This course examines the connection between two of the United States’ most stark racial inequities: Black-White health disparities and Black-White residential segregation. For many diseases and health conditions, Black people in the U.S. have higher prevalence, more severe disease, and higher mortality rates. This health portrait is not attributable solely to restricted access to medical care; so what are the causes? The long history (and current persistence) of segregation between Black and White populations has a cascading effect on many critical resources and opportunities. These include: education, income, wealth, social networks, prestige, power, environmental exposures, neighborhood amenities, and more. For that reason, Williams and Collins (in an article that we will read in class) argue that segregation is the cornerstone upon which Black-White health disparities are built. Today, when people hear the words “segregation”, the images that tend to come to mind are those of a bygone era, such as water fountains that say “Whites Only”. With the passage of civil rights laws, that kind of legalized segregation no longer exists. However, in many ways, the United States remains just as segregated as before those laws were passed. In this class we will explore the cascading effects of segregation to answer questions such as: What are the mechanisms through which Black neighborhoods are segregated? How do predominantly Black neighborhoods differ from predominantly White neighborhoods? What impact does segregation have on socioeconomic position? Taken together, what is the connection between racial segregation and health disparities?
Course objectives:
Students who take the course will:
• Learn the current state of racial residential segregation across U.S. cities
• Learn the history, particularly policies and practices, that have led to current segregation levels
• Learn the current state of Black-White health disparities in the U.S.
• Learn to identify, extract and analyze varied data (e.g., U.S. census, real estate values) related to segregation and health
• Use a variety of tools to analyze and present information (e.g., graphics, oral presentation, spatial and quantitative data)
• Have frequent opportunities to write. Writing skills only improve by doing!

Course structure:
Simply put, the course includes a bunch of stuff, and it will not be entirely linear in nature. For example, you will see that we don’t really talk about health disparities until the end of the course, not at the beginning. Also, assigned reading will mostly come after class sessions, rather than before precede it, to facilitate comprehension and analysis. The overall goal is to have you encounter and work with lots of different kinds of information, and have that come together as the course progresses.

1. As a 400-level course, class time will not rely entirely on lecture. There will be some lecture time most days, but apart from that, there will be an emphasis on discussion (of assigned readings, homework, and more). Everyone is expected to actively and constructively participate — class will only be as stimulating as you make it. So, it goes without saying that being present each day and reading in advance of class meetings is critical.

2. There is a fair amount of reading. Plan ahead so you can keep up!

3. In addition to the reading and other assignments, the class will include a “virtual neighborhood” experience. All students will be assigned to a particular racial and socioeconomic background and will live in a virtual neighborhood. “Residents” of the assigned neighborhoods will encounter various life experiences as the class progresses. These exercises will be central in our analysis of segregation’s effects on health and wealth. They are intended to bring to life the issues you would otherwise only read about in assigned texts or hear me talk about in class. Your neighborhood is located in Sakai, via the Groups feature.

4. In the last few days we will complete a street-level observation of New Brunswick, to explore neighborhood change right here in our own backyard.

Course Requirements & Grading
Check your email every day! Information about life experiences in the virtual neighborhoods will generally be sent by email and if you don’t check it on time, you won’t be able to complete assignments on time.

Commentaries (5%): Three commentaries are due at any time during the semester. Commentaries are 2-page responses to the readings, in which you argue with the text, suggest areas for future research, discuss what ideas were interesting and why, describe the ways in which the work relates to other literature we’ve read, outline how the arguments might apply to other populations, etc.
Please note: Commentaries are due the same day as the reading! For example, if you want to write a commentary about housing foreclosures it is due on Nov. 22, the day we will discuss those articles in class. However, don’t actually wait until the last few weeks of the semester to turn these in. Responding to the literature and forming arguments in the commentaries will be useful preparation for the midterm, so you should complete at least one before the exam.

Class participation (10%): What it sounds like. Participation means your active and engaged analytic contributions during class. If you merely attend class, but say nothing and appear to be a pile of compost, that does not count.

Homework (20%): Homework assignments will include a variety of activities that will draw upon lectures, the reading, and the experiences in the virtual neighborhood. Homework assignments are separate from whatever work you may have for the virtual neighborhood. Whether a homework assignment is due on any given day is outlined in the schedule. Assignments will either be distributed in class the meeting before, or online in Sakai. Completed homework is due by 12:35. Please: 1. Upload your homework to Sakai before class, so I have a permanent record of everyone’s work for the semester; and 2. Bring a hard copy to class, which I will grade.

Midterm Exam (30%): There will be a take-home midterm exam, which will draw upon everything through the first half of the class. The midterm will ask you to respond to a statement by your boss, a fictitious Commissioner of Public Health. The Commissioner will claim that population health is due to particular determinants, and you will write an official response (5 double-spaced pages) in which you refute this claim. Of course, in disagreeing with the Commissioner “on the record”, your statement cannot rest on conjecture or opinion—you must use relevant literature and evidence to support your assertions. You will NOT have to do any new research to complete the midterm. Relevant literature means all the assigned reading you have done for class up to that point. If you keep up with the reading and participate fully in class discussions and activities, you will be all set.

Areas of evaluation for the midterm

- Strength and clarity of argument
- Clarity of writing
- Organization
- Appropriate coverage of literature
- Appropriate citation of other scholars’ work
- Grammar
- Appropriate use of style guides (e.g., APA, ASA). You can use whichever is appropriate for your discipline as long as you do it correctly and consistently.

Final Project (35%): The final project will ask you to synthesize what you have learned over the course of the semester in a written project that will be the equivalent of a 15-20 page paper. You will be evaluated on the same constructs as the midterm (e.g., clarity of argument, writing, organization). However, it will not be a “standard” paper format. Stay tuned.

Academic integrity

As detailed on the