



EMORY
UNIVERSITY

SOCIOLOGY 389:

Race, Class and Gender in the Workplace

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Meetings: Tue/Th/Fr: 9:00-9:50am
Location: Tarbutton 218
Office Hours: Tue 10-11am and by
appointment

Course Description:

Historically, the workplace is one of the most important arenas in which race, gender and class inequality is created or reduced. This course explores how and why race, class and gender shape employees' experiences in the workplace. We will focus on three questions:

1. *What is race, class and gender?* We will examine how sociologists define race, class and gender and discuss how this may differ from every-day understandings.
2. *What is the current state of inequality in the U.S. today and in the past?* We will take an inventory of how labor market outcomes differ by race, class and gender and examine how a) access to jobs and b) earnings differences developed since the 1970s.
3. *How can we explain inequality?* We will conclude the course by discussing key sociological perspectives that explain where inequality comes from. Some of these explanations focus on what employees bring into the workplace (e.g. their education or social networks). Other explanations focus on how characteristics of the workplace create or reduce inequality (e.g., policies or culture).

The main objective of this course is to give you an overview of the current state of workplace inequality in the U.S. and to provide you with the theoretical tools to understand where inequality comes from. Using current news pieces and examples from popular culture we will examine how these theoretical perspectives are used in the debate around work today. You will learn how to find and interpret important labor market statistics, conduct your own interview study and apply your knowledge by developing workplace policies.

Some Ground Rules

General Communication

I provide very detailed information and instructions in all of the course documents. I will also send periodic BlackBoard announcements and/or emails about any further course information.

- **Please read all of the written Course communications thoroughly!**
- If you have questions after you have read everything in a particular course document (syllabus, paper instructions, study guide), then feel free to ask me.
- **Do NOT ask/email me questions that I have already answered** in a course document or via posted announcement/emails. I will not respond to these questions.

Email Communication:

I generally try to respond to emails within 24 hours, but I do not guarantee a response within 24 hrs. I do not answer emails after 6pm at night.

General Conduct:

Please be mindful of the general code of conduct that you would use in any classroom setting. I expect us all to be respectful of one another.

- Please do not arrive late to class.
- Once in class, please refrain from carrying on private conversations with your neighbor(s). This is distracting for everyone else in the room.
- Please refrain from texting, checking Facebook, or any other non-class activities during all class meetings. If you are found to be engaging in these activities, you will be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of the class.

The use of cell phones is not permitted in this class. Please turn OFF your phones before entering the classroom.

Summary of Course Requirements

Assignment #	Description	Due Date	% of grade
# 1	Official-Statistics Paper	2/6	15
	Written Assignments		
# 2a	Proposal	2/17	5
# 2b	Literature Review	3/6	15
# 2c	Interview Study	4/10	15
# 3	Workplace Policies	4/17	10
# 4	News Piece	Ongoing	10
	Participation	Ongoing	10
	FINAL PAPER	4/28	20

Detailed Instructions for all course requirements will be handed out in class!

Assignment #1: Official-Statistics Paper (15%): DUE Feb 6th

For this **2-3 page** paper you will choose one major labor market outcome such as earnings or labor market participation and use official statistics (such as the Federal Reserve Economic Data Portal) to collect data on how this labor market outcome has developed since the 1970s. In the

next step you will choose one dimension of inequality (race, class OR gender) and use official statistics to examine whether this trend varied by race, class OR gender.

Assignments 2a-2c: Written Assignments

You will complete your own research project over the course of the semester. Each written assignment will help you complete one of the three major steps of conducting a research process:

- *Proposal & Consent for Approval (5%)- DUE Feb 17.* You will focus on one dimension of inequality (race, class or gender) and one type of labor market outcome and formulate a research question. Your research question is subject to approval.
- *Literature Review (15%) - DUE March 6:* Once I approved your research question, you need to conduct a literature review to examine what social scientists already know about your questions and how sociological theories might help us understand the issues at hand. In a 3-4 page paper you will define your key dimension of inequality (race, class OR gender) and your labor market outcome of interest. Then you need to draw on at least 2 of the sociological perspectives we discussed in class and find 4 journal articles to develop your research hypotheses.
- *Interview Study (15%) – DUE April 10:* Next, you will conduct an interview study in which you interview 6 currently employed individuals to answer your research question. In a 5-8 page paper you will explain how you collected you interviews, what your major findings are and how your findings related to the sociological theories we discussed in class.

