pop culture artifacts I assign you.

*Exercises and Quizzes:*

There will be a variety of different in-class exercises throughout the semester. Examples of these activities may be formal debates, scavenger hunts, media content analysis, and so forth. There will be no make-ups for these assignments so if you are not in class the day the assignment is given, you will receive no points!

*Presentations:*

You will be asked to give two presentations throughout the course of the semester: a short, 3-5 minute presentation and a longer 5-7 minute presentation. These presentations will be timed so please make sure you are prepared.

The first presentation will be on an element of popular culture relating specifically to race you wish to share with the class. This could be a clip from a movie, a segment from a television show, song lyrics, a book, advertising, a set of clothing or an outfit, or even a video game. Your presentation should include a sample from your source (lasting no more than 90 seconds if this is a video clip) and then a short discussion of: (1) how your element relates to the course and (2) what you thought of the element. I will demonstrate the format on the first class period. Time

during class on Friday will be set aside for presentations. I will ask for volunteers to go the first week (06/14/2013) and will assign students a date after that.

You will work on your longer presentations as a pair and they will follow the same format as the individual presentations, but I will assign each pair a particular concept we have or will have discussed in the course. Students must then find an element they think is a good example of that concept. So, for example, if you are assigned the concept of “power,” you might want to talk about the presentation of a president on the television show *24*.

At the time you are scheduled to present you must turn in a typed sheet of paper with your name, the element you are presenting (with appropriate links, if it is available online), and a brief (no more than a paragraph) summary of your presentation.

### **Turning Work In:**

I ask that students turn their work in digitally through email [kabrownf@siu.edu]. All work should be sent by 9:00am on the day that it is due. Assignments should be turned in as PDF or Word (.doc or .docx) files. No other formats will be accepted. **No late work will be accepted.**

### **Extra Credit:**

There will be NO extra credit offered in this class. My preference is that students complete the *actual* credit rather than attempting to make up for missed assignments at the last minute.

**Tentative Course Schedule:** (topics/readings subject to change, full and complete reading lists will be available on the blog each week)

D&S: Diversity and Society

### **Week 1**

Readings: D&S CH1-2

Watch: Race: Power of Illusion

### **Week 2**

Readings: D&S CH 3-4

*Response paper 1 Due: Blazing Saddles, 06/21, 9am*

### **Week 3**

Readings: D&S CH6

Watch: Smoke Signals

Response Paper 2 Due: Smoke Signals, 06/28, 9am

### **Week 4**

D&S CH5

Have finished RWR CH1-5

Read: A Wish After Midnight

No class Thursday 07/04

### **Week 5**

Readings: D&S CH7

Response Paper 3 Due: A Wish After Midnight, 07/12, 9am

**Week 6**

Readings: D&S CH8

**Week 7**

Readings: D&S CH9

Response Paper 4 Due: Girlfight, 07/26, 9am

**Week 8**

Readings: D&S CH 10

Have finished RWR CH 6-10

Final Exam Due: 07/06, 9am