

SOC 214: Introduction to Race and Ethnic Relations, Section 1, CRN 76431, 3 Units, Fall 2014-2015
Tuesday and Thursday, 1:30-2:45pm, Kuykendall 308
Professor: Sun-Ki Chai

NOTE: This is a preliminary syllabus, and while the basic structure of the course is as stated, the weighting and criteria for course assignments may be subject to some moderate adjustment.

One of sociology's main concerns is the great puzzle we call **ethnicity**. OK, we all take it for granted that people belong to one ethnicity or another, but it's much harder to explain why ethnicity has such a hold on the way that people and groups think and act. Our world is becoming increasingly borderless, and as long as you have an internet connection, there is no limit to the types of people you can meet and get to know. We're also changing, becoming more individualistic, cool and calculating, rational, and generally "me"-oriented. So why do so many of us still care about our ethnicity, whether it is defined by race, religion, language, or original place of origin?

Part of the solution to this question, as we will learn, is that ethnicity is not quite as "natural" as it might seem. Ethnic groups don't last forever; they get created, grow, join forces with other groups, split off from other groups, and eventually die out. Not necessarily because people die out, but because they no longer feel any emotional attachment to their ethnicity. We will cover theoretical approaches to ethnic identity, organization, mobilization, and conflict - thinking about how each matches some pieces of the puzzle but not others. Our approach will be international, rather than just on the United States. We will also focus heavily on the growing role of the internet, and its increasingly important role in how ethnicity affects today's world.

The course texts are Stephen E. Cornell and Douglas Hartmann, [*Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities in a Changing World*, 2nd Edition \(Pine Forge Press, 2006\)](#) and Neal G. Jesse and Kristen P. Williams, [*Ethnic Conflict: A Systematic Approach to Cases of Conflict* \(Congressional Quarterly Press, 2010\)](#). These are available at the University bookstore.

Most of the course materials will be placed on the [Laulima](#) course site. The course should appear automatically on your homepage at Laulima once you are registered for the course.

Grades in the course are based on point totals, with the total for assignments adding up to 100 points.

Shortly after beginning of the course, you will each be asked to choose a different ethnic group from somewhere around the world that you will be expected to cover for the rest of the semester. Some may be large, and others may be smaller, but each will be large enough so that information can be found in books and online about your group. Over the course of the semester, you will assemble a class portfolio of information about your ethnic group, revealing at their differences and similarities, why they formed, and why they cooperate or are in conflict with other groups. In order to accomplish this, there will be short assignments interspersed through the semester, that will ask you to research some aspect of your assigned ethnic group using a particular piece of theoretical or methodological knowledge that we have covered from class and/or the readings and lecture. Advice will be given on how to use online and/or library materials to accomplish this task. Together, these assignments will count for 40 points.

You will be given a take-home final examination that will require you to develop a fuller picture of the your ethnic group based upon a larger set of theoretical concepts from the lecture and readings. You may draw upon your earlier research assignments, but the assignment will require you to do additional research, as well as to consolidate the analysis you have already done. This will count for 20 points. They will be due at the end of the period assigned for the course on the University [final exam schedule](#).

Attendance will be taken in the course, and will count for 30 points maximum. One point will be subtracted your attendance grade for each class missed. Students who arrive after class begins or who leave before

class ends, without an excused absence, will receive at most half-credit for attendance on that day. Excused absences can be given if there are outside events for which your participation is a University requirement or crucial for your or others' well-being, your role cannot be adequately filled by another person, and whose occurrence and timing are outside of your control. You must provide some sort of official documentation that describes how these conditions are filled.

Class participation is essential for the amount of learning we gain in this course. Therefore, 10 points will depend on constructive and substantive participation in structured opportunities to discuss and compare the characteristics of the different ethnic groups you are researching with other members of the class.

Plagiarism is a violation of [campus policies](#) and is strictly prohibited. Students who plagiarize or otherwise violate student integrity policies on an assignment for any reason will be subject to a failing grade, and further discipline will be administered for significant, deliberate violations. It is students' responsibility to be familiar with rules on plagiarism and other aspects of the [Student Conduct Code](#); ignorance of the rules is not a valid excuse. It is becoming increasingly easy to detect plagiarism electronically, and it cheats the other students in the class who are following the rules.

Efforts will be made to provide reasonable accommodation for students who are registered with the [KOKUA Program](#), the UH Manoa office for students with disabilities. For more information on KOKUA, please contact them at Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services 013, phone 956-7511, or email kokua@hawaii.edu.