Assignment # 3: Workplace policies (10%) – DUE April 17

You will create a list of 3 policies for workers and 3 policies for employers (managers or companies as a whole). These policies must be based on the arguments and evidence provided in the course readings. You will need to justify (based on the course material) **what** you think these policies will accomplish and **why** you think the policy will be effective in doing so. You must use at least 2 different course readings for workers and 2 different course readings for employers. The readings may overlap between the 2 sections but you must be sure to use at least 2 different readings for each section.

Your classmates and I will both take part in the grading of this assignment. I will use <http://todaysmeet.com/> to get anonymous feedback about what your classmates think your grade should be (1 through 5)

Assignment # 4: News piece and discussion questions (10%)

On an assigned day your group will be responsible for bringing in a current news item (within the last 5 years) that addresses and is relevant to the readings for the week. It may be an announcement, a short written piece (no longer than 1 page), a video (news cast or interview), or something similar. One group member will present this explaining the news piece and its relevance to the course. Each group will also come up with 2 discussion questions for the class to talk about in small groups and then discuss as a class. These questions should link the news piece to the course readings for the week. A good news piece will be both interesting and either 1) provide support or not to course readings or 2) Make us consider the implications of the news

piece for what research can and is being done in sociology. One (or more) representative from your group will present your information and ask the class your discussion questions. The group must meet with me **a week prior to your presentation** to discuss their news piece and discussion questions with me. In the meeting you must tell me what the news piece is about and why you think it is relevant.

Your classmates and I will both take part in the grading of this assignment. I will use <http://todaysmeet.com/> to get anonymous feedback about what your classmates think your grade should be (1 through 5)

Class Participation (10%)

Participation in class discussions and in-class exercises is very important. Attendance is strongly encouraged. Missing more than 2 required classes will lead to deductions in points, as will little or no participation. Many classes will involve in-class exercises. Some are already noted on the syllabus; other exercises will be determined as we go through the semester.

Final Paper (20%) – DUE April 28

The *Final Paper* will be 20% of your final grade. For the final paper you will revise your literature review and results from your interview study and develop a full 15-20 page research paper. It is due one week after the last day of class.

Grading Scale

I use a plus/minus scale consistent with the University recommendations. There is no curve and no extra credit. I also do not round grades up, as that defeats the purpose of the plus/minus system. At the end of the term, you will receive a letter grade, based on the following scale:

A = 93-100%	C+= 77-79.99%
A- = 90-92.99%	C = 73-76.99%
B+ = 87-89.99%	C- = 70-72.99%
B = 83-86.99%	D+= 67-69.99%
B- = 80-82.9%	D = 60-66.99%
	F = BELOW 60

Readings

All *required readings* should be completed before class to ensure active participation. Assigned readings are marked with the double stars (**) in the syllabus

There are no required text books. All course readings are either book chapters or journal articles. You will find electronic copies of these readings on Blackboard.

Blackboard site: <https://classes.emory.edu>,

Log in, and then click on “Soc 389. 000 Special Topics in Sociology”. This site will include all materials that are handed out in class such as the syllabus, instructions for written assignments, and other hand-outs. Any important announcements will also be posted on this site. Look for the button marked “Course Readings.” Click on the button and download the according article or click the link for Blogs.

Other Important Information

Accommodating Disabilities:

If you have or acquire any sort of condition that may require special accommodation(s), please inform me AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (e.g., not the day of an exam) so that we may make the appropriate arrangements. Proper documentation from the Office of Disabilities Services will be required. Please contact their office to get more information on available services and accommodations, as well as documentation requirements. They can be reached at 404-727-9877 or via the web at <http://www.ods.emory.edu>.

