

**SYLLABUS**  
**Introduction to Race and Ethnicity**  
**Sociology 217, Section 502**  
 Fall 2019

**Instructor Information**

**Name** Gabe H. Miller  
**Email** gabriel.miller@tamu.edu  
**Office** 325C, Academic Building  
*Enter through 325 or 327*

**Office Hours**

**MON** 1:00-2:00 – ACAD 325C  
**WED** 10:00-11:00 – ACAD 325C  
**THUR** 1:00-3:00 – *The Village*

*And by Appointment*

*Please note:*

Thursday Office Hours are held at  
 The Village Café & Art979 Gallery in  
 Downtown Bryan  
 210 W 26<sup>th</sup> St, Bryan, TX 77803  
 Look for me towards the back

**Course Information**

**Classroom** Room 204, HEEC  
**Class Days** MWF  
**Class Time** 11:30am-12:20pm

**Prerequisites** None.

*You may NOT take this course if you already took SOCI/AFST 317, the upper-level race & ethnicity course*

**Course Credit Hours** 3

**Required Course Materials**

Gallagher, Charles A. (Ed.). 2018. *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity (6<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. Sage Publishing. ISBN: 978-1506394138 (listed in schedule as “Reader”).

Other readings and course materials are available on the course website (listed in schedule as “WEB”).

**Course Description:**

Welcome to **Sociology 217**, Sociology’s lower division undergraduate course introducing the study of race and ethnicity within the discipline of sociology. In this course, we will focus on (1) how sociologists define and use the concepts of “race” and “ethnicity,” (2) how sociologists use theories and data to learn about and explain race and ethnicity, and (3) how race and ethnicity relate to other social processes. This course will introduce you to the sociology of race and ethnicity, providing you with the resources needed to investigate the issues more fully.

**Course Goals:**

The goals of this course are that students will:

- Better understand how viewing the world through a sociological lens informs and explains inequality in the United States today;
- Utilize a more critical perspective in their interpretation of changes in racial and ethnic relations;
- Express ideas about racial groups, ethnic groups, and racism more effectively in writing, discussion and other forms of communications;
- More skillfully access information claims and make inferences from observed facts about racial and ethnic groups or disparities;
- Gain insight about their social experiences and those of others in a diverse and globalized world.

### **Texas A&M Learning Outcomes:**

*Texas A&M University has identified student learning outcomes that describe our institutional commitment to your educational goals. This course is a Core Curriculum Social and Behavioral Science Foundation Component course. The core objectives for the Social and Behavioral Sciences Foundational Component area are:*

1. *Critical Thinking: to include creative thinking; innovation; inquiry; and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.*
2. *Communication: to include effective development and interpretation and expression of ideas through written and oral communication.*
3. *Empirical and Quantitative Skills: to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.*
4. *Social Responsibility: to include intercultural competence; knowledge of civil responsibility; and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.*

### **Learning Outcomes for Sociology 217:**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Evaluate the strengths and limitations of quantitative and qualitative information used to make arguments about racial and ethnic groups or disparities (critical thinking and empirical and quantitative skills);
- Explain the social construction of race and ethnicity (effective communication and critical thinking);
- Use concepts of race and ethnicity to analyze information about racial groups, ethnic groups, and racism (effective communication and critical thinking);
- Discuss arguments and evidence about the major sources of change in racial and ethnic relations (critical thinking);
- Discuss the causes of inequality in the United States today (critical thinking); and
- Apply research materials to real-world issues and organizations (effective communication, social responsibility).

### **Course Requirements and Grading:**

A breakdown of course requirements and how each will contribute to your grade is included below. Students will be asked to demonstrate their knowledge in a variety of ways. There will be two exams, several in-class quizzes/assignments, a take-home assignment, and a group assignment. Reading will be required every week.

#### **In-Class Quizzes/Assignments:**

In-class quizzes and assignments will draw from the assigned readings. Thus, you should actively engage with the readings such that you can summarize an author's thesis statement and critically evaluate it. We will periodically have in-class quizzes/assignments, designed to ensure that you are keeping up with the reading. These exercises are meant to stimulate discussion in class for that day. Your in-class quiz/assignment grade will use the top 10 grades on quizzes/assignments. There will be 15 quizzes/assignments offered on various dates in the semester, determined at the discretion of the instructor. In-class quizzes/assignments will be worth 15 points each, totaling 150 points (15% of your final grade). In-class quizzes/assignments cannot be made up unless you provide documentation of a University excused absence.

