



**NYU**

**ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

**Race, Identity, and Inclusion in Organizations**

**Spring 2021**

**Instructor Information**

- Sean Thomas-Breitfeld
- Email: [stb245@nyu.edu](mailto:stb245@nyu.edu)
- Office Hours: By appointment.

**Course Information**

- Class Meeting Times: Saturdays, 4:20PM – 6:00PM on 2/6, 2/20, 3/6, 3/27, 4/10, 4/24, 5/8
- Distinct Zoom links for each class meeting are available in NYU Classes

**Course Description**

This course brings together a wide range of thinking and scholarship about race and identity to encourage learning about race as a construct that shapes individuals, interpersonal relationships and society, and how to make progress on addressing racial dynamics within organizations. “Race” is used as a shorthand for the interconnected complex of race, ethnicity, culture and color, understanding that we will be careful to distinguish between them in the course itself.

While recognizing the importance of intersectionality and other markers of difference such as gender, class and sexuality, the course centers race for two reasons: 1) it is generally the most charged dimension of diversity in the United States, the most difficult to discuss and, therefore, the topic we most often avoid, especially in cross-racial groups, and 2) it has the greatest impact on life chances and opportunities: race is often the best predictor of wealth, education, health, housing, employment and other important measures of well-being. However, we live race at the same time that we live other parts of who we are and those intersections will come up throughout the course. Because the impact of race is highly contextual, we will focus on the United States.

The class will meet seven times over the semester, with the content roughly divided into two

sections. We will begin the semester by exploring the racial and ethnic dynamics in organizational contexts, including what makes diversity, equity and inclusion difficult to for organizations. Following Spring Break, we will review a variety of approaches and interventions intended to foster racial diversity and create equity and inclusion within organizations.

**Course and Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, students should be able to

- 1) Reflect critically on personal / lived experiences of race, identity, inclusion and marginalization;
- 2) Participate in, design and facilitate discussions about race, identity and inclusion ... even when such discussions trigger disagreement and / or discomfort;
- 3) Engage proactively and critically with a wide variety of academic research related to race and organizations;
- 4) Draw out and integrate insights from various sources (academic research, popular articles, etc.) to inform strategies and processes for advancing equity and inclusion in organizations.

*Learning Assessment Table*

<b>Graded Assignment</b>	<b>Course Objective Covered</b>
“Where I’m From”	#1, #3
Analysis of Course Reading	#3
Team-Led Class Discussion	#2, #3, #4
Organizational Analysis Paper	#2, #3, #4
Class Participation	#1, #2, #3, #4

## **Course Texts**

Each class will feature a variety of readings from a wide range of sources, mostly scholarly but other times from a practitioner viewpoint. All readings are posted on NYU Classes as PDFs.

Check NYU Classes for announcements, reminders, readings, assignments, etc.

## **Course Requirements**

There are five course requirements; each accounts for a percentage of your grade:

- “Where I’m From” – 4 pages: 25%
- Analysis of Course Reading – 3 pages: 20%
- Team-Led Class Discussion – 1 page, plus presentation: 15%
- Organizational Analysis Paper – 6 pages: 30%
- Class participation: 10%

**All papers should be uploaded to NYU Classes as word documents (not PDFs), and should use 1.5 spacing, have 1 inch margins, use 12 pt. font size, and be in one of the following standard fonts; Arial, Calibri, Times, Times New Roman (no Freestyle Script please).**

**Papers should be posted on NYU Classes by the time class begins on the day they are due; if not, they will be considered one day late. Late assignments will lose one percentage point for each day they are late (which begins immediately after the posting deadline). If you are facing some kind of *serious and urgent* situation that could delay turning in the assignment, contact me as soon as possible to discuss other arrangements.**

## **Description of Course Assignments**

### **1. “Where I’m From” – due February 20 (4 pages):**

In this assignment, you will write a kind of racial-cultural autobiography, addressing the question “How did I come to be who I am?” Think about the influence of race and Ethnicity in both your personal and professional life. You may also want to explore how race and ethnicity have interacted with other aspects of your identity (like gender, class, religion, sexual orientation, etc.).

As you are preparing for this assignment, consider these questions: How does the spectrum from colorblindness to color cognizance (described in the chapter by Foldy and Buckley from the February 1 class) relate to your lived experience? How does the framework challenge, confirm and/or connect to the message(s) about race you received in your formative years? How have elements of your identity shaped your life experience? To what extent have you experienced privilege and marginalization (or both) based upon them? How have various facets of your identity influenced you professionally (at work, in organizations, your commitment to public service, etc.)?

In addition the Foldy and Buckley chapter, you are expected to reference – and engage critically / thoughtfully with – at least one other reading from the February 6 class. Evaluations of this assignment will be based on: 1) completeness of the assignment, including quality and clarity of writing; 2) evidence of having read and reflected on Chapter 2 of *The Color Bind* by Prof. Foldy and at least one additional reading from the February 6 class; 3) thoughtfulness in writing about – and critical reflection on – your lived experience.

(This assignment adapted from a syllabus by Jody Cohen)

### **2. Analysis of Course Reading – due March 6 (3 pages):**

Each of you will be asked to draft a paper on one of the required course readings for the classes on March 27, April 10 or April 24. The schedule of readings and dates for the assignment will be randomly assigned at the start of the semester. The purpose of these papers – in combination with the Team-Led Discussions – is to prepare each person to work in a team that will collectively take responsibility for advancing class discussion on a reading.

The analysis should include the following elements: 1) a summary of the salient findings from

the article; 2) your critical analysis, thoughts, comments and reflections triggered by and responding to the reading; 3) integration of one outside reading or learning resource of your choice that is related to the topic but geared to a popular/general audience (i.e., a recent news article on related current events, an organization, resource or tool, or a relevant website).

Evaluations of this assignment will be based on: 1) completeness of the assignment, including quality and clarity of writing; 2) evidence of having read and reflected thoughtfully and critically on the assigned reading; 3) thoughtfulness in connecting the assigned article to the outside reading or learning process, as well as broader topics.

Note on the schedule: The papers must be completed separately as individuals. The team presentations will happen over the course of the following weeks. This schedule ensures that each member of the team is prepared to contribute their own ideas and analysis, so that the team can work together to design a class discussions (see assignment description below).

(Assignment adapted from Stacy Blake-Beard [2000]: syllabus for Cultural Diversity in the Workplace, and Erica Foldy's fall, 2014 syllabus for this course).

### **3. Team-Led Discussions on Course Readings – Due March 27, April 10 or April 24 (1 page, plus in-class presentation)**

Each student will serve on a team, with the responsibility of preparing for – and facilitating – a 35- to 45-minute discussion on an assigned reading. Based on each team-member's memo on the same reading, the teams will prepare a **talking/discussion points memo** that outlines: 1) the arguments the team intends to make in presenting the article to the class; 2) the plan for integrating at least one outside reading or learning resource; 3) the questions and points of debate / discussion that the team plans to pose to the rest of the class in order to spark conversation and deepen learning during the discussion.

Evaluations of this assignment will be based on: 1) completeness of the team's talking/discussion point's memo; 2) evidence of having jointly (as a team) contributed to the plan for leading the class discussion; 3) skilled and engaging facilitation of class discussion for 30 minutes.

Note: The team's talking points memo is due **by the time class begins** on the day the assigned

article will be discussed. One team member should submit / post the memo to Brightspace on behalf of the whole team.

#### **4. Organizational Analysis Paper – due May 8 (6 pages):**

In this assignment, you will describe a particular organization / institution / sector and outline a strategy for increasing racial diversity, equity and inclusion in that context. This paper should include a **5 page narrative** outlining the current state of diversity, equity and inclusion in the organization and making the case for an intervention that you will summarize in a **1-page theory of change** that provides an initial logic for the intervention.

The 5-page narrative should include: 1) a description of the organizational context; 2) a summary of the organizational issue that you believe should be addressed; 3) a brief proposal for a change initiative that would address the organizational issues; 4) a summary of relevant academic research that informs your analysis of the organizational context and proposed change strategy, referencing **at least two scholarly, peer reviewed research sources** not part of the assigned class readings.

Note: Harvard Business Review and Stanford Social Innovation Review are NOT scholarly, peer-reviewed journals. HBR and SSIR articles will not be counted toward the requirement of two scholarly research sources for this assignment.

The 1-page diagram / illustration of the “theory of change” of your proposed intervention should include: 1) the desired long-term goal that the intervention is in service of achieving; 2) the elements of the proposed change initiative (specific activities or interventions); 3) the outcomes and/or conditions that the initiative would lead to as preconditions for the long-term goal.

Note: there are many theory of change templates that you are free to use. The main goal of this additional page is to demonstrate at a glance that there is a clear and logical rationale for how the proposed activities / interventions will lead to the desired change.

Evaluations of this assignment will be based on: 1) completeness of the assignment, including quality and clarity of writing; 2) thoughtfulness in describing the organizational context; 3) evidence of a research basis for the analysis of the organizational issue; 4) logical and thoughtful rationale and argument for the proposed change strategy; 5) clear visual

layout of the theory of change.

## 5. Class Participation:

The class will rely almost entirely on group discussion so your preparation and participation in class is critical to its success. Even on weeks where you are not responsible for a **Team Led Discussion on Course Readings**, you should certainly be prepared to engage in discussion and demonstrate that you have completed all of the required readings for each class. Evaluation of class participation will be based on the descriptions below.

### “A” Level Class Participation

- Absent no more than once during the semester. Sends email ahead of time to inform professor of the reason that class will be missed.
- Regularly participates in class discussion.
- Comments are clear, succinct, and relevant to the current conversation. • Takes risks in answering difficult questions or offering unpopular ideas. • Is prepared for class, as evidenced by:
  - Applying ideas from the readings to the discussion
  - Challenging or extending ideas in the readings
  - Integrating or contrasting ideas from current readings with previous readings

### “B” Level Class Participation

- Absent no more than twice. May not send email to professor ahead of time. • Participates occasionally.
  - Comments are sometimes unclear, long-winded or not relevant to discussion.
  - Answers questions when called on, but volunteers their viewpoints or takes risks.
- Is less prepared for class (in contrast to the bulleted list above)

### “C” Level Class Participation

- Absent no more than three times. Doesn't email professor ahead of time. •

Participates rarely.

- Is unprepared for class.

### **Course Overview**

- February 6 Introduction to the course, key concepts, and each other • February 20  
Issues of race and identity in nonprofit organizations and the sector • March 6  
Impacts of governance structures
- March 27 Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce
- April 10 Training for diversity and inclusion
- April 24 Grappling with paradoxes in leading organizational change • May 8  
Future directions

### **Schedule of Course Readings and Assignments**

#### **February 6 Introduction to the course, key concepts, and each other**

- 1) Adames et al. 2020. The Fallacy of a Raceless Latinidad: Action Guidelines for Centering Blackness in Latinx Psychology. *Journal of Latinx Psychology*.

Read "Centering Blackness in Latinx Psychology: A Framework" pp. 6-13

- 2) Dukmasova, M. July, 21, 2016. What does it mean to be a white ally? *The Chicago Reader*.

<https://www.chicagoreader.com/Bleader/archives/2016/07/21/what-does-it-mean-to-be-a-white-ally>

- 3) Foldy, EG and Buckley, TR. 2014. *The Color Bind: Talking (and not Talking) about Race at Work*. Chapter 2: Achieving Color Cognizance. The Russell Sage Foundation. Read pp.

13-26

- 4) Wang et al. 2011. When the seemingly innocuous "stings": Racial microaggressions and their emotional consequences. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 37(12), 1666-1678



## February 20 Issues of race and identity in nonprofit organizations and the sector

- 1) Adesaogun, R. et al. 2015. Stratification, communication tactics, and Black women: Navigating the social domain of nonprofit organizations. *Journal of Organizational Culture, Communications and Conflict*, 19 (1): 42-57.
- 2) Building Movement Project. 2020. Executive Summary: Race to Lead Revisited <https://buildingmovement.org/reports/race-to-lead-revisited-executive-summary/> 3) Curry-Stevens, A., Deloney, G. & Morton, M. 2019. Rethinking Services with Communities of Color: Why Culturally Specific Organizations Are the Preferred Service Delivery Model. *Sociology Mind*, 9, pp. 183-206.  
Read "5. The Literature: Seven Assets of Culturally Specific Services" to end, pp. 191-202.
- 4) Dorsey, C, et al. May 4, 2020. Overcoming the Racial Bias in Philanthropic Funding. [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/overcoming\\_the\\_racial\\_bias\\_in\\_philanthropic\\_funding](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/overcoming_the_racial_bias_in_philanthropic_funding)

### ASSIGNMENT DUE: "Where I'm From"

## March 6 Impacts of governance structures

- 1) "BoardSource. n.d. Taking Action on Board Diversity: Five Questions to Get You Started <https://boardsource.org/taking-action-board-diversity-five-questions-get-started/>" 2) Fredette, C. and Sessler Bernstein, R. 2019. Ethno-racial Diversity on Nonprofit Boards: A Critical Mass Perspective. *Nonprofits and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 48(5): 931-952 Read up to "Research Design, Method, and Analysis," pp. 931-938, and from "Discussion and Findings" to end, pp. 945-948
- 3) LeRoux, K. 2009. Paternalistic or Participatory Governance? Examining Opportunities for Client Participation in Nonprofit Social Service Organizations. *Public Administration Review*, 69(3), pp. 504-517.  
Read up to Data and Methods, pp. 504-508, and from "Discussion and Implications" to end, pp. 512-514.

### ASSIGNMENT DUE: Memo on Course Reading

## March 27 Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce

- 1) DiTomaso, N. Racism and discrimination versus advantage and favoritism: Bias for

versus bias against. *Research in Organizational Behavior*. 35 (2015) 57-77. **TEAM-**

**LED DISCUSSION:**

- Alex Meyers
- Chauntenay Young
- Deja Robinson
- Julian Amberg
- Primo Lasana

2) Dover, TL, et al., "Diversity Policies Rarely Make Companies Fairer, and They Feel Threatening to White Men", *Harvard Business Review*, Jan. 4, 2016.

<https://hbr.org/2016/01/diversity-policies-dont-help-women-or-minorities-and-they-make-white-men-feel-threatened>

3) Purdie-Vaughns, V, et al. 2008. Social identity contingencies: How diversity cues signal threat or safety for African Americans in mainstream institutions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 94(4).

**April 10 Training for diversity and inclusion**

1) Antal, A. B. & Friedman, V. J. 2008. Learning to negotiate reality: A strategy for teaching intercultural competencies. *Journal of Management Education* 32 (3): 363-386. Read from "Step 1: Understanding How Cultures Influence Thinking and Behavior" thru "Step 6: Experimenting with Different Ways of Responding", pp. 370-381.

2) "Bregman, P. ""Diversity Training Doesn't Work."" *Harvard Business Review*, Mar. 12, 2012.

<https://hbr.org/2012/03/diversity-training-doesnt-work>"

3) "Chang, E.H., et al. ""Does Diversity Training Work the Way It's Supposed To?"" *Harvard Business Review*, Jul. 9, 2019.

<https://hbr.org/2019/07/does-diversity-training-work-the-way-its-supposed-to>" 4)

Chung, Y. Gully, S.M., & Lovelace, K.J. 2017. Predicting Readiness for Diversity Training: The Influence of Perceived Ethnic Discrimination and Dyadic Dissimilarity. *Journal of Personnel Psychology* 16 (1), 25-35.

5) Lindsey, A., et al. 2015. The Impact of Method, Motivation, and Empathy on Diversity

Training Effectiveness. *The Journal of Business and Psychology*, 30 (3), 605-617. **TEAM-**

**LED DISCUSSION:**

- Chris Holden
- Jaheer Jones
- Kirsten Howe
- Leslie Harris
- Thais Carter

**April 24 Grappling with paradoxes in leading organizational change**

1) Change Elemental. "What's Power Got to Do With It? Owning Your Power As a Manager."

<https://changeelemental.org/resources/owning-your-power-as-a-manager/> 2) Ferdman,

B.M. 2017. Paradoxes of inclusion: Understanding and managing the tensions of diversity and multiculturalism. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 53 (2), 235- 263.

**TEAM-LED DISCUSSION:**

- April Thompson
- Asli Ali
- Chelsea Kirk
- Lauren Stackpoole
- Linda Zhang

3) Koppers, A., et al. "Discursive managerial practices of diversity and homogeneity."

*Journal of Gender Studies*, 24 (3), 259-274.

4) Le, V. "Toxic Self-Marginalization: How our unconscious addition to being underdogs

harms our work." <https://nonprofitaf.com/2019/09/toxic-self-marginalization-how-our-unconscious-addiction-to-being-underdogs-harms-our-work/>

**May 8 Future directions**

1) Dobbin, F. and Kalev, A. "Why Diversity Programs Fail: And what works better." *Harvard Business Review*, Jul.-Aug. 2016. <https://hbr.org/2016/07/why-diversity-programs-fail> 2)

Hudson-Ward, A. 2014. "Eyeing the New Diversity: An emerging paradigm for recruitment

and retention." *American Libraries*, 45 (7/8), pp. 32-35.

3) Jordan, C.G. and Ewing, H.T. 2016. "Diversity and Inclusion Concepts and Practice as Informed by Gestalt Training." *Gestalt Review* 20 (2), pp.188-200

4) Olsen, J.E. and Martins, L.L. 2012. "Understanding organizational diversity management programs: A theoretical framework and directions for future research." *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 33 (8), pp. 1168-1187.

## **ASSIGNMENT DUE: Organizational Analysis Memo**

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by Wagner's Academic Code. All Wagner students have already read and signed the Wagner Academic Oath. Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations to me. If any student in this class is unsure about what is expected of you and how to abide by the academic code, you should consult with me.

### **Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at NYU**

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) website and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or email CSD at (212-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

### **NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays**

NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays that might coincide with exams to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.