

****INVITATION***PLEASE FORWARD TO ASA SECTION LISTSERVES****

2013 American Sociological Association (ASA) Position Paper on Office of Management & Budget (OMB) Guidelines and 2020 Census Race and Ethnicity Questions

Members of the ASA Latino Section and the Racial and Ethnic Minorities Section as well as several other sections are working on developing a proactive position paper on the recommendations proposed in the 8/8/12 report on the Alternative Questionnaire experiment of the 2010 Census. The proposed changes in future Census questionnaire formats clearly have the potential to affect the way in which researchers, civil rights organizations and communities interrogate inequality and mobility among Latinos and Latin immigrants, as well as other racial and ethnic minority groups for generations to come. The main recommendation in that report is that the Census should combine the two-question format (e.g., Hispanic Origin and Race) currently used in the Census to one question that would include "Hispanic" as a race and ask about national origin, in lieu of race. The significance of these changes reverberated among the members of our sections as the elimination of the race question for Hispanics would mean that Hispanics that are primarily identify as and are racialized as white would now be indistinguishable from Latinos who identify or are racialized as Black, Native American, etc. The report also tested the elimination of the term race from future Census and American Community Survey forms--a position that echoes the position taken by the 1997 American Anthropological Association Statement in OMB Directive 15 and that is diametrically in contradiction with the American Sociological Association's 2003 Race Statement, which affirms the need to continue doing data collection and scientific analysis on race and inequality.

Please contact Dr. Nancy López, Associate Professor, Sociology, University of New Mexico, Director and Co-founder, Institute for the Study of "Race" & Social Justice, RWJF Center for Health Policy, University of New Mexico, <http://healthpolicy.unm.edu/about/initiatives/isrsj>

Email: nlopez@unm.edu, as soon as possible, if you would like to work on a position paper on these changes for vote by the ASA Council in the 2013 meetings. We are also compiling references for books, studies, articles that can shed light on these questions. Please forward relevant citations to: nlopez@unm.edu. Thank you!