Group Race and Social Structure Assignment:

During Week 1, each student will select a race and social structure topic to form groups where students will write and present a race and social structure report. Each group will consist of 7-10 members. Groups will be expected to conduct research throughout the course and seek assistance from classmates, the instructor, and librarians well before the final report is due. Course readings; however, are insufficient in crafting a report. The report should be 10-12 double spaced pages. A comprehensive description of the assignment with expectations and the grading rubric will be distributed no later than the end of Week 1. The description will provide more information on criteria and evaluation. Group presentations will be made on November 18, 20, 22, and 25, and written reports are due one week following group presentation (see course calendar for specifics). The Group Race and Social Structure Assignment is worth 250 points (25% of your grade).

Scheduled Exams:

You will take two exams consisting of short answer questions and essays which will ask you to (1) define key terms from readings and lectures and explain the importance of these terms, and (2) write short essays in response to a prompt about theories of race and ethnicity. A review sheet will be made available in lecture prior to each exam, and students will be allowed to bring a handwritten 3" x 5" note card to the exam for reference. The Mid-Term Exam will be worth 250 points (25% of your final grade), and the Final Exam will be worth 350 points (35% of your final grade).

**Important:** Cell-phone and laptop use is strictly prohibited during exams. Please turn off all electronic devices and keep them out of sight. If I see a cellphone or other electronic device during an exam, I reserve the right to pick up the exam and give the student a zero on the exam.

*Make-up Exams and Lateness:* If it is at all avoidable, please do not miss or be late to an exam! While I encourage students to contact me as soon as possible after missing an exam, students are required to contact me no later than one week after a missed exam, except in cases of extreme illness/injury or death in the family. Make-up exams are not allowed without a documented excuse of the reason for the absence. If you know in advance you will miss an exam, please let me know.

If you are late to an exam, you may take the exam as long as no one has finished the exam and left the classroom. If a student has already left the classroom, you will be required to take a make-up exam. I cannot provide extra time to complete the exam. If you arrive with 15 minutes left in class, you will have 15 minutes to complete the exam, as long as no other student has already completed the exam. If you are exceedingly late and have a documented reason for the lateness, you can take the exam as a make-up.

Make-up exams will follow the same format outlined above, but will consist of different questions than the exam given in-class.

*All assignments will be read for and graded on writing style and content; please write accordingly and refrain from use of uncommon abbreviations and net slang.*

**Calculation of Course Grades** (See course calendar for dates.)

	<b>Percentage of Final Grade</b>
<b>Points</b>	
In-Class Quizzes/Assignments	150      15%
Group Race & Social Structure Assignment	250      25%
Mid-Term Exam	250      25%
Final Exam	350      35%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000      100%</b>

  

<b>Number of Points Earned</b>	<b>Percentage of Points Earned</b>	<b>Course Grade</b>
900-1000	90% or More	A
800-899	80% - 89%	B
700-799	70% - 79%	C
600-699	60% - 69%	D
599 or Less	59% or Less	F

**Access to Grades:**

All grades will be posted on eCampus. Hard copies of completed assignments and exams will be available for pick-up during office hours and at the start of each class. I cannot discuss grades over e-mail, as it is a violation of the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)* to reveal any information about grades in e-mail, even with student permission or at student request. Please verify your eCampus grades often. Discuss grade posting errors/omissions with me immediately.

**Extra Credit and Grading on Improvement:**

Extra Credit opportunities will not be available. I do not grade “on improvement” I will not respond to any e-mail requesting extra credit or grading on improvement.

**Attendance and Borderline Grades**

Although I do not grade on attendance, in-class quizzes/assignments will occur frequently throughout the course. I do not post lecture material online – it is your responsibility to gather any notes you have missed. Please provide me with documentation for missed assignments as soon as you are able. Do not wait until the end of the semester. I will not respond to any e-mail requesting rounding or curving borderline grades.

