

Racial Inequality and Discrimination
Econ 212:001 & 212:002
Spring 2021

Instructor: Kelly Lee

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Office: Clark C309-B

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 12:00 p.m – 1:30 p.m. and by appointment. *NOTE: ALL office hours will be conducted online through Microsoft Teams.*

Lecture:

Section 001: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m. Engineering 100

Section 002: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m. Yates 104

Remember, we will not be returning to campus after Spring break. The remaining of the semester will be online. I will provide directions closer to time.

Required Course Materials:

There are no textbooks required for this course. All readings, videos, and podcasts will be accessible online.

Class Websites:

Canvas: <http://info.canvas.colostate.edu/login.aspx>

- Canvas will serve as our primary website. Here, you will find course material and announcements. Login using your Colorado State University eID and password
- Canvas is the primary way I will communicate with you. Be sure to check Canvas often.

Prerequisites: None

Course Description:

This course critically examines the causes and consequences of racial disparities as well as economic policies to address those disparities. Central to this topic is the relationship between group identity and power. We therefore adopt a political economy perspective, which underscores the role of power, often transmitted through public policy, in influencing the economic and social welfare of a group or groups. We investigate racial disparities in various socioeconomic indicators such as education, labor markets, housing, and wealth. We then explore the merits and limitations of various approaches to explaining these persistent disparities. Finally, we explore a variety of policy proposals designed to overcome intergroup disparity by race/ethnicity. While much of the course focuses on the U.S. context, I will at times broaden the discussion to countries outside the US for comparative purposes.

The course is divided into four parts: (1) an introduction to the biological and social construction of race and the problem of racial disparity, (2) conservative, liberal and alternative paradigms that explain racial disparity, (3) an examination of racial disparity in economic outcomes, and (4) policies to address racial disparities.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- **Introduce the “Other” into economics.** This course will develop your knowledge of the research in economics on the status of African Americans and the growing literature on Latinos, Asian Americans and other groups. At the end of the semester, you should be better able to 1) Locate data on the socioeconomic status of demographic subgroups of the US population; 2) Interpret summary measures of segregation and racial and ethnic disparity; 3) Describe the role of discrimination vs. other factors in explaining racial and ethnic differences in socioeconomic status; 4) Assess the impact of public policies designed to reduce racial inequality in economic status.
- **Develop and sharpen economic reasoning skills.** Economists and economic analysis have a major influence on social policy and it is important, regardless of your career choice, to understand the assumptions that underlie economic arguments and to be able to evaluate economic evidence with some independence of thought.
- **Model a rational discourse about race, ethnicity and economic disparity.** This course emphasizes a scientific evidence-based analysis of race and ethnicity. We will make distinctions between speculative hypotheses and conclusions based on a careful analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. At the end of the semester, you should be better able to 1) Avoid assessments based on stereotypes; 2) Support a position with references to empirical evidence; 3) Express disagreement by challenging the logical consistency or the evidentiary basis of an opponent’s statement.

Required Reading and Participant Responsibilities:

Discussion Posts will be based on the **readings, videos, and podcasts** listed in the Course Schedule for that week, unless otherwise noted.

Because there is a wide array of academic experience in this class and because there is so much literature on this topic, I will include optional readings on the course schedule for those who wish to pursue topics in more depth.

It is imperative that members of the class read the assigned readings in a timely manner and in a professional or thorough fashion. This will necessitate you downloading the articles, making margin notes to highlight the key points, and being prepared to write a paragraph on the main points of the articles.

We will also watch video clips and discuss current newspaper articles, or podcasts (all of which will be posted via announcements on Canvas). All such material is considered part of required reading for the course for exam purposes.

This class is a combination of discussion, lecture, debate, and very careful analysis of assigned readings. For that reason, it is essential you read all of the assigned readings. I also ask that you

come to class with your mouth, ears, heart, and mind open; that you listen to and respect each other; and that you challenge yourself, your classmates, and me to do our very best.

Emails:

I typically respond to emails quickly and will do my best to respond within 24 hours (not including weekends). Please remember to include your first and last name on all emails that you send to me. In addition, please do not email to ask me when the next exam will be or when any of the other coursework is due. All exam and coursework dates are on Canvas. **If there is a change, I will make it on the course schedule and send an announcement through Canvas that a change was made.**

Assessment and Grading:

As a student enrolled in this course, one of your responsibilities is to submit course work by the due dates listed on the schedule. With that said, I take my role as your instructor very seriously, and, in fact, I care about how well you do in this course and that you have a satisfying, rewarding experience. It is my commitment to you to respond individually to the work you submit in this class and to return your work in a timely manner. If, however, due to unforeseeable circumstances, the grading of your work takes longer than expected, I will keep you informed of my progress and make every effort to return your work with feedback as soon as I can!