Academic Conduct:

All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the policies of Emory College with respect to conduct and academic honesty. Anyone engaging in acts that violate these policies, such as plagiarism or cheating will be referred to the Honors Council. For more information on the Emory Honor Code, see

http://www.college.emory.edu/current/standards/honor_code.html

Late Assignments:

I will accept late assignments, but your grade on the assignment will be lowered by half a letter grade for each day the assignment is late (e.g. from A to A- after the first day). Assignments turned in to my office, to my box, under my door, via stork, or via email are considered late, so give yourself plenty of time to complete assignments. ONLY assignments handed DIRECTLY TO ME IN CLASS on the DAY THE ASSIGNMENT IS DUE are considered on time. Most reasons to turn in a late assignment are not valid. I will be the judge of what constitutes a valid excuse and what does not. Personal illness and family emergencies are valid excuses, but they still will require documentation. Oversleeping, trips out of town, interviews, car trouble, and work-related absences are not valid excuses for missing an assignment.

Course Outline

While we will attempt to adhere to the following schedule, it is subject to change throughout the course of the semester

Week 1: Introductions – defining race class, gender

- 1/13 *Introductions*
1/15 *What is Race?*
 **Omi, Michael and Howard Winant, 1994. *Racial Formation in the United States*. New York: Routledge. Pp. 53-69
1/16 *What is Gender?*
 ** West, Candice. and Don Zimmerman. (1987). *Doing gender. Gender and Society*, 1(2). READ: p.127 - p.135, and 145-147. Skim the rest

Week 2: Defining race class, gender, intersectionality

- 1/20 *What is Class?*
 ** Wright, Erik O. "Class Counts". (chapter 1). READ: p.1-11, 19-29
Optional:
 - Mills, C. Wright. 1956. "The Power Elite" p. 275-285
 - Weber, M. "Class, Status, Party"
1/22 *Navigating Official Statistics* (e.g. FRED,)
- **ECIT: Rob O'Reilly ***
- **Assignment # 1 (official statistics paper) handed out**
1/23 *When race, class and gender come together: Intersectionality*
 ** Browne, I. and J. Misra (2003). "The intersection of gender and race in the labor market." *Annual Review of Sociology* 29: 487-513; READ: p. 487-494.
 Skim the rest
Optional Readings
 - Collins, P. (1999). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* New York, Routledge. p. 221-238

Race, Class and Gender Differences in Outcomes

Week 3: Occupational segregation today and in the past

- 1/27 *What is occupational segregation? Historical Trends*
 ** Tomaskovic-Devey et al. (2006) *Documenting Desegregation: Segregation in American Workplaces by Race, Ethnicity, and Sex*. ASR
1/29 ** Wilson (2003) *Ethnic niching and metropolitan labor markets*, *social science research*, 32(3), 429-466
1/30 *Consequences of Occupational Segregation*
 ** England, Budig, Folbre (2002) *Wages of virtue: The relative pay of care work*, *Social Problems*, 49(4), Pages: 455-473

Week 4: Race, Class, Gender earnings disparities today and in the past

- 2/3 *Class: Disparities between the "top and bottom"*
- **Assignment # 2a (Paper Proposal) handed out**
** Autor, D., L. Katz, et al. (2008). "Trends in US wage inequality: Revising the revisionists." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 90(2): 300-323.
- 2/5 *Gender & Race*
** Blau, F. and L. Kahn (2007). "The gender pay gap: Have women gone as far as they can?" *Academy of Management Perspectives* 21(1): 7-23.
Optional readings
-Dozier, R. (2010). "The declining relative status of black women workers, 1980-2002." *Social Forces* 88(4): 1833-1857.
- Semyonov, M. and N. Lewin-Epstein (2009). "The declining racial earnings' gap in United States: Multi-level analysis of males' earnings, 1960-2000." *Social Science Research* 38(2): 296-311.
- 2/6 *Presentation of Assignment # 1*
- **Assignment # 1 (official statistics paper) due**
- **Assignment # 4 (News piece) Handed out**

