Instructor: Jeremy Tanzer

Introduction:
What is it to be a ‘minority’? What are the effects of minority status? Are there basic similarities in the minority experience? These are the kinds of questions which sociologists ask when looking at the study of minorities. As a term, ‘minority’ is rather broad – and it should be. There are many groups which can fit under this heading and rightfully so. Issues of race, ethnicity, gender, class, (dis)ability, citizenship and other categories can all be examined as minority groups.

Emphasis for this class:
This class will focus on the concepts of race and ethnicity. I do this for several reasons, first, the classic sociological literature and our fundamental understanding of what it is to be a minority is rooted in the study of first race and then ethnicity. Secondly, because of the wide diversity of topics from which to choose, some sort of delimitation was required in order to make sure that we were getting well into the necessary concepts. Third, the area in which we focus is not necessarily done elsewhere in the university in this way.

Our Approach – Historical and Sociological
History presents itself as a handy laboratory in which to examine the plight of groups of people. While much of the history which you experienced in high school and possibly in college deals with “dead white men in Washington” our historical focus will be different. Will we talk about the dead white rich men? Sure. But we talk about those people in a context which includes and, indeed, is focused on minorities. Rather than taking the approach most textbooks in this area do where each chapter focuses independently upon a different group, we are going to look at how the different groups interact, play off one another, engage in competition with each other for scarce resources and develop a more holistic picture of what it is to be a minority in the United States.

The “BIG” Goals:
I am hoping that by the end of this class you will be able to do at least the following:
- Define and explain (to anyone) concepts of race, ethnicity, prejudice, discrimination and minority.
- Explain how history and events both affect and effect groups of people.
- Utilize your understanding of the concepts of prejudice and discrimination to examine other groups which may or may not fall into our study in this course.

Rules of the Course:
It is imperative that you treat others in this course kindly. Over the course of the term, we will encounter subjects which may make you or others feel uncomfortable. We will be discussing the tools of language and image which may not be pleasant. I make no apologies – it is neither my language nor my images. I bring them to you and present
them so we can together understand and, most likely, attack the ideas that they represent. I will not tolerate or accept *ad homonym* (against the person) attacks. Attack ideas – fine; DO NOT attack others. If you engage in attacks against others in the classroom you will be asked to leave.

**Communication Information:**

The best way to get hold of me (other than face-to-face interaction) is by email. If you want a prompt response, email is the way to go. The internal email function in D2L is easy to use. If you go to the class list and click on my name, an email window will appear.

If for some reason D2L is not cooperating, my regular PSU email is jtanzer@pdx.edu.

**Books and Other Information Sources:**


**Grading and Evaluation:**

There will be three (3) consisting of multiple guess questions. These exams will cover the lecture material. The tests are not cumulative in the traditional sense, but I do expect that basic concepts will be retained throughout the course and that you will be able to identify patterns throughout history.

In addition to the three exams, there are seven (7) quizzes based on the readings for the course. The questions are available to you ahead of time so you can read with focus, prepare your answer ahead of time and essentially copy and paste your prepared answer into the space.

**Missed Exams:**

Outside of exceptional circumstances (e.g., documented medical emergency) I do not allow make up exams. Forgetting the due date, internet problems, transportation issues, lost course materials, etcetera do not qualify as exceptional circumstances.

**Grades:**

The exams are worth the following percentage of your grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 3</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-----------------------

**Total:** 100%

I follow the standard rules for A-F grading with one exception: if you achieve 90% or better in the class, you will receive an A for the course. I only utilize A- to push people on the line between B+ and A over the line.
A Word on Academic Honesty:
The world of academia is based on integrity. To take someone else’s work and claim it as your own is, in the academic world, the worst of offenses. The process of creating your own work and ideas is sacred and expected. If you violate this sacred trust by cheating, you will fail the course and the evidence will be turned over to the Office of Student Affairs. Sanctions which can be levied by the University for cheating include suspension and expulsion – I take dishonesty very seriously. For more information on the student code of conduct check out the following web page: http://www.pdx.edu/dos/conduct.html

Disabilities Statement:
Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty, and the Disability Resource Center. Students with accommodations approved through the DRC are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through the DRC should contact the DRC immediately

Stuff to Print Immediately!:
I do not necessarily recommend printing the syllabus (it will always be online for you to consult). I do, however highly recommend you printing both the assignment deadlines sheet and the reading quiz questions out. Keep both of these forms handy and refer to them often.