**Student Rule 07**

*The University views class attendance as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments. For information about excused and unexcused absences, see Student Rule 07 at <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>.*

**Incompletes:**

I only give a grade of “incomplete” if there is a clear and compelling reason to do so. This includes those rare circumstances in which a significant crises (serious illness or injury, or a death in the immediate family) occurs near the end of the semester, preventing the student from completing the course, and for which the student can provide detailed documentation. Incompletes will not be given under any other circumstance. If you feel that you are struggling in the course, please see me after class or during office hours so we can discuss your performance.

## **Classroom Policies:**

### **Policy on Civility, Respect, and Tolerance:**

Please arrive prepared and on time to class. Arriving late distracts other students and can alter the flow of a class discussion. Please be respectful of the time of other students and the instructor. If you must leave class early, please do so quietly and considerately.

It is almost certain that some of the topics or discussions in class will challenge deeply-held beliefs and viewpoints. Sometimes this challenge and growth can be uncomfortable. I encourage all students to share their viewpoints, since the inclusion of viewpoints of persons from different backgrounds helps develop our understanding of an issue. Another's viewpoint may conflict with your own. However, I will not allow incivility, disrespect, or intolerance in the classroom. Personal attacks will not be tolerated. You are expected to treat each student and your instructor with respect, and they are expected to treat you with the same respect. If you want to challenge my ideas or views, another student, a reading, or an author, know that all arguments and challenges should be presented respectfully and with factual, verifiable evidence to support your view. Students will receive a warning on the first offense; however, I reserve the right to remove a student from class if I feel as though the student is being disrespectful.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Texas A&M is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, Texas A&M encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality, diversity, pluralism and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit.

Texas A&M University, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Harassment of a student in class, i.e., a pattern of behavior directed against a particular student with the intent of humiliating or intimidating that student will not be tolerated. The mere expression of one's ideas is not harassment and is fully protected by academic freedom, but personal harassment of individual students is not permitted.

### **Preferred Name & Preferred Gender Pronouns**

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternative name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

### **Instructor Error:**

Please keep an extra copy of each assignment submitted, as well as any graded exam or assignment until after course grades have been posted.

**Academic Integrity Statement and Policy:**

**An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.**

Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code (above), to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the TAMU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System.

**Plagiarism:**

As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you have the permission of that person. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please consult the latest edition of the *Texas A&M University Student Rules*, under the section "Scholastic Dishonesty."

**Policy on Technology Use**

Laptops are allowed in class for academic use only. Cell-phones must be on silent and you must refrain from using your cell-phone in class.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:**

*The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, currently located in the Disability Services building at the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus or call 979-845-1637. For additional information, visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>.*

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## Title IX and Statement on Limits to Confidentiality

Texas A&M University and the College of Liberal Arts are committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws provide guidance for achieving such an environment. Although class materials are generally considered confidential pursuant to student record policies and laws, University employees — including instructors — cannot maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues that jeopardize the health and safety of our community. As the instructor, I must report (per Texas A&M System Regulation 08.01.01) the following information to other University offices if you share it with me, even if you do not want the disclosed information to be shared:

- Allegations of sexual assault, sexual discrimination, or sexual harassment when they involve TAMU students, faculty, or staff, or third parties visiting campus.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In many cases, it will be your decision whether or not you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting, you are encouraged to make an appointment with the Student Counseling Service (<https://scs.tamu.edu/>).

Students and faculty can report non-emergency behavior that causes them to be concerned at <http://tellsomebody.tamu.edu>.

## **Tentative Course Calendar**

*Note: Readings should be completed before class time on the dates indicated below.*

## PART I: INTRODUCTION: RACE AND ETHNICITY IN SOCIOLOGY

M 08/26 Introduction

*Required Readings*      Reader: Introduction  
                                Sorting by Color: Why We Attach meaning to Race

W 08/28 Exploring & Defining Race & Ethnicity

Required Readings:	Reader: #4: Race and Ethnicity in America <i>SBP: The Social Construction of Race, 1790-2000</i>
Suggested Readings:	Web: Desmond & Emirbayer, What is Racial Domination #8: Defining Race: Comparative Perspectives <i>SBP: What Was Your Race in 1890?</i> #3: Racial Formations