Explaining Differences: Individual vs. Structure

Individual-Level explanations

Week 5: Human Capital Theory

- 2/10 *How to find scholarly articles? **Library: Liz McBride***
- **Assignment # 2b (Literature Review) handed out**
- 2/12 *What is Human Capital?*
** Becker, G. (1985) Human Capital, Effort, and the sexual division of labor. *Journal of labor economics*, 3(1), S33-S58
- 2/13 *Human Capital Theory in the debate – Prepare for Debate*
** Tam, T. (1996). "Sex segregation and occupational gender inequality in the United States: Devaluation or specialized training?" *American Journal of Sociology* 102(6): 1652-1692.
** England, P. (1982) the failure of human-capital theory to explain occupational sex segregation, *journal of human resources*, 17(3), 358-370

Week 6: Social Capital Theory

- 2/17 *What is Social Capital?*
- **Assignment # 2a (Paper Proposal) due**
** Granovetter, M. (1995). *Getting a job*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Introduction. pp.3-22
Optional readings
- Kanter (1993) *Men and Women of the Corporation*. Chapter 3 "Managers"
- 2/19 *Race and Gender differences in social capital?*
** McPherson, M., L. Smith-Lovin, et al. (2001). "Birds of a feather: Homophily in social networks." *Annual Review of Sociology* 27: 415-444.

Optional Reading:

- Ibarra, H. (1992). "Homophily and differential returns - sex-differences in network structure and access in an advertising firm." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 37(3): 422-447.

2/20

Social Capital vs. other explanations?

** James, E. H. (2000). "Race-related differences in promotions and support: Underlying effects of human and social capital." *Organization Science* 11(5): 493-508.

Week 7: Discrimination

2/24

How to define Discrimination?

**Pincus, F. (1996). "Discrimination comes in many forms." *American Behavioral Scientist* 40(2): 186-194.

** Bielby and Baron (1987). "Men and Women at Work: Sex Segregation and Statistical Discrimination" *American journal of sociology*, 91(4), 759-799

2/26

Discrimination in the Workplace.

** Dovidio, J. and S. Gaertner (2000). "Aversive racism and selection decisions: 1989 and 1999." *Psychological Science* 11(4): 315-319.

** Ridgeway, C. (1997). "Interaction and the conservation of gender inequality: Considering employment." *American Sociological Review* 62(2): 218-235.

Optional Readings: Identifying Discrimination

- Petersen, T. and I. Saporta (2004). "The opportunity structure for discrimination." *American Journal of Sociology* 109(4): 852-901.

- Bertrand, M. and S. Mullainathan (2004). "Are Emily and Greg more employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A field experiment on labor market discrimination." *American Economic Review* 94(4): 991-1013.

Optional Readings: Experiencing Discrimination

- Shih, J. (2006). "Circumventing discrimination - Gender and ethnic strategies in silicon valley." *Gender & Society* 20(2): 177-206.

- Kirschenman, J. and K. Neckerman (1991). "We'd love to hire them, but ...": The meaning of race for employers. *The Urban Underclass*. C. Jencks and P. Peterson. Washington, DC, The Brookings Institute

2/27

*** **Guest Speaker: Lisa Anderson: Atlanta Women for Equality** ***

<http://www.atlantawomenforequality.org/>

WEEK 8 – Workplace Composition

3/3

Qualitative Interviews: Selecting Participants and Developing Questions

- **Assignment # 2c (Interview Study) handed out**

3/5 *Workplace Composition: Too few or too many?*
** Kanter (1993) Men and Women of the Corporation. Chapter 8 "Numbers: Minority and Majorities"
** Fossett, M. and Kiecolt, K.J. (1986). The relative size of minority populations and white racial attitudes. *Social Science Quarterly*, 70(4), 820-834.

