SOCIOLOGY 371
Intersectionality: Race, Class, and Gender Analysis
Spring 2015
Oberlin College
Professor Julie C. Keller
Email: jkeller2@oberlin.edu  Office Phone: (440) 775-6238
Class: Tues. & Thurs. 9:30-10:45am; 323 King
Office Hours: Wed. 10:00am-Noon and by appointment, 203 Mudd

Course Description

In this course we will examine the concept of intersectionality. We will investigate its development, the practice of quantitative and qualitative intersectional research methods, and the influence of this tool on sociological theory. We will critically analyze the role of power in intersecting systems, including those beyond race, class and gender—such as sexuality, citizenship and ability. Our exploration will center on the discipline of sociology, but we will occasionally draw from other disciplines to trace the meaning and use of intersectionality over time and across fields. Previous coursework in sociology is required.

Course Objectives

If you invest the required time and effort into this course, you will have developed the following skills: 1) The ability to critically engage with complex and advanced sociological work through careful reading, writing, and in-class contributions; 2) The ability to design accessible public sociology material about an intersectional topic that interests you; 3) The ability to apply the tools of intersectionality to the social justice projects to which you are personally and professionally dedicated.

Course Requirements

Attendance  Coming to class is mandatory. Starting with Week 2, each student can miss 2 days of class without penalty and I will not ask questions about the nature of the absence. These absences are meant to cover illnesses and unforeseen events. Each absence after 2 days results in the removal of points from your total grade. Lateness is strongly discouraged. After 2 late passes, points will be deducted from your course grade. If you will be more than 15 minutes late, please don’t come to class. Your presence will not count for any credit in this instance.

Many of our discussion sessions will occur in a circular seating configuration. It may be tempting to check your email in this configuration, but please respect others by refraining from doing so. Laptops are allowed, but note that if you are engaged in non-class activities on your computer, your participation for that day will be scored as a zero.

Participation  You will be graded on your effort to verbally engage with the topic of discussion. To be able to fully engage with the topic, you must read all of the assigned material before
coming to class each day. Whether in hard or electronic copy, please bring the assigned readings for the day and your notes to class. I will regularly ask you to write closed-book in-class responses to prompts that I provide. I will also occasionally ask you to complete a very short homework assignment. Together, along with your attendance, these contributions will constitute your participation grade.

I encourage you to share your viewpoint during class discussions, even, and especially, if it contradicts that of others. Disagreement and class debates can be quite fruitful and thought-provoking. During our class discussions, please show respect to me and other students who may have different perspectives from your own.

During our class discussions, I will regularly introduce outside material to us to analyze. These will include blog posts, excerpts from popular books, and academic sources.

**Leading Discussion**  For one class period this semester, you will facilitate discussion of the reading for that day. Two days in advance, you will email me a list of thought-provoking questions to pose to the group. Feel free to be creative in your facilitation, incorporating news items or other media to help create a stimulating and fun space for productive discussion.

**Reaching Back Paper**  You will write a 3-4 page paper that reflects upon material from a social science or humanities course you have taken previously at Oberlin. Review past syllabi and select a relevant piece that stuck with you. Briefly summarize the article/chapter, then focus on how intersectionality was mapped, treated, and understood in this piece, drawing on assigned material from the first two weeks of this class to inform your paper.

**Methods Paper**  Using an intersectional lens and drawing from sources in our methods unit, you will write a 6-8 page critique of the methodological components of two pieces of contemporary sociological scholarship. You will select these non-syllabus readings based on your own interests.

**Book Review**  Choose one of the required 5 books assigned in this class and write a thoughtful and original 6-8 page review of this work. Focus on identifying the book’s contribution to theorizing and practicing intersectionality in the social sciences. You may submit this paper at any point during the semester, but it must be submitted by May 8th at Midnight.

**Final Research Project**  Public sociology demands that academics climb down from their ivory tower and make scientific knowledge accessible to the communities that surround them. For your final project, you will select a relevant topic of your choice, conduct a literature search, develop an argument, and translate this material into a 10-12 page document that is more accessible to a non-academic audience than a typical final course paper. (More details to come.)

**Evaluation Criteria**  All papers will be graded for their thesis statements, analytical precision, conceptual clarity, organization, proper citation, format, and mechanics (spelling & grammar).
Grade Scheme

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reaching Back Paper</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Methods Paper</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leading Discussion</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Research Project</td>
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<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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| Total               | 200    | 100%       |

A+ 97-100%
A  93-96%
A- 90-92%
B+ 87-89%
B  83-86%
B- 80-82%
C+ 77-79%
C  73-76%
C- 70-72%
D  60-69%
F  0-59%

Readings
The required books listed below are available at the Oberlin College Book Store, are on reserve at Mudd Library and some are available as e-books on the Oberlin College Library website. Other course readings will be available on the Blackboard (Bb) course website.


Students with Disabilities
Please let me know if you need disability-related accommodations in this course. Contact the Student Academic Services to develop a plan for assistance: Jane Boomer, Coordinator of Disability Services, Room G27 Peters Hall, ext. 55588.

Academic Honesty
This course adheres to the policies of the Oberlin College Honor Code and Honor System. Please add the statement “I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment” to all written work. For more information on the Honor Code, see: [http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html).

Religious Observance
Please inform me by the end of Week 2 of the semester if you need to miss a class to observe a religious holiday. Make up work will be assigned to recover credit.

Student Athletes
If you are a student athlete with scheduled games that will conflict with this course, please bring me a signed letter from the athletics department. Make up work will be assigned to recover credit.

[Note: Some details of this syllabus may change over the course of the semester.]
UNIT I: HISTORY & CONCEPTS

Week 1: (2/3 & 2/5)—Overview

T: Introduction to the Course & Definitions
R: Looking Back: Sociology & Black Feminism

Week 2: (2/10 & 2/12)—Critical Race Theory

T: Critical Race Theory: Origins & Basic Tenets
R: Emergence of Intersectionality

Week 3: (2/17 & 2/19) Intersectional Debates—In Theory & In Practice

Due: Reaching Back Paper, Tues. Feb. 17th, in class at 9:30am (hard copy)

T: “Doing” Intersectionality?
R: More Recent Debates: In the Academy and Beyond

UNIT II: INTERSECTIONAL METHODOLOGY

Week 4: (2/24 & 2/26)—Epistemology & Theoretical Process

T: Standpoint, Revisited
  -Please skim PHC from 2/5
  -hooks, b. 2003. “Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness,” pp.153-159
R: Conceptualizing Intersectionality Beyond Sociology
Week 5: (3/3 & 3/5)—Methods In-depth: Study Design, Data Collection & Analysis

T: Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches
- Sprague, J. 2005. Feminist Methodologies (excerpt on quantitative methods)

R: Explanatory Process

UNIT III: FAMILIES

Week 6: (3/10 & 3/12)
T: Not Our Kind of Girl (Forward through Ch. 3)
R: Not Our Kind of Girl (Ch. 4 through Ch. 6)

Week 7: (3/17 & 3/19)

Due: Methods Paper, Tues. March 17th, in class at 9:30am (hard copy)

T: Not Our Kind of Girl (Ch. 7 through Appendices)

UNIT IV: WORK

R: No More Invisible Man (Introduction through Ch. 2)

[Spring Break: 3/21-3/29]

Week 8: (3/31 & 4/2)
T: No More Invisible Man (Ch. 3 and Ch. 4)
R: No More Invisible Man (Ch. 5 through Conclusion)

Week 9: (4/7 & 4/9)
T: The Managed Hand (Introduction and Ch. 1)
R: The Managed Hand (Ch. 2 and Ch. 3)

Week 10: (4/14 & 4/16)
T: The Managed Hand (Ch. 4 and Ch. 5)
R: The Managed Hand (Ch. 6 and Conclusion)
UNIT V: SCHOOL

Week 11: (4/21 & 4/23)

T: Intersectionality in Education: An Introduction


R: Distinguishing Disability (Introduction through Ch. 2)

[Plus, please read E. Patrick Johnson’s 5-page article, “From Page to Stage” in preparation for his talk at 7:00pm, Thursday April 23rd]

Week 12: (4/28 & 4/30)

T: Distinguishing Disability (Ch. 3 and Ch. 4)

R: Distinguishing Disability (Ch. 5 through Appendix)

UNIT VI: GLOBAL & QUEER INTERSECTIONALITIES

Week 13: (5/5 & 5/7)

T: The Sexuality of Migration (Forward through Ch. 4)

R: The Sexuality of Migration (Ch. 5 through Editors’ Conclusion)

Book Review Due: By Friday, May 8th at Midnight (submit in advance at any point)

Final Project Due: By Thursday, May 14th at 4:00pm