F 08/30 Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism

**Required Readings:** Reader: Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism  
#16: Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position  
#18: Discrimination and the American Creed  
#17: On the Removal of Confederate Monuments  
#19: The Place of Race in ... Movements  
*SBP: America's New Public Enemy?*  
#40: Taking a Knee

### **Deadline to Select Race & Social Structure Topic**

M 09/02 White Violence

## PART II: SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

W 09/04 Ethnicity & Assimilation

*Required Readings:*      Web: Gordon, The Nature of Race Relations

F 09/06 Ethnicity & Assimilation

*Required Readings:* Web: Waters and Jimenez, Assessing Immigrant...  
Rogers, the Return of Assimilation?

M 09/09 Conflict & Stratification

*Required Readings:*      Web: Weber, The Origins of Ethnic Groups

**Tentative Course Calendar (Continued)**

Note: Readings should be completed before class time on the dates indicated below

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**W 09/11 Racial Formation**

Required Readings: Web: Omi & Winant, Racial Formation

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**F 09/13 Racial Formation (Continued)**

Suggested Readings: Web: Penner & Light, Racial Formation in Perspective  
Feagin & Elias, Rethinking Racial Formation

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**M 09/16 Racialized Social Systems**

Required Readings: Reader: #5: Racialized Social Systems Approach to Racism  
Web: Bonilla-Silva, from *White Supremacy and Racism...*

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**W 09/18 Racialized Social Systems (Continued)**

Suggested Readings: Web: Bonilla-Silva, From Bi-Racial to Tri-Racial

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**F 09/20 Colorblind Racism**

Required Readings: Web: Bonilla-Silva, from *Racism without Racists*

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**M 09/23 Systemic Racism**

Required Readings: Web: Feagin, from *Systemic Racism*

Suggested Readings: Web: Feagin, The White Racial Frame: Why a New...  
Omi & Winant, Resistance is Futile?

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**W 09/25 Critical Race Theory**

Required Readings: Web: Delgado & Stefancic, Ch. 1, Ch. 2

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**F 09/27 Critical Race Theory (Continued)**

Required Readings: Web: Delgado & Stefancic, Ch. 7, Ch. 8

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**M 09/30 Intersectionality & Black Feminism**

Required Readings: Web: Collins, Black Feminist Thought, Ch. 1 & 2  
Crenshaw, Demarginalizing the Intersection...

**Mid-Term Exam Review Distributed (in class)**

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**W 10/02 Mid-Term Exam Review**

**No Class – Review for Midterm Exam!**

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**F 10/04 Mid-Term EXAM**

**Mid-Term Exam in Class – Bring 3x5in Notecard + Writing Instrument**

**Tentative Course Calendar (Continued)**

Note: Readings should be completed before class time on the dates indicated below

**PART III: RACE AND THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE**

**M 10/07 Race, The Economy & Workplace**

Required Readings: Reader: #7: The Roots of the Widening Racial Wealth  
#31: Kristen v. Aishia; Brad v. Rasheed  
*SBP: The Color of Money*

**W 10/09 Race & Relationships**

Required Readings: Web: TBD

**F 10/11 Race & Education**

Suggested Readings: Web: Lei, (Un)Necessary Toughness?  
Lewis et al., The Impact of "Colorblind" Ideologies..

**M 10/14 GUEST LECTURE TBD**

Required Readings: Web: TBD

**W 10/16 Everyday Racism Online**

Required Readings: Web: TBD

**F 10/18 Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration**

Required Readings: Reader: #41: Racist Immigration Policy in the U.S.  
#42: The Melting Pot and the Color Line  
*SBP: Who Is Allowed to "Melt" in the Pot?*

Suggested Readings: Reader: #32: When the Melting Pot Boils Over  
#44: The Arab Immigrant Experience  
#43: Who are the Other African Americans?

**M 10/21 Race & The Media**

Required Readings: Reader: #35: Racism and Popular Culture  
#36: The Media as a System of Racialization

Suggested Readings: Reader: #38: Arabs and Muslims in the Media After 9/11  
*SBP: How the Media Shapes Perceptions of Race*  
#39: Winnebagos, Cherokees, Apaches, and ...  
*Seeing the Big Picture: The Toma-hawk Chop*  
Web: Miller et al.,  
Williams & Gonlin,

**W 10/23 Race & Neighborhoods**

Required Readings: Reader: #22: Trends in Black Hypersegregation  
*SBP: How Integrated is Your Neighborhood?*  
Web: Roscigno et al., The Complexities and Processes...

### Tentative Course Calendar (Continued)

Note: Readings should be completed before class time on the dates indicated below

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#### F 10/25 Race & Neighborhoods (Continued)

Required Readings: Reader: #24: Environmental Justice in the 21st Century  
#26: The Black-White Swimming Disparity...  
SBP: *Urban Food Deserts*

Web: Zenk et al., Why Are There No Supermarkets...

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#### M 10/28 Race, Politics, and the Law

Required Readings: Reader: #27: Crack v. Heroin  
SBP: *How Race Tips the Scales of Justice*  
#28: The New Jim Crow

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#### W 10/30 Race, Politics, and the Law (Continued)

Required Readings: Reader: #29: American Policing Under Fire  
SBP: *The Color of Incarceration Rates*  
#30: The Mark of a Criminal Record

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#### F 11/01 Special Topic TBD

Required Readings: Web: TBD

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#### M 11/04 Race & Social Movements

Required Readings: Web: TBD

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#### W 11/06 Race & Social Movements (Continued)

Required Readings: Web: TBD

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#### F 11/08 Race & Health

Required Readings: Reader: #6: Racism and Health  
SBP: *How Race Can be Hazardous to Health*  
#21: The Cost of a Black Corpse

Web: Sered and Fernandopulle, Race Matters  
Norgaard, Denied Access to Traditional Foods  
Anderson et al., The Role of Race in the Clinical...

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#### M 11/11 Race & Health – Part II

Required Readings: Readings Noted Above

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#### W 11/13 Race & Health – Part III

Required Readings: Readings Noted Above

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#### F 11/15 Race & Health – Part IIV

Required Readings: Web: Miller, HIV/AIDS and the President's Party  
Miller et al, There Goes the Neighborhood...  
Marquez et al, Serious Psychological Distress...  
Miller, Racial Stratification and Delusional...

**Tentative Course Calendar (Continued)**

*Note: Readings should be completed before class time on the dates indicated below*

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**M 11/18 GROUP PRESENTATIONS I (schedule may change based on groups)**

Group 1 (11:30-11:55) – \_\_\_\_\_  
Group 2 (11:55-12:20) – \_\_\_\_\_

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**W 11/20 GROUP PRESENTATIONS II (schedule may change based on groups)**

Group 3 (11:30-11:55) – \_\_\_\_\_  
Group 4 (11:55-12:20) – \_\_\_\_\_

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**F 11/22 GROUP PRESENTATIONS III**

Group 5 (11:30-11:55) – \_\_\_\_\_  
Group 6 (11:55-12:20) – \_\_\_\_\_

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**M 11/25 GROUP PRESENTATIONS IV**

Group 7 (11:30-11:55) – \_\_\_\_\_  
Group 8 (11:55-12:20) – \_\_\_\_\_

**Race & Social Structure Assignment DUE 11:30pm – Groups 1 & 2**

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**W 11/27 No Classes**

**Race & Social Structure Assignment DUE 11:30pm – Groups 3 & 4**

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**F 11/29 No Classes**

**Race & Social Structure Assignment DUE 11:30pm – Groups 5 & 6**

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**M 12/02 The Future of Race & Ethnicity**

Required Readings      Reader: #50: Policy Steps toward Closing the Gap  
                                  #51: Ten Things You Can Do to Improve Race...  
Web: Van Ausdale and Feagin, What Can be Done?  
                                  Coates, The Case for Reparations

**Race & Social Structure Assignment DUE 11:30pm – Groups 7 & 8**

**Final Exam Review Distributed in class**

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**W 12/04 In Class Review Session**

**Bring Final Exam Review (with questions)**

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**W 12/11 FINAL EXAM**

**FINAL EXAM (IN CLASS) – Bring your handwritten 3x5in notecard, writing pen/pencil**  
**FINAL EXAM TIME – 10:30-12:30 - \*Please note change in time**

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## **NOTES**