



SOC 553: AMERICAN SUBCULTURE GROUPS

COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2025

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Julia Meszaros, Associate Professor

Office Location: Ferguson Social Science Room 230

Office Hours: ONLINE by appointment

Office Phone: 903-886-7528

Office Fax: 903-886-5330

University Email Address: Julia.Meszaros@tamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: 24-48 Hours; Monday to Friday 8-5

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Books:

1. *Race, Ethnicity and Sexuality: Intimate Intersections, Forbidden Frontiers* By Joane Nagel
2. *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity* by Charles Gallagher (5th Edition)

Both books available used on amazon

Course Description

American Subcultural Groups. Three semester hours. An examination of cultural diversity in American life, focusing particularly on Black Americans, Mexican Americans, Native American Indians, and Anglo Americans. Describes dynamics of intergroup relations; the impact of ethnicity and social class on cultural patterns; the causes and effects of racism and prejudice. Special emphasis is placed on problems and strengths of multicultural education.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics. Assessments will test knowledge about concepts like race, ethnicity, and gender across various global cultures and historical time frames.
2. Demonstrate intercultural competencies by comparing issues across cultures. This learning objective will be assessed in the papers that require students to make connections between race in the U.S. and other cultures.
3. Apply sociological lens and knowledge into their daily lives. This learning objective will be assessed in the papers and weekly discussion posts that relate the readings to racial issues occurring in daily life.
4. Apply intersectional analysis to issues of race, linking ideas and discourses of race to gender, sexuality, etc. This learning objective will be assessed in the papers and weekly discussion posts that relate the readings to racial issues occurring in daily life.

Classroom Expectations:

1. Students must be prepared to participate in group work and be prepared to take notes and complete work with their peers.
2. Students must come prepared to learn. That's why it is essential to participate in class discussions online and by reading the chapter ahead of time.
3. Please treat everyone with respect. Disrespectful behavior towards anyone in the virtual classroom will not be tolerated.

Assessments: The main assessments for this course will be designed to be utilized

Weekly D2L Discussion Posts: (15 posts @ 20 pts: 300 points total)

Each week students will need to post a 500 word summary of the week's readings and how the readings discuss race in terms of theme for each week. Students must interact with at least two of your fellow students' post each week. Please refer to specific concepts and theories and examples from the readings and refrain from using anecdotal evidence and stories.

Podcast or Op-Ed Series (200 points)

Create a 15-minute podcast episode *or* two 800-word op-eds on a contemporary racial issue (e.g., environmental racism, media representation, immigration policies).

Requirements:

- Cite at least 3 course readings + 2 external academic sources.
- Interview a community member or expert (for podcast).
- Submit to a real outlet (e.g., local paper, Medium, SoundCloud) or draft a pitch email.

Advocacy Toolkit (300 points)

- Create a resource for a specific audience (e.g., teachers, policymakers, nonprofits) addressing a course-related issue (e.g., colorblindness, workplace discrimination).
- Options:
 - Lesson plan with activities and readings.
 - Policy memo with legislative recommendations.

- Social media campaign (e.g., Instagram carousel, TikTok script series).
- Requirements:
 - Use 4+ course readings and 3+ external sources.
 - Include an annotated bibliography.

Cultural Audit Report (200 points)

- Conduct an intersectional analysis of a local institution (e.g., workplace, school, media outlet, or public space) using course frameworks.
- **Deliverables:**
 - 5–7-page report with:
 1. **Demographic analysis** (race, gender, class dynamics)
 2. **Policy/practice critique** (e.g., hiring practices, curriculum, accessibility)
 3. **Recommendations for equity** (applying concepts from Nagel, Collins, or Alexander)

Total Class Points: 1000 Points

Grade Scale: A 900-1000

B 800-899

C 700-799

D 600-699

F Below 600

Grade Policies: For incompletes, you must speak with me ahead of time and have completed most of the course work. I do not round grades, and I do not change grades after they have been submitted. Grades are available on D2L so you can track your up to date progress in the course.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Brightspace Support

Need Help?

Student Support

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778 or click on the **Live Chat** or click on the words “click here” to submit an issue via email.



System Maintenance

Please note that on the 4th Sunday of each month there will be System Maintenance which means the system will not be available 12 pm-6 am CST.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

I prefer communication via email. I rarely answer my office phone and am much more likely to respond to email. I will respond to email within 24 to 48 hours, between normal business hours of 8am to 5pm. Please be sure that when you email me, you use a proper greeting (Dr. Meszaros Professor Meszaros) an email body, and an appropriate closing. You should never send an email with just an attachment and no email body. Be sure you have an appropriate and informative subject line and include the name and section of the course you are enrolled in. See the attached page for some email expectations that would serve you well in all future communication with any professors or potential employers.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: [Netiquette](http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html)

<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities

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 have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Week One: Settler Colonialism in the U.S.

Read Evelyn Nakano Glenn's article "Settler Colonialism as structure: A Framework for Comparative Studies of U.S. race and gender formation"

Read Andrea Smith's article "Indigeneity, Settler Colonialism and White Supremacy"

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L

Week Two: Sociohistoric Constructions of Race

Read Zirm "Drawing the Color Lines" in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Read "Seeing the Big Picture: The Social Constructions of Race" in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L

Week Three: Race in a Comparative Perspective

Read Davis "Defining Race in Comparative Perspectives" in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Read Espiritu's "Asian American panethnicity: contemporary national and transnational possibilities" in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L

Week Four: Color Blind Racism

Read Guinier and Torres “The Ideology of Color Blindness” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Read Gans “Possibility of a New Racial Hierarchy in the 21st Century” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L

Week Five: Understanding Racism

Read Bayoumi’s “How does it feel to be a problem? Being Young and Arab in America” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Read Lipsitz’s “The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racialized Social Democracy”

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L

Week Six: Race and Criminal Justice System

Read Alexander’s “The New Jim Crow” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Read Bobo and Thompson’s “Racialized Mass Incarceration” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Week Seven: Race, Ethnicity and Sexuality

Read Joane Nagel’s *Race, Ethnicity and Sexuality: Intimate Intersections, Forbidden Frontiers*

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L

Week Eight: Race and Gender

Read Pat Hill Collin’s “It’s all in the family: Intersections of gender, race and nation” (PDF on D2L)

Read Collin’s “The Intersection of Race and Bisexuality” (PDF on D2L)

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L

-PODCAST OR OP ED SERIES DUE 10/17

Week Nine: Race and the Media

Read Dirks and Mueller, “Racism and Popular Culture” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Read Bounds, “The Media as a system of racialization” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L

Week Ten: Race and the Workplace

Read Bao’s “Sweatshops in Sunset Park” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Read Parrado’s “Hispanics in the American South and the Transformation of the Poultry Industry” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L

Week Eleven: Race and Immigration

Read Steinberg, “The Melting Pot and Color Line” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Read Suleiman, “The Arab immigrant experience” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L

Week Twelve: Race and Marriage

Read Fryer, “Who’s Coming to Dinner” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Read Dalmage, “Discovering Racial Borders” in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L
-Cultural Audit report DUE 11/14

Week Thirteen: Race and Space

Read Bullard's "Environmental Justice in the 21st Century: Race still matters" in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Read Emerson's "Race, Religion and the Color line" in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L

Week Fourteen: Moving Forward

Read Gallagher's "Ten things you can do to improve race relations" in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Read Lui et al, "Policy steps toward closing the gap" in *Rethinking the Color Line*

Weekly Discussion Post on D2L

Week Fifteen: Research on Race

Read Small's "De-Exoticizing Ghetto Poverty" (PDF on D2L)

FINALS WEEK

Advocacy Toolkit DUE 12/9 by 11:59 PM.