Coursework:

Assignment	Points per Assignment	Frequency	Total Points	Percentage
Exams	100	3	300	30%
Reflection Exercises	40	5	200	20%
Group Project	200	1	200	20%
Discussion Posts	20	15	300	30%
			1000	100%

EXAMS

There will be three (3) exams throughout the semester; they will not be cumulative. Each exam is worth 100 points, for a total of 300 points of your final grade. The exam will be available Wednesday (of the week of the exam) at 12:00 a.m. and will need to be completed on Canvas by Friday by 11:59 p.m. Exams will be an essay format. You can take the exam anytime during the availability, however, once you start the exam, you will have 2 hours to complete it. You only get 1 attempt, so once you begin, the time will start to count down. The Monday of exam week will be a review session.

REFLECTION EXERCISES

There will be six (6) reflection exercises, each worth 40 points. Reflection exercises will be responses to course topics. I may post specific questions, but they will be largely based on your understanding, impression, and personal reflection of the lectures, videos, and readings. There are no make-ups for these assignments, but at the end of the semester I will drop the one with the lowest score, so you can miss one without penalty. You will upload your reflection on Canvas by 11:59 pm on the due date.

GROUP PROJECT

There will be one (1) group project. You will be randomly assigned to a group and each group will be assigned a topic and required to turn in a 3 – 5 page paper. More details can be found on Canvas.

DISCUSSION POSTS

There will be sixteen (16) online discussion posts, each worth 20 points. There are no make-ups for these assignments, but at the end of the semester I will drop the one with the lowest score, so you can miss one without penalty. For each discussion post you will:

1. Answer a question(s) relevant to current material topics. (15 points)
2. Reply to at least one comment/question made by another student with further insight, clarification of a question, or answer to a question. (20 points)

Each initial post must be at least 1-2 paragraphs in order to be considered for the discussion credit. Each response to another student's post must be at least 1 paragraph. Your comments/questions should be respectful and considerate. This exercise is meant to engage you with the rest of the class and to provide different perspectives to the topic material.

Online Discussion Post Consideration: It is important to remember that everyone is here to learn. As we are all adults, it is imperative that all individuals have consideration and respect for other students, as well as the instructor. We are all individuals with our own opinions and experiences, that is what makes our perspectives unique.

EXTRA CREDIT

Discussing real world examples of race operating in the economy can enrich the class discussion. Students may find a news or research article related to the course and summarize the key points in a one (1) page summary and implications of the article. Each student may only submit article. Twenty (20) points of extra credit will be added to your final score if you do the following:

1. Send a news or research article related to our course material to me through email for approval BEFORE you write up your summary. The article should be recent (published from January 2019 to present).
2. Once your article is approved, then you can write up a summary and implications, one page in length.

All Due Dates for assignments can be found on the Class Schedule on Canvas

Grades:

The table below shows the minimum percent threshold necessary to achieve the following letter grade:

Course Grading Criteria		
Grade	Percentage Grade	Equivalent Points
A+	97 - 100	970 - 1000
A	94 - 96	940 - 969
A-	90 - 93	900 - 939
B+	87 - 89	870 - 899
B	84 - 86	840 - 869
B-	80 - 83	800 - 839
C+	77 - 79	770 - 799
C	70 - 76	700 - 769
D	60 - 69	600 - 699
F	59 - Below	0 - 599

Late, Make-ups, Missing Assignments, and Regrades:

Assignment due dates are posted in Canvas and on the Course Schedule. Late assignments will be penalized by ten percent (10%) each day that they are late. The instructor reserves the sole right to determine what grounds constitutes a reasonable excuse for missing or submitting a late work assignment and the right to require the student to submit proper verification of such excuse. Vacations are not an excuse for missing or submitting a late assignment. If something comes up and you are unable to complete an assignment on time, email me as soon as possible.

Whatever your circumstances, I AM HERE TO HELP you be successful. If you need more time to complete the assignments, please do not hesitate to reach out. Any regrade requests must be made within one week of receiving the grade. I reserve the right to regrade the entire assignment when requests are made.

Hours Devoted to Course:

Below you will find an example of a weekly schedule that satisfies these expectations where contact hours measure the amount of time students are expected to be engaged in the course: If you feel you may have trouble dedicating enough time to be successful in the course, you should re-evaluate your schedule to ensure enough time for proper comprehension.

Activity	Contact Hours Per week
Reading	2
Reviewing Class Notes	2
Completing Assignments	2
Exam Study Time	3
Total Hours	9

Academic Integrity:

We take academic integrity seriously. At minimum, academic integrity means that no one will use another's work as their own. The CSU writing center defines plagiarism this way:

“Plagiarism is the unauthorized or unacknowledged use of another person's academic or scholarly work. Done on purpose, it is cheating. Done accidentally, it is no less serious. Regardless of how it occurs, plagiarism is a theft of intellectual property and a violation of an ironclad rule demanding credit be given where credit is due.”

—Writing Guides: Understanding Plagiarism

<http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/researchsources/understandingplagiarism> Academic

Dishonesty could result in expulsion from the university. This course will adhere to the CSU Academic Integrity Policies and Guiding Principles as found in the General Catalog and the Student Conduct Code. At a minimum, violations will result in a grading penalty in this course and a report to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services. Of course, academic integrity means more than just avoiding plagiarism and cheating. It also involves doing your own reading and studying. It includes class attendance, careful consideration of all class materials, and engagement with the class and your fellow students. Academic integrity lies at the core of our common goal: to create an intellectually honest and rigorous community. Each exam and assignment you submit, you will need to write and sign the CSU student honor pledge: "I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance."

Department Statement on Copyright:

Please do not share material from this course in online, print or other media. Course material is the property of the instructor who developed the course. Materials authored by third parties and used in the course are also subject to copyright protections. Posting course materials on external sites (commercial or not) violates both copyright law and the CSU Student Conduct Code. Students who share course content without the instructor's express permission, including with online sites that post materials to sell to other students, could face disciplinary or legal action.

CSU Honor Pledge:

Academic integrity lies at the core of our common goal: to create an intellectually honest and rigorous community. Because academic integrity, and the personal and social integrity of which academic integrity is an integral part, is so central to our mission as students, teachers, scholars and citizens, I will ask that you affirm the CSU Honor Pledge as part of completing your work in this course. While you will not be required to affirm the honor pledge, you will be required to affirm the following statement:

"I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance."

Further information about Academic Integrity is available at CSU's **Practicing Academic Integrity**.

Accommodations and Tutoring Options:

- **Tell Someone: If you are concerned about safety or mental health – your own or someone else’s, please call (970) 491-1350 or complete the online referral form at: <https://supportandsafety.colostate.edu/tell-someone/>.** Rams take care of Rams. Helping others, speaking up when something doesn’t feel right or when you’re worried about someone else, and reaching out are foundational values at Colorado State University. **Tell Someone** is a Colorado State University service where anyone can report concerns about a student or employee who may be struggling with issues such as mental health, stress management, and safety, as well as share concerns about threats of violence (against themselves or others). Through **Tell Someone**, you can report anything that threatens your safety or the safety of others in the university community. **Tell Someone** is available to seek help for or report a concern about any CSU community member, including employees who work off campus. **Tell Someone** is not designed to get people in trouble; it is designed to help students and employees who may be struggling, as well as help enhance university safety. **Tell Someone** is your resource if you’re worried about a friend’s well-being. If a student or employee is disruptive, **Tell Someone** is the right place to turn for intervention as well as university support to help put consequences and boundaries in place. **Tell Someone** is run by the Office of Support and Safety Assessment. The office is comprised of trained specialists who can identify concerns, pathways to resolution, and university resources. **Tell Someone** online and phone reports are only reviewed during regular business hours. If you believe someone is at risk of immediate harm, call 911.
- **Student Disability Center:** Students with disabilities may be eligible for accommodations in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is the student’s responsibility to disclose any learning disabilities. Please contact the instructor if a special accommodation is required. To request accommodations, students should contact Student Disability Center at (970) 491-6385 or go to <https://disabilitycenter.colostate.edu/>. Documentation of disability is required and the SDC office will assist in this process.
- **Writing Center:** Help with written assignments can be found at the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.colostate.edu>).
- **Canvas technical support:** <http://info.canvas.colostate.edu/student-resources.aspx>

Title IX:

CSU’s Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation policy designates faculty and employees of the University as “Responsible Employees.” This designation is consistent with federal law and guidance, and requires faculty to report information regarding students who may have experienced any form of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation. This includes information shared with faculty in person, electronic communications or in class assignments. As “Responsible Employees,” faculty may refer students to campus resources (see below), together with informing the Office of Support and Safety Assessment to

help ensure student safety and welfare. Information regarding sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking and retaliation is treated with the greatest degree of confidentiality possible while also ensuring student and campus safety. Any student who may be the victim of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation is encouraged to report to CSU through one or more of the following resources: Emergency Response 911, Deputy Title IX Coordinator/Office of Support and Safety Assessment (970) 491-1350, Colorado State University Police Department (non-emergency) (970) 491-6425. For counseling support and assistance, please see the CSU Health Network, which includes a variety of counseling services that can be accessed at: <http://www.health.colostate.edu/>. The Sexual Assault Victim Assistance Team is a confidential student resource that does not have a reporting requirement: <http://www.wgac.colostate.edu/need-help-support>.

Disclaimer:

All of the information in this course syllabus is subject to change when deemed necessary by the instructor. Students will be notified verbally in class, via postings on the class homepage, or by email if such changes occur.