**SPRING 2014: UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS at ARLINGTON**

SOCI 3338, Section 001: Contemporary Black Experience

Professor: Jason E. Shelton, Ph.D.

Faculty Profile: <https://www.uta.edu/mentis/public/#profile/profile/edit/id/2556>

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Office Hours: 2:30pm to 4:30pm on T & H, or by appointment

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Time and Place of Class Meetings: T & H from 12:30pm to 1:50pm in Pickard Hall, Room #102

**Course Description:** This course is an overview of the classical and contemporary sociological literature on the black experience in America. Some of the topics to be addressed include racial differences across income, education, and occupational status. Other important areas include persistent racial discrimination, the debate over race and class, tensions over the cultural and attitudinal adaptation to inequality, as well as emerging disputes within the African American community over what it “means to be black” in the post-Civil Rights Era.

**Required Text:**

**Book**

1. Hacker, Andrew. 2003. *Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, and Unequal*. New York: Scribner.

**Articles on Electronic Reserve:**

1. Anderson, Elijah. 1999. *Code of the Street*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.
2. Graham, Lawrence. 2000*. Our Kind of People*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
3. Hollinger, David. 2008. Obama, Blackness, and Postethnic America. *The Chronicle of Higher Education, 54 (125)*: 7-12.
4. Lacy, Karyn. 2004. Black Spaces, Black Places: Strategic Assimilation and Identity Construction in Middle-Class Suburbia. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 27(6)*: 908-930.
5. McWhorter, John. “Blackness: A Quick and Dirty Primer.” 2/13/08. TheRoot.com
6. Patterson, Orlando. “A Poverty of the Mind.” 3/26/06. *The New York Times*.
7. Pinkney, Alphonso. 2000. *Black Americans* (5th Edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
8. Tourè. 2011. *Who’s Afraid of Post-Blackness: What It Means to Be Black Now*. New York: Free Press.
9. Wilson, William. 2009. *More Than Just Race: Being Black and Poor in the Inner City*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

**Course Requirements:** This course will consist of three scantron multiple choice exams. Each exam is worth 100 points. Your final grade will be calculated by simply dividing your point total by 300.

No work for extra credit is necessary, and none will be accepted in lieu of missed requirements or to raise grades. I randomly give out bonus points on particular days during the semester (mainly as a reward for attendance). Students are expected to have read the course materials **before** coming to class. Also, out of respect for our scholarly goals, I ask that you place your electronic devices (e.g., cell phone) on silent or vibrate.

Students are expected to keep track of their performance via Blackboard throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels.

**Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**: Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least 3 additional hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

**Attendance Policy:** This course does not have an attendance policy. However, be here on the exam days because I **do not** give make-ups (unless you have an incredibly valid reason that can be substantiated with evidence).

**Final Grading Scale**

A= 90 to 100%

B= 80 to 89%

C= 70 to 79%

D= 60 to 69%

F= 0 to 59%

**Academic Integrity:** All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

Instructors may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

In this course, scholastic dishonesty automatically results in an **F** for the assignment in question, and possibly even an **F** in the course overall. (I highly recommend that you take this policy very seriously; I have no sympathy for students who attempt to cheat on tests or plagiarize papers.) For more information, please refer to the Student Judicial Affairs website at: <http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/academicintegrity.html>

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or add classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more information. The final drop date for the **Spring 2014** semester is **March 28th for undergraduates.**

**Americans With Disabilities Act:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and the letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide me with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by staff in the Office of Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Student with Disabilities at (817)-272-3364.

**Student Support Services:** UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

**Electronic Communication Policy:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Recording Lectures:** Please see me if you feel that you need to record class lectures. Also, taking notes for distribution outside the classroom (e.g., for companies that sell lecture notes to students) is strictly prohibited and will be met with very stiff penalties.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit/emergency exit, which varies depending on where you choose to sit within the classroom. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

**Section 1:**

Week 1 (Jan 14th): T = Welcome: Aims & Expectations

H = \*Pinkney Ch 1

Week 2 (Jan 21st): T = (continued)

H = \*Pinkney Ch 2

Week 3 (Jan 28th): T = (continued)

H = TBA

Week 4 (Feb 4th): T = Hacker Ch 5

H = Hacker Ch 2

Week 5 (Feb 11th): T = Hacker Ch 4

H = **EXAM #1**

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**Section 2:**

Week 6 (Feb 18th): T = TBA

H = Hacker Ch 6 & 7

Week 7 (Feb 25th): T = Hacker Ch 8 & 10

H = \*Wilson Ch 3

Week 8 (Mar 4th): T = \*Wilson Ch 4

H = \*Robinson Ch 1

Week 9 (Mar 11th): T = NO CLASS (Spring Break)

H = NO CLASS (Spring Break)

Week 10 (Mar 18th): T = \*Robinson Ch 3

H =\*Robinson Ch 10

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**Section 3:**

Week 11 (Mar 25th): T = **EXAM #2**

H = Hacker Ch 1 (pgs. 9-16)

Week 12 (Apr 1st): T = \*Lacy

H = \*Graham Ch 1

Week 13 (Apr 8th): T = \*Graham Ch 2 & 5

H = \*Anderson

Week 14 (Apr 15th): T = \*McWhorter (TheRoot.com) and \*Patterson (*New*

*York Times*)

H = TBA

Week 15 (Apr 22nd): T = \*Tourè Ch 1 & 6

H= Hacker Ch 12

Week 16 (Apr 29th): T = \*Hollinger

H = TBA

**EXAM #3: Thursday, May 8th @ 11am**

\*Reading on Electronic Reserve

**Important Dates for the Spring 2014 Term**

Tuesday January 14th Class Begins

Thursday February 13th EXAM #1

Mon-Fri March 10th – 14th NO CLASS (Spring Break)

Tuesday March 25th EXAM #2

Friday March 28th Last Day to Drop Classes

Friday May 2nd Last Day of the Semester

Wednesday May 8th EXAM #3