

ECONOMICS OF MINORITIES, RACE, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, & IMMIGRANTS

[Sample Syllabus]

CLASS INFORMATION

Semester: Fall 2020

Class Time: M, W, 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Classroom: Lecture Hall

Prerequisites: Intermediate Microeconomics and Calculus I.

Required Textbooks:

Immigration Economics, George J. Borjas, Harvard University Press, 2014.

The Economics of Race in the United States. Harvard University Press, 2015

Optional Textbook: *Victims of Progress (6th ed)*. Bodley, John H, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015.

Two copies of each textbook will be reserved for students at the library and e-copies will be made available. All additional course readings available online.

Course website: Lecture notes, homework assignments, problem set solutions, and course readings will be made available on the website.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name: Dr. Kritee Gujral

E-mail: kriteegujral@gmail.com

Office: TBD

Office Hours: W, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM, TH, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM, and by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will provide a broad overview of the current political and economic standing of racial minorities, indigenous communities, and immigrants in the U.S. using tools of economic analysis— incentives, equilibrium, optimization, and more. The course previews racial and ethnic differences across blacks, whites, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and indigenous populations in the context of health care, education, employment opportunities, housing, crime and wealth. The second half of the course focuses on immigrant economics and includes topics such as self-selection and assimilation of immigrants, as well as their impact on the labor market and the economy as a whole. The course will include discussions of race and immigration in historical, cultural, economic and policy contexts. The course will highlight that progress of a group in one area is often constrained by the group's disadvantage and/or diminishing marginal returns in another. Students will learn that thorough and careful analysis is needed for informing appropriate policy, and they will be encouraged to discuss policy solutions and implications.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

READING

Students are expected to have read the assigned readings listed in the course schedule before the day the material is scheduled to be covered. This policy must be strictly followed after the first day of class. A detailed schedule of daily readings will be provided on the first day of class. Some of the readings will be very technical and students are not responsible for understanding all of the methods, however, students are responsible for understanding the main research questions, framework and findings of each reading. We will be discussing the research, methods (when applicable), the findings, and their implications in class. Therefore, it is important that you have an understanding of the main results of the chapters and the journal articles prior to the class period. Class lectures will cover topics from supplemental materials, and students may wish to consult supplemental materials to enhance their understanding of the topics covered each week.

CLASS PARTICIPATION (5%)

Students are expected to raise thoughtful comments and questions based on their readings, material covered in the lectures, and on comments and presentations made by classmates.

HOMEWORK (30% TOTAL, 15% EACH)

There will be 2 graded and other non-graded homework assignments, which will include problem sets that help students apply math to understand key concepts and short 1-page response papers that help students think critically about the coursework in the policy context. Extra credit opportunities will also be provided from time to time.

- **Problem Sets** – Will be graded mostly on effort and on showing each step to get to the answer. Accuracy of the answers matters, but is weighed less. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize office hours to improve on and practice their math skills as needed.
- **1- Page Response**- Must describe a student's insight, learning, or an opinion related to one of select lecture topics and must be complemented with a relevant and important news article. Grade rubrics will be provided.

Homework needs to be turned in within the first 5 minutes of class starting on the day that it is due. **There will be no exceptions made, and no late assignments will be accepted.**

POP QUIZZES (20%)

There will be a total of 3-6 pop quizzes (20 minutes of class time), out of which your two lowest scores will be dropped. Quizzes will be straightforward, and will test understanding of key concepts using short essay response and multiple choice questions. Quizzes will include extra credit opportunities from time to time. Sample questions will be discussed during lectures. Quizzes will usually be at the end of class, and could be on material covered up to the prior day's reading assignment and lecture. There are no make-up quizzes, so if you do not attend class on a pop-quiz day, that quiz will count as one of your drops. Keeping up with the material will be crucial, and you are encouraged to ask questions in class and attend office hours so that you learn the material. **These unannounced quizzes are fair game at any point during the course.**

EXAMS (30% TOTAL, 15% EACH)

There will be two exams, and the final will not be cumulative per se, **however, the material builds up on previous lectures, so keeping up with the material will help.**

GROUP PROJECT & PRESENTATION (15% TOTAL)

Students, in groups of 3-4, will submit a 2-3-page report describing key issues facing a racial/ethnic group or an immigrant group. The report will shed light on 1-2 national or state-level policies that severely disadvantage the chosen group. These descriptions must be framed using economic

concepts learned during the course. The use of relevant graphs and descriptive data analysis is encouraged where applicable. The report must suggest solutions supported by economically sound arguments. Students will present the report in class (10-minute presentation). Each group member must present and must submit a grade sheet evaluating the contribution/effort of other group members. Grading rubrics will be provided when the project is assigned.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Below is a general course schedule. A detailed schedule with daily readings and assignments will be assigned at the outset of the course. I will also let you know beforehand if there are sections of chapters I would like for you to ignore or simply skim over.

Week	Course Schedule
Week 1	Introduction to Race and Racism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is race? • Statistical discrimination
Week 2	Racism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment and Earnings • Education Homework 1 assigned
Week 3	Racism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Life, Friends, Partners, and Children • Housing, Neighborhoods, & Crime Homework 1 due
Week 4	American Indians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political and economic status of American Indians • How do tribal governments raise revenues? • Educational attainment, employment and wages
Week 5	Mid-term review Mid-term exam
Week 6	Immigration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-selection: Who moves? • Immigrants and the labor market Group project assigned
Week 7	Immigration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses and entrepreneurs • Gains from open borders
Week 8	Immigration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gains from open borders • High-skill immigration Homework 2 assigned
Week 9	Immigration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-skill immigration • Human capital externalities Homework 2 due
Week 10	Poverty, inequality, and mobility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty & inequality • Social and income mobility

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redistribution: theoretical case for policy
Week 11	Seeking ways to reduce inequities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reparations • Affirmative action • Other policies
Week 12	Group projects due
Week 13	Group project presentations
Week 14	Group project presentations
Week 15	Final exam review Final exam

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including due dates and exam dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

READINGS

Week 1

- The Economics of Race in the United States. Harvard University Press, 2015; Chapters 3 & 4.

Supplemental (Multimedia):

- Jay Smooth. 2011. "[How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Discussing Race.](#)" TEDxHampshireCollege

Week 2

- The Economics of Race in the United States. Harvard University Press, 2015; Chapters 5 & 7.

Supplemental:

- David Brooks, "The Harlem Miracle," New York Times, May 8, 2009
- Sharon Otterman, "Lauded Harlem Schools Have Their Own Problems," New York Times, Oct. 12, 2010

Take the [implicit bias test](#) – do the one on race. You do not need to share your results but it is worth reflecting upon.

Week 3

- The Economics of Race in the United States. Harvard University Press, 2015; Chapters 8 & 9.

Supplemental:

- C Jens Ludwig et al., "Long-Term Neighborhood Effects on Low-Income Families: Evidence from Moving to Opportunity," American Economic Review Papers & Proceedings, 2013

Week 4

- Bodley, John H. 2015. Victims of Progress (6th ed). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. Chapters 2, 8, 9, 13.

Supplemental:

- Mushinski, D.W. and Pickering, K. (2000). Inequality in Income Distributions: Does Culture Matter? An Analysis of Western Native American Tribes. Journal of Economic Issues. 34(2), 403-412. Access at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4227569>

Week 5 – No assigned readings.

Week 6

- Borjas, George J. Immigration Economics, Chapter 1 & 2.

Supplemental:

- Borjas, George J. "Self-Selection and the Earnings of Immigrants," American Economic Review (September 1987): 531-553.
- Chiquiar, Daniel and Gordon H. Hanson. "International Migration, Self-Selection, and the Distribution of Wages: Evidence from Mexico and the United States," Journal of Political Economy (April 2005): 239-281.

Week 7

- The Economics of Race in the United States. Harvard University Press, 2015; Chapter 6.
- Borjas, George J. Immigration Economics, Chapter 7.

Supplemental:

- Altonji, Joseph G., and David Card. "The Effects of Immigration on the Labor Market Outcomes of Less-Skilled Natives."
- Borjas, George J. "The Economic Benefits from Immigration," Journal of Economic Perspectives (Spring 1995): 3-22.

Week 8

- Borjas, George J. Immigration Economics, Chapter 8.

Week 9

- Borjas, George J. Immigration Economics, Chapter 9.

Supplemental:

- Borjas, George J. "Ethnic Capital and Intergenerational Mobility," Quarterly Journal of Economics (February 1992): 123-150.
- Borjas, George J., "Long-Run Convergence of Ethnic Skill Differentials: The Children and Grandchildren of the Great Migration," Industrial and Labor Relations Review 47 (July 1994): 553-573.

Week 10 & 11

- The Economics of Race in the United States. Harvard University Press, 2015; Chapters 13 & 14.
- Glenn C. Loury, "Social Exclusion and Ethnic Groups: The Challenge to Economics," Annual World Bank Conference on Development Economics, 1999

Supplemental:

- James J. Heckman, "Lifelines for Poor Children," New York Times, Sept. 14, 2013
- Tim Hyde, "From the Archives: Can Temporary Affirmative Action Policies Have Lasting Effects?" American Economic Association research summary, April 2018
- Marie-Anne Valfort, "Do Anti-Discrimination Policies Work?" IZA World of Labor, 2018.

Weeks 12-15 – No assigned readings.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

1. **Respect** - Be respectful of the other students and the professor. Your comments to others should be factual, constructive, and free from harassing statements. You are encouraged to disagree with other students, but such disagreements need to be based upon facts and documentation (rather than prejudices and personalities). Unprofessional or disrespectful conduct will result in a lower grade on an assignment. Warnings will not be given; part of the learning process in this course is respectful engagement of ideas with others.
2. **Name and pronoun preference** - Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Accordingly, I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.
3. **Technology policy** - Laptops, e-tablets or cellphones are not permitted during class. The use of computers during lectures has been shown to interfere with student attention and decrease student success (Fried, 2008; Sana et al., 2013; Hembrooke and Gay, 2003), even when they are used only for note-taking (Mueller and Oppenheimer, 2014). Permission may be granted for special cases; please discuss this with me as needed. **If any student is found using an electronic device without permission during lecture, they will receive a zero for their next pop-quiz.**
4. **Class attendance** - If unable to attend class, it is the student's responsibility to obtain lecture notes and request homework. Quizzes cannot be made up.
5. **Late assignments** - Late assignments will never be accepted (except in the case of *documented* medical emergencies).
6. **Academic honesty** - Turn in only YOUR OWN work. If caught cheating, you get a zero for the assignment, quiz, or exam.
7. **Email/office hours** - Students are encouraged to come to office hours and to schedule appointments if they are unable to come to office hours. Students are also encouraged to email me with their specific concerns and can expect a response within 24 hours. Broad concerns about the course content or assignments should be addressed in-person or during office hours.

All university rules apply. The University's policy on academic honesty will be strongly enforced.

UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES AND RESOURCES

- Honor Code
- Students with Documented Disabilities
- Affordability of Course Materials
- Stress Management, Counseling and Wellness Center

[SOURCES USED FOR SAMPLE SYLLABUS]

This syllabus has been developed using the following syllabi:
[Immigration Economics by Professor Borjas, Harvard University](#)
[Economics of Race and Gender by Professor Brainerd, Brandeis University](#)

[Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights, and the Environment by Professor Rebecca Dobkins, Willamette University](#)
[American Indian Studies by Professor Akee, University of California Los Angeles](#)
[Sample Syllabus by Dr. Hamalainen, Franklin & Marshall College](#)