Administrative Unit: History and Social Sciences Department

Course Prefix and Number: SOWK 370

Course Title: Minority Cultures and Relations

Number of: Credit Hours: 3  Lecture Hours: 3  Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: Survey of historical and contemporary minority/majority relations among various racial, ethnic, and gender groups. Focus on the social construction of race and ethnicity. Cross-listed as SOCI 370. Offered Spring. Course meets World/Eastern Culture graduation requirement.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): None.

Text(s): Texts:

Most current editions of the following:


Farley, John E. *Majority-Minority Relations*. Prentice Hall.


Supplemental Texts:


Gallagher, Charles A. *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*. Mayfield publishers.

Nagel, Joane. *Race, Ethnicity and Sexuality: Constructing Boundaries, Identities, and Communities*. Oxford UP.
Course Objectives:

- To understand majority/minority relations from a sociological perspective and to understand race and ethnicity as social constructed concepts.
- To generate an understanding of majority/minority group relations across the globe, historically and currently.
- To interrogate our own role in race relations, as oppressor or oppressed, and to generate an understanding of white privilege.
- To understand the role of power and the way dominant group status is created in maintained.
- To apply this sociological understanding of majority/minority relations to arenas beyond race and ethnicity: gender, sexuality, disability.

Measurable Learning Outcomes

- Differentiate between race and ethnicity; sexuality and gender; minority and majority groups. Be able to generate a sociological understanding of these concepts – which includes the idea that these are socially constructed notions.
- Understand the origin of minority group status, the significance of the origins of interracial and interethnic contact.
- Evaluate the major forms of minority/majority relations including discrimination, segregation, assimilation, pluralism, and separatism.
- Interrogate the concept of whiteness and white privilege.
- Describe the current majority/minority relations in the US, along racial/ethnic lines, as well as gender and sexuality, with a primary emphasis on the role of power in constructing and maintaining such dominant/subordinate relations.
- Demonstrate self-reflexivity and be able to critically interrogate one’s own feelings concerning these issues. Get in touch with the racism (or sexism, or homophobia) inside ourselves.
- Understand institutional discrimination in all major society institutions: political and legal, economic, and educational.
- Explain changing demographics in the United States and the effect that will have on all aspects of society (the demographic breakdown of our classrooms, neighborhoods, workplaces).
Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):

• Definitions, terminology
• Begin self-reflexive project, challenge students to get in touch with the racism inside themselves through readings, written work, etc.
• Theoretical perspective on majority/minority relations
• Prejudice: theories of its origins, efforts to reduce prejudice
• Global perspectives on majority/minority relations
• Institutional discrimination: educational, political, and economic spheres
• Demonstrate understanding of the intersection of race, class, gender, and/or sexuality
• Women as an oppressed minority
• Sexuality as an axis of discrimination

Recommended maximum class size for this course: 35

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

Prepared by: Kathleen J. Fitzgerald

Date: May 20, 2005

NOTE: The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.