3/6 *All about the numbers?*
** Williams, C. (1992). "The glass escalator - Hidden advantages for men in the female professions." *Social Problems* 39(3): 253-267.
** Wingfield, A. (2009). "Racializing the glass escalator: Reconsidering men's experiences with women's work." *Gender & Society* 23(1): 5-26.
- **Assignment # 2b (Literature Review) Due**

3/9-3/13 - Spring Break!!

Week 9: Bureaucracy and Formal Organizations

3/17 *Positive effect of Bureaucracy*
** Max Weber, "Bureaucracy" (pp. 51-56)
** Baron, J., M. Hannan, et al. (2007). "In the Company of Women: Gender Inequality and the Logic of Bureaucracy in Start-Up Firms." *Work and Occupations* 34: 35-66

3/19 *Negative effects of Bureaucracy?*
** Acker, J. (2011). Theorizing gender, race and class in organizations. In Jeanes, E., Knights, D., and P. Martin. *Handbook of Gender, Work, and Organizations*.

3/20 *Qualitative Interviews: How to analyze results*

Week 10: Role of EEO Legislation

3/24 *Overview Title VII*

3/26 *Effectiveness of EEO Legislation*
** Stainback, K., C. Robinson, et al. (2005). "Race and workplace integration - A politically mediated process?" *American Behavioral Scientist* 48(9): 1200-1228

3/27 *EEO Legislation and its unintended consequences.*
** Collins, S. M. (1996). *Black corporate executives: the making and breaking of a Black middle class*. Philadelphia, Temple University Press. chapters 5 & 7

Week 11: Workplace practices

3/31 *Practices and their (unintended?) consequences.*
** Williams, C., C. Muller, et al. (2012). "Gendered organizations in the new economy." *Gender & Society* 26(4): 549-573.

- **Assignment # 3 (workplace policy) handed out**

Optional Readings:

- Kanter (1993) Men and Women of the Corporation. Chapter 9

“Contribution to Theory: Structural Determinants of Behavior in Organizations”

- 4/2 *How to drive change?*
** Kalev, A., F. Dobbin, et al. (2007). "Practices or Best Guesses? Assessing the Efficacy of Corporate Affirmative Action and Diversity Policies." *American Sociological Review* 71: 589.
Optional Reading:
- Stainback, K., et al. (2010). Organizational Approaches to Inequality: Inertia, Relative Power, and Environments. *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol 36. K. S. Cook and D. S. Massey. Palo Alto, Annual Reviews. 36: 225-247.
- 4/3 ** Castilla, E. J. (2015). "Accounting for the gap: A firm study manipulating organizational accountability and transparency in pay decisions." *Organization Science*.

Week 12: Workplace Culture

- 4/7 *What is Culture?*
** Kunda, G. (2006). *Engineering Culture: Control and Commitment in a High Tech Corporation*. Chapters 3 & 5
- 4/9 *The effect of gendered and racialized culture.*
** Van Vianen, A., Fischer, A. (2002). Illuminating the glass ceiling: The role of organizational culture preferences. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 75 (3), 315-337
** Holdaway, S (1997). Constructing and Sustaining ‘Race’ within the police workforce. *British Journal of Sociology*, 48(1), 19-34
- 4/10 *Changing Organizational Culture?*
** Ely, R. and Meyerson, D. (2010). An organizational approach to undoing gender: The unlikely case of offshore oil platforms, *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 30 (2010)
- **Assignment #2c (Interview Study) Due**

Week 13: Bringing it Home:

- 4/14 *Writing a Literature Review*
4/16 *Writing-Workshop*
4/17 *Workplace Policy – Assignment # 3 Due*

Week 14.

- 4/21 *Writing-Workshop*
4/23 **Class at Emory: Dr. Gary Hawk from Class and Labor Committee**
** Class and Labor Report & Recommendations:
<http://provost.emory.edu/community/areas/class-labor.html>
4/24 *Conclusion*

Week 15 – FINAL PAPER DUE: Tuesday 4/28