

Departments of Economics, Brown University
Professor Glenn C. Loury (www.glennloury.com)
EC 1370: *Race and Inequality in the United States*, Fall 2017

COURSE SYLLABUS

Classes: Tu/Th 10:30-11:50; Kassar House-Fox Auditorium
Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday: 1-3pm; Robinson 105 (and by appt.)

Description: This course examines the social disadvantage of African American in the United States from the perspectives of economics, but with due attention to sociology, politics and history. We take a holistic view of the relevant issues, reading broadly. Thus, while quantitative economic analysis is used where necessary, mastery of technique is not the main focus of this course. Among the issues to be examined are:

- (i) structural/historical origins of persistent racial inequality
- (ii) race stereotypes, stigma, segregation, identity, discrimination
- (iii) paying reparations for past wrongs to achieve “racial justice”
- (iv) using affirmative action in pursuit of greater racial inclusion
- (v) and, race-related aspects of crime, punishment and policing.

Requirements: This is primarily a lecture course. Regular attendance is expected. *Students’ evaluations will be based on their performance on four short papers, assigned at three-four week intervals, responding to the professor’s prompts. (You can think of these 3-4 page papers as take-home essay exams.) There will be no midterm or final exam.* Class participation is encouraged, as is posting comments on readings/lectures, responding to Professor’s occasional prompts, at course’s Canvas page.

Workload: This course will require approximately ten hours/week for reading; three hours/week of time in class; and two hours/week for paper preparation – for a total of 15 hours/week (roughly 180 hrs. for the whole semester) of students’ time that will need to be devoted to this course.

Be Advised: I CATEGORICALLY DO NOT ACCEPT LATE PAPERS

Books: Here, in order of their appearance, is a list of the books that are required for this course and available for purchase at campus book store:

1. Glenn C. Loury (GL-1), *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality*. Harvard University Press, 2002
2. Thomas Sugrue (TS), *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton University Press. 1996
3. Ira Katznelson (IK), *When Affirmative Action Was White*. W.W. Norton. 2005
4. Jennifer Lee/Min Zhou (L&Z), *The Asian-American Achievement Paradox*. Russell Sage, 2015
5. Khalil Muhammad (KM), *The Condemnation of Blackness*. Harvard University Press, 2010
6. Natl. Rsrch. Council (NRC-1), *Measuring Racial Discrimination*, NRC Press, 2004 (Online for free at <https://www.nap.edu/>)
7. Thomas Chatterton Williams (TCW), *Losing My Cool: Love, Literature and a Black Man's Escape*. Penguin Press 2010
8. James Forman (JF), *Locking-Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America*, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2017
9. Glenn C. Loury (GL-2), *Race, Incarceration and American Values*. M.I.T. Press, 2008
10. Natl. Rsrch. Council (NRC-2), *The Growth of Incarceration in the US*, NRC Press 2014 (Online for free at <https://www.nap.edu/>)

We will also consult a number of research articles, in addition to these core texts. These articles will be posted at our course's Canvas site.

TOPICS OUTLINE [Associated readings are given in brackets]

1. Introduction: Basic considerations grounding subsequent studies

9/7: Can We Talk? [Loury self-censorship essay; current news reports TBA]

9/12: What Is “Race”? (Defining “race” is harder than it looks!) [GL-1, chp. 1-2]

9/14: An Overview of Racial Disparities in the US [GL-1, appendix + handout]

First Writing Assignment: Prompt given 9/14; paper due 9/21

2. Structural Origins: Historical & socio-political root of racial disparities

9/19: Case Study – Race & Inequality in Post-War Detroit [TS, chps. TBA]

9/21: Case Study – Costly Segregation in Chicago [MPC/Urban Institute Report]

Guest Lecture by Alden Loury, Metropolitan Planning Council-Chicago, 9/21

9/26-28: Case Study – Racializing the US Welfare State [IK, chps. TBA]

3. Racial Stereotypes: Beliefs, Expectations and Imperfect Information

10/3-5: Racial Profiling/Implicit Bias [L&Z, chp. TBA; R. Sethi articles TBA]

Guest Lecture by the economist Rajiv Sethi, Columbia University, 10/5

4. Racial Stigma: Perceptions, Social Relations and Social Meanings

10/10-12: Biased Social Cognition [GL-1, chp 3; KM + L&Z, chps. TBA]

Second Writing Assignment: Prompt given 10/12; paper due 10/19

5. Racial Identity: Who is “authentically black”? Who gets to decide?

10/17: Peer culture & academic performance – exploring the “acting white” debate. [R. Fryer et al. papers; Loury’s 2008 “Opening Convocation Address”]

10/19: A Black Man’s “Escape” from Peer Influences [TCW, all]

Guest lecture by the author, Thomas Chatterton Williams, 10/19

6. Discrimination: What is “illicit” racial discrimination? How can we tell?

10/24: Economic Theories of Racial Discrimination (NRC report (I) chps. TBA)

NO 10/26 CLASS – PROFESSOR IS UNAVOIDABLY ABSENT

10/31-11/2: Statistical Evidence of Discrimination (NRC report (I): Chps. TBA)

7. Racial Justice: What is it? How can it be achieved?

11/7-11/9: The Ethics and Efficacy of Affirmative Action [articles TBA]

11//14: The Cases for/against Reparations for Slavery [articles TBA]

[Third Writing Assignment: Prompt given 11/14; paper due 11/21]

8. Crime, Violence and Communal Responses

11/16-11/21: Community Responses to Crime [JF, all]

Guest Lecture by the author, James Forman, Jr., 11/16

NO CLASS 11/23 – THANKSGIVING BREAK

9. Policing in Black Communities: The Politics of “#Black Lives Matter”

11/28: Race and Police Use of Force (1) [Fryer’s Houston study]

11/30: Race and Police Use of Force (2) [Roithmayr’s Contagiousness study]

Guest Lecture by the author, Daria Roithmayr, Yale Law School, 11/30

10. Is “Mass Incarceration” and “The New Jim Crow”?

12/5: Race, Incarceration and American Values [GL-2, all; articles TBA]

12/7: Causes/Consequences of Prison Growth [NRC-2; chps. TBA]

Final Writing Assignment: Prompt given 12/7; paper due 12/14

11. Conclusions: What Did We Learn and Where Do We Go from Here?

12/12: An Open Discussion Soliciting Critical Feedback on this Course