**Economics 5140/6140: Discrimination in Labor Markets**

Fall 2012

M W 4:35-7:35pm BUC 305

Instructor Johan Uribe

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Office Hours: To be determined by class vote

This class examines the issue of discrimination in US labor markets from both a theoretical perspective and an empirical perspective. The focus is on racial discrimination (especially discrimination against African Americans) and gender discrimination. However, we will have the opportunity to examine the experiences of other ethnic groups, as well as discrimination along age, religion, or other lines, through additional readings and research projects.

Our class time will be spent primarily on discussion and critical analysis of the readings and of other recent research. Students must be committed to reading and thinking about the material before coming to class.

Class reading materials will mainly consist of book chapters and academic journal articles posted on Canvas. Everyone should purchase Sugrue, The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit (also available at the bookstore). We will use the Sugrue book as a kind of “case study” of issues relating to racial inequality. Other readings may be added depending on time and interest. I will also present a good deal of material from other sources. It will therefore be important to attend class regularly in order to stay on top of this material.

Assignments and Grading

1. Exams: We will have one exam during the course of the class. It will be a comprehensive final take-home exam which will be administered during the last week of class and due during finals week. The format will be three long essays covering what we learned in class. The final exam will be worth 30 percent of the final grade.

2. Research Project: Each student will conduct an independent research on a topic related to discrimination in labor markets. The research paper will be due on the last day of class and is expected to be between 8 and 12 pages long and to follow APA format. Students are not expected to embark on a major research project involving original data work or original theoretical work. However, students will be expected to pose an original research question, gather published evidence from scholarly sources, present an organized and coherent thesis using the gathered evidence, evaluate and criticize the relevant literature on the subject, and to discuss the shortcomings and potential future expansions of the paper. An initial half page to one page long research proposal will be due on the first day of class in October. The proposal must be a coherent explanation of your research question and what evidence you wish to use to back up your thesis. You must include citations and a work cited of at least three academic sources you plan to use. The proposal is worth 5% of your final grade. A rough draft of your paper is due on the first day of class in November. The rough draft should be at least six pages long, follow APA format, and should at least include a coherent introduction to your research question, your methodology, and a discussion of the relevant literature on your topic. The rough draft will be worth 10 percent of your final grade. The final draft, to be submitted to me in person on the last day of class, will be worth 25 percent of your final grade. The grades for all written assignments will be based on both content as well as form-clarity of the argument, grammar, spelling, citation, etc.

3. Presentations/Class Participation: During each class period I will assign two or three groups of four to five people to be in charge of presenting a piece of literature on the following class day. Each group will be expected to very thoroughly read through their respective piece and be ready to not only discuss the details of the article, but more importantly to criticize the article. Each and EVERY member of the group must be ready to present a short summary of the article followed by a criticism. I will randomly pick a member of the group to begin the discussion, and then the other members of the group may join in and contribute. Each member of the group will be evaluated based on their contribution to the discussion. Additionally, every student in the class is expected to have read the article and be ready to discuss and criticize it. The group members will merely be the leaders of the discussion. Class participation/presentation will be worth 30 percent of the final grade. Each students class participation grade will be based mostly on how well prepared they were to discuss articles they were assigned to discuss in the group format, as well as for their contributions to the discussion of other groups articles. Groups will be assigned randomly each class period and I will make sure to give every student in the class several opportunities to participate in a group.

**Students who are taking this class for graduate credit need to meet with me to discuss**

**additional requirements.**

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement**

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services. (www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/ada/guide/faculty/)

**Wellness Statement**

Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student’s ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness - www.wellness.utah.edu; 801-581-7776.

**Policies**

*Attendance:* I do not take attendance. However, since this is largely a discussion based class, regular attendance is absolutely necessary in order to achieve a satisfactory grade. I will not deduct points for missed classes, but consistent lack of participation will be noted.

*Expectations***:** All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.

*Respect:* Disrespectful behavior toward any student will not be tolerated. In particular, any use of racist, sexist, or other offensive language will not be tolerated.

Weighting of Assignments

Final Exam – 30%

Research Proposal – 5%

First Draft – 10%

Research Paper Final Draft – 25%

Participation - 30%

Grade Scale

A: 92+

A-: 90 - 91.999

B+: 88 - 89.999

B: 82 - 87.9999

B-: 80 - 81.9999

C+: 75 - 79.9999

C: 70 – 74.9999

C-: 65 – 69.9999

D+: 63 – 64.9999

D: 57 – 62.9999

D-: 55 – 56.9999

Semester Schedule

This schedule is very tentative. Additional readings, changes in the schedule, and other announcements will be posted on Canvas. This schedule will be updated on a weekly basis as the semester progresses.

8/23/2012 - Introduction

8/30/2012 - A crash course on interpreting regression output & Preliminary Evidence of economic inequality and discrimination

**Wage Determination and Theories of Discrimination**

9/6/2012 - Introduction to models of discrimination

9/13/2012 - Racial Inequality in Detroit - Sugrue Ch. 1

9/20/2012 - More models of discrimination

TBA