To many Americans, racial identity appears self-evident; one “looks” or “acts” like the others in the same racial group. Ancestry and heritage are often thought to be the primary factors binding members of the same racial group to each other. However, this notion of race is strongly challenged by many sociologists and other scholars who have demonstrated the ways in which racial identity is *socially constructed*, reflecting categories and identifications that are ever changing. Recent challenges to the ways in which the U.S. Census Bureau has collected data on racial identity have been led by those of “multiracial” backgrounds, while large streams of “non-white” immigrants since 1965 have changed many of the prevailing concepts of race in America.

In this course, we will examine some of the prevailing sociological and social-psychological explanations of racial identity. We will then focus upon the construction of racial identities for several different groups in the U.S.: Whites, African-Americans, Latinos, Asians and Multiracial groups. We pay particular attention to the construction and meaning of “whiteness”, as its definition has changed dramatically throughout history, yet it has remained relatively unexamined as a racial group.

**Course Requirements:**

*For Undergraduates:*

- **Section Attendance and Participation (20%)**
- **Essay #1 (25%)**—An essay on course readings of approximately 5-6 pages. **Due May 2 in lecture**
- **Essay #2 (25%)**—An essay incorporating the material from several websites with course readings. **Due May 23 in lecture**
- **Final Exam (30%)**—An in-class exam including short answer and essay questions. **Monday, June 10, 12:15p.m.-3:15p.m.**
For Graduate Students/Co-Terms:

There are two options:
Option 1: Two 12-14 page papers on assigned topics
Option 2: One 25-30 page research paper on instructor-approved topic of your choice

You must inform the professor of your choice by April 23. Papers are due May 30 in lecture

University Policy Regarding Disabilities:

“Students who have a disability which may necessitate an academic accommodation or the use of auxiliary aids and services in a class must initiate the request with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend appropriate accommodations, and prepare a verification letter dated in the current academic term in which the request is being made. Please contact the DRC as soon as possible; timely notice is needed to arrange for appropriate accommodations. The DRC is located at 123 Meyer Library (phone 3-1066; TDD 725-1067).”

Books Ordered at Stanford Bookstore:


Jacobson, Michael. Whiteness of a Different Color. Harvard UP.


COURSE OUTLINE AND READING LIST

Week 1: Overview

Readings:


Week 2: Theoretical Perspectives on Racial Identity

Readings:


Week 3: Measuring Racial Identities

Readings:


Espiritu, Yen. “Census Classification: The Politics of Ethnic Enumeration.” Ch. 5 In Asian American Pan-Ethnicity. Temple UP. (online)

Weeks 4 & 5: White Racial Identity

Readings:

Gallagher, “White Racial Formation: Into the Twenty-First Century.” In Delgado and Stefancic, Critical Whites Studies: Behind the Mirror. (online)
Week 6: Black and Biracial Identities

Rockquemore and Brunsma, Beyond Black: Racial Identity in America.

Weeks 7 & 8: Multiracial Identities

Readings:


Kennedy, N. Brent. 1995. The Melungeons. (selections online)

Weeks 9 & 10: Immigration and the Future of Racial Identities


