

## UNM SOCIOLOGY OF RACE AND ETHNICITY

Race and ethnicity comprise two of the most important forms of social differentiation in the United States society as well as in countries around the world. What is race? What is ethnicity? Students could well consider how their own embodied lifelong and cumulative experiences with race, racialization and academic training shape their conceptualizations and praxis (e.g., research, teaching and policy). The Sociology Department at the University of New Mexico (UNM) invites a dialogue on these and many more compelling research questions in the sociology of race and ethnicity in the U.S. and global contexts.

### CURRICULUM

Students participating in the race and ethnicity curriculum within the Sociology Department at UNM will be privileged to participate in dialogues about the social construction of race and ethnicity in some of the most uniquely diverse settings in the U.S. At both the graduate and undergraduate level, our classrooms attract a diverse body of students from across the United States and internationally. Our courses on race and ethnicity are among some of the most heavily enrolled at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Our program provides students with the opportunity to examine the multidimensional and multilevel social construction of race and ethnicity at all levels of society, from the most large-scale and global, to the meso-institutional, to the micro-interactional levels.

Sociology faculty and graduate students specializing in the sociology of race and ethnicity focus their research and teaching on the intersection of race and ethnicity (culture) *and* their relation to many of society's major domains, including neighborhoods, social movements, immigrant chains, health and inequality outcomes, and the educational, political, and criminal justice systems. Core seminars in race and ethnicity map the sociohistorical trajectory and examine the sociological conceptualizations of race and ethnicity. Attention is focused on understanding the diverse paradigms and theoretical frameworks in the field: unpacking their epistemologies, central assumptions, discourses, central research questions, as well as exploring the diverse methodological approaches and public policy implications. In addition to core courses in the sociology of race and ethnicity, specialized graduate level courses are devoted to intersectionality (race-gender), health, education as well as the sociology of important groups in the American Southwest such as Native Americans and Mexican-Americans.

The explanation of race and ethnic stratification and conflict is a focal concern of our courses. Racial formation theory, critical race theory, nation-based perspectives as well as intersectionality are some of the central currents of analyzing race in the discipline, while the sociology of ethnicity, assimilation and immigration open up important issues of changing ethnicity in the United States. Such approaches permit opportunities for framing and understanding of racial and ethnic inequality in their variegated and multidimensional and multilevel facets and manifestations. In addition, some of the newer and provocative thinking on race coming out of the current revolution in genomic research are points of sociological inquiry, debate and critique. Graduate students are trained to have a comprehensive understanding of how race and ethnicity are dealt with by a substantial number of sociologists (e.g., public, applied, critical and professional sociology).

## COURSES

The courses offered in the undergraduate curriculum address both national and more specialized contexts of race and ethnic relations and inequality. They include: Soc. 216 The Dynamics of Prejudice (the social constructions of inequalities by race, ethnicity, and immigrant status, as well as gender, class, sexuality, nationality, disability, and age); Soc. 326 Sociology of New Mexico (New Mexico as a social system, including ethnic groups and inter-group relations); Soc. 328 Sociology of Native Americans (Native American peoples in historical, comparative and contemporary perspective in the U.S. and/or other countries); Soc. 420 Race and Cultural Relations (comparative and structural analysis of intergroup relations in the United States and/or other countries and regions); Soc. 428 Sociology of Mexican-Americans (Mexican-Americans in historical, comparative and contemporary perspective and in light of theories of race and ethnicity); and, Soc. Race, Class and Crime (the relationships of race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status to involvement in criminal behavior and social control). The graduate courses take advanced approaches to the issues arising in the areas in race and ethnicity. They include Soc. 520 Race and Cultural Relations (historical and comparative analysis of race and ethnic relations in the U.S., with comparative reference to Western Europe, Latin America, Asia), and, Soc. 528 Sociology of Mexican-Americans (Mexican-Americans in historical, comparative and contemporary perspective and in light of theories of race and ethnicity);

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Graduate students in sociology entertain a wide range of interests in their comprehensive, master's theses and doctoral dissertations. Faculty members incorporate race and ethnicity into their publications in a variety of ways. They include the intersection of race and ethnicity with the sociology of education; violence against Native Americans; ethnopolitical mobilization of Mexican-Americans; health, race and Native Americans; race and crime; race and ethnic identity formation; race and the census; and the sociology of ethno-racial social movements.

## AFFILIATED PROGRAMS

The Department of Sociology at UNM values inclusive excellence in research, teaching, and service. Beyond having diverse faculty, the Department engages in curricular partnerships with a host of academic programs on campus, including the Southwest Hispanic Research Institute, Africana Studies, Chicana/o Studies, Native American Studies, the Robert Wood Johnson Center for Health Policy (RWJCHP), and the Center for Regional Studies. These programs provide Sociology faculty and graduate students unique curriculum offerings and perspectives from a majority-minority state in the Southwest, useful for research, teaching, and academic administration. In addition, Sociology faculty regularly serve on the committees of study for graduate students in other departments, such as Anthropology, History, American Studies and departments in the College of Education.

Co-founded in 2009 and directed by Sociology faculty, the mission of the Institute for the Study of "Race" and Social Justice, housed at the RWJCHP, is to promote the establishment of empirical, theoretical and methodological clarity about "race" that draws on cutting-edge thinking from multiple disciplines and diverse empirical traditions. The Institute seeks to develop ways of empirically measuring "race" and assessing racialization processes in order to develop strategies for ameliorating race-based inequality. The Institute has organized and participated in

several national symposiums with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the U.S. Census Bureau on the collection of Race and Ethnicity Data. It coordinates the New Mexico Statewide Race, Gender and Class Data Policy Consortium established in 2014. The Consortium strives to be a research design and methodology incubator that fosters the exchange of ideas and innovative value-added strategies anchored in the insights of examining race, gender, class together for improving data collection that advances policy-relevant knowledge about inequities in a variety of policy arena including health, employment, housing, criminal justice, education and early childhood. Comprised of the directors and data managers of a variety of research centers at UNM including The Institute for Social Research, Center for Education and Policy Research, The Bureau of Economic and Business Research, The UNM Office of Institutional Analytics, Center on Alcoholism, Substance Abuse, and Addictions, and The UNM Diversity Council, the Consortium aspires to be a national leader in establishing pathways from harmonized data collection, analysis and reporting to effective policies that address the needs of vulnerable communities in New Mexico and beyond.

## FACULTY

The following full-time faculty members in the Department are eligible to serve on graduate student comprehensive and thesis/dissertation committees. Please note that full descriptions of their academic interests, including access to their publications, can be accessed in the official Sociology Department website.

Nancy López, Associate Professor ([nlopez@unm.edu](mailto:nlopez@unm.edu)); race & ethnic relations; race & educations; Latinos/Latinas; theory of race as a demographic category; Dominican Americans.

Felipe Gonzales, Professor ([gonzales@unm.edu](mailto:gonzales@unm.edu)); professor; Nuevomexicano politics; Latino identity.

Roberto Ibarra, Associate Professor, ([raibarra@unm.edu](mailto:raibarra@unm.edu)); Latina/o societies & cultures; race/ethnicity, education, and diversity in higher education.

María Vélez, Associate Professor ([mvelez@unm.edu](mailto:mvelez@unm.edu)); race and ethnicity; crime, law, and social control.

Noah Painter-Davis, Assistant Professor, ([npf26@unm.edu](mailto:npf26@unm.edu)); race/ethnic differences in crime and punishment, demography and crime, courts and sentencing.

Reuben J. Thomas, Assistant Professor; [reubenjthomas@unm.edu](mailto:reubenjthomas@unm.edu); segregation, interracial/ethnic couples and friendships.

Wayne Santoro ([wsantoro@unm.edu](mailto:wsantoro@unm.edu)); race and social movements.

Kimberly Huyser ([Khuyser@unm.edu](mailto:Khuyser@unm.edu)); race, ethnicity and health; Sociology of Native Americans.

Jessica Goodkind ([jgoodkin@unm.edu](mailto:jgoodkin@unm.edu)); health inequality and race ethnicity