
Course Description

This online course will examine the evolving position of Black workers in the U.S. economy: how it has changed at key points throughout history to the present day, and how access to opportunities in the labor market is informed by racial stratification in the larger society.

We will discuss various dimensions of racial labor market stratification (wages, mobility, benefits, poverty, unemployment, and underemployment) to assess Blacks' economic position in the labor market. The goal of the course is to challenge common notions of how people succeed in the labor market and to explore how systemic patterns of exclusion limit opportunities for Blacks. The course will focus on structural explanations for racial inequality in the labor market rather than purely individualistic ones. We will examine the social constructs of race and class to understand how Blacks at all levels in employment face common challenges in navigating the labor market.

Core Curriculum Learning Objectives

- CCD-2. Analyze contemporary social justice issues and unbalanced social power systems.
- SCL-1 Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
- SCL-2 Employ tools of social scientific reasoning to study questions or situations, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department Objectives:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the perspectives, theories and concepts in the field of labor and employment relations. (Goal I)
- Apply those concepts, and substantive institutional knowledge to understanding contemporary development related to work. (Goal II)
- Analyze the degree to which forms human difference shape a person's experience in the world. (Goal VI)

Course Learning Objectives

Analyze the degree which forms human difference and shape a person's experience of and perspectives in the world. In this class we will explore how racial categorization, created through the social construction of race, affects one's position in the labor market and consequently produces racial labor market inequality. Through this approach, we will examine the socioeconomic dimensions that race is not a scientifically "real" concept; it is "real" in its consequences.

Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, methods, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis. Through analysis of readings and forum discussions, students will breakdown the author's thesis, arguments and supporting evidence to critically evaluate the claims presented and compare them across other readings, draw connections and distinctions using different approaches and strategies to build a supporting argument.

Analyze issues of social justice across local and global contexts. Students will develop an understanding of concepts such as hierarchy, and power in developing a working knowledge of social change – specifically, one that uses a complex, nuance analysis of a social problem to devise effective policies to end socioeconomic inequality. We can view the position of African American's position in the U.S. economy as part of a racial structure fortified by mechanisms such as exclusion, access, and institutional

discrimination. We will explore this idea through course readings, statistical reports, videos/film and research chosen to explore hypothetical situations designed to encourage student engagement, communicating various perspectives and lived experiences in group discussions.

Understand different theories about social identity, economic entities, human culture, political systems and other forms of social organization. We will use the idea that the labor market, as well as society at large is organized in such a way that it can be examined using a structural approach.

Apply concepts about human and social behaviors to better understand situations and approach issues such as labor market consequences of affirmative action, residential and occupational segregation, persistent wage inequity amidst a gap in education, using concepts such as hegemony, social construct, social closure and bias.

Course Delivery

- Course written lectures.
- Research based articles and papers.
- Answer questions regarding.
- Online threaded forum discussions and posts.
- Course videos, and/or listening to audio files.

Class Session and Assignment Due Date Information

The course will begin on Thursday, January 19, 2024.

Thursdays are the beginning of each course week. All assignments are due by Wednesday at 11:59 pm. A weekly message will be sent at the beginning of the week which will provide instruction for new assignments as well as grading feedback on prior assignments and general course instruction for new assignments.

Course Materials

There is not a textbook for this course. All required readings, videos and assignments are located on the course website within Canvas.

Assessment of Weekly Online Assignments:

Weekly Written Questions are a series of questions students will be asked to answer most weeks. The questions are designed to ensure that students understand the most important aspects of the readings and/or videos. The answers for each question should be no longer than needed to fully answer the questions. In most cases 6 to 8 single space sentences.

Forum is an interactive threaded discussions used to discuss course topics. Within these forums students can communicate their insights and thoughts pertaining to a particular course topic, as well as learn from one another in the process.

Threaded discussions are also a means for the instructor to identify whether a student comprehends required reading and/or video assignments. Forums include instructor-generated questions and suggested topic areas for discussion, and student-to-student interaction.

Overall Criteria for Grading - Scores on the weekly assignments as well as the online forums reflect whether you have achieved an accurate understanding of the various readings and whether you reflect those ideas well in written English. There are three sets of criteria on which students are graded. Earning the highest number of points within each assignment requires following these best practices:

Content (50% of points)

Content is well developed:

- ✓ Content that relates to required/recommended course material is accurate and well developed.
- ✓ Questions are thoroughly answered, and content is appropriate for the topic of inquiry.

- ✓ Content that indicates knowledge gained and potential for knowledge/skills to influence future thoughts/behavior is adequately linked to course materials (including any material brought into the course by a student). When required, citations are provided.

Reflection (40% of points)

Outstanding reflective skills:

- ✓ Answers indicate a high level of reflection and insight on topic.
- ✓ Critical thinking is evident.
- ✓ A strong desire to reflect on topics is evident.

Organization & Mechanics (10% of points)

Organization of content and expression of ideas/thoughts are outstanding:

- ✓ Writing is fluent and lively.
- ✓ All answers are presented in a professional manner: using appropriate grammar, sentence structure, and spelling.
- ✓ All ideas/thoughts are well communicated. Answers to all questions are concise/to the point.
- ✓ Engages in a high-quality Internet search (when applicable). Instructions for completing assignment are followed.

Policies and Procedures

Written assignments (weekly questions and/or forum discussion posts) will be accepted 72 hours late with a 30% late penalty. Permission to submit a late assignment after this date must be approved by the instructor.

You may submit assignments earlier than the due date. If you are unable to complete assignments by the due date because of illness or COVID-19 related quarantine requirements, please notify your instructor immediately. Failure to comply may result in grade penalties as per the course policy.

Resources for Student Success:

The faculty and staff at Rutgers are committed to your success. Students who are successful tend to seek out resources that enable them to excel academically, maintain their health and wellness, prepare for future careers, navigate college life and finances, and connect with the RU community. Resources that can help you succeed and connect with the Rutgers community can be found at success.rutgers.edu, and nearly all services and resources that are typically provided in-person are now available remotely.

Technical Assistance

Rutgers Center for Online and Hybrid Learning and Instructional Technologies (OIT)

Support Website: <https://it.rutgers.edu/help-support>

Email: help@oit.rutgers.edu

Call 24/7: 833-OIT-HELP or (833) 648-4357

Health and Safety Protocol:

Health and Safety Protocol: The university continues to monitor all relevant health and safety issues, specifically COVID-19, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), and Influenza (Flu), and I want to remind you of the important health and safety protocols that remain in effect across the university.

COVID-19 Vaccine and Boosters:

COVID-19 Vaccine and boosters: In support of Rutgers' commitment to health and safety for all members of its community, the University has updated its Immunization Requirements for Students to include vaccination against COVID-19. (Read Policy 10.3.14 COVID-19 Immunization Record Requirement for Students). This health policy update means that, with limited exceptions, all students must be fully vaccinated and upload record of these vaccinations to the Rutgers Student Immunization Portal. A valid NetID and password are required. The university requirements allow for medical and religious exemptions. As of May 16, 2023, booster doses will no longer be required unless an individual falls within the definition of a "Covered Individual" set forth in University Policy 100.3.1

Disability Services

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all University educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus disability service office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodation. **(See full policy on Canvas)**

Media Policy

The recording and transmission of classroom activities and discussions by students or faculty is prohibited without written permission from the class instructor and all students in the class. Class participants must have been informed that audio/video recording or reposting of forum contributions may occur. The recording may not be reproduced or uploaded to publicly accessible web environments without written permission. **(See full policy on Canvas)**

Plagiarism

In coordination with the Office of General Counsel, Rutgers Teaching and Learning with Technology advises instructors who use Turnitin for plagiarism detection to include the following statement in their course syllabus:

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com (directly or via learning management system, i.e., Sakai, Blackboard, Canvas, Moodle) for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com ser is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. **(See full policy on Canvas)**

Instructor's Message Policy:

Unless you receive advance notification, your instructor will check for messages daily on most workdays. (This excludes Saturday/Sunday, holidays, and official University breaks) If a student sends a comment or question, your instructor will try to respond to your message within 24 hours.

Student's Message Checking Policy:

It is the responsibility of the student to check incoming course related messages and comments on Canvas at least two times a week. Announcements are sent weekly, prior to each published assignment.

Grading Rubric:

Everyone will have the opportunity to do well in this course. A final grade is based on the point system below. Number of points for each course assessment is detailed in the following chart.

Course Component	Raw Points Possible
Forum Discussions (6)	240
Interview	100
Written Questions (10)	410
Midterm Exam	100
Final Exam	150
Total	1000

Total Raw Points	RU Letter Grade
1000-900	A
899-860	B+
859-800	B
799-760	C+
759-700	C
699-600	D
599 and below	F
Total	1000

Weekly Schedule: Refer to weekly topic pages in course shell for full description.

WEEK DUE	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS
Week 1: Jan 16 – Jan 24	<p><i>Introduction: Icebreaker Activity</i> <i>Racial and Social Bias</i> Frontline: “A Class Divided” Frontline CNN: “Inside the AC360 Doll Study” Assignment: Questions</p>
Week 2: Jan 25 – Jan 31	<p><i>Understanding Racial and Economic Stratification</i> Readings: Sydney Spivack “Race, Ethnicity and the American Labor market: What’s at Work?” Russell Sage “Equal Employment Opportunity in America” Assignment: Questions</p>
Week 3: Feb 01 – Feb 07	<p><i>The Historical Formation of Race and Work in the U.S. Economy: Post – Emancipation</i> Assignment: “The Origins of Race” video Readings: “Race, Ethnicity and the American Labor Market: What’s at work?”</p>
Week 4: Feb 08 – Feb 14	<p><i>The Industrial Era</i> Bruce Nelson, “Divided We Stand” Ira Katznelson, “When Affirmative Action Was White”</p>
Week 5: Feb 15 – Feb 21	<p><i>Black Workers: Civil Rights and the US Labor Market</i> Movie: “At the River I Stand” Assignment: Interview</p>
Week 6: Feb 22– Feb 28	<p><i>Access to Work</i> National Bureau of Economic Research: “A Field Experiment on Discrimination in the Labor Market” Bureau of Labor Statistics “State of Unemployment by Race and Ethnicity”</p>
Week 7: Feb 29 – Mar 06	<p><i>Midterm Exam</i></p>
Week 8: Mar 09– Mar 17	<p><i>Spring Break</i></p>
Week 9: Mar 21–Mar 27	<p><i>Structural and Institutional Discrimination</i> Julia Isaacs, “Economic Mobility of Black and White Families”</p>
Week 10: Mar 28 –Apr 03	<p><i>Education and the Middle Class</i> EPI “State of Unemployment by Race and Ethnicity” Janelle Jones & John Schmitt “Has Education Paid Off for Black Workers”</p>
Week 11: Apr 04 –Apr 10	<p><i>Gender and Pay Inequity</i> Pew Research “Gender Pay Gap in the U.S. hasn’t changed much in two decades.” AAUW “The Simple Truth”</p>
Week 12: Apr 11 –Apr 17	<p><i>Black Workers in Technology</i> Cary Funk & Kim Parker “Black Men and Women in Stem at Odds Over Workplace Equity” USA Today “Howard University and Google”</p>

Week 13: Apr 18 –Apr 23

Social Justice in America

Week 14: Apr 24 – Apr 29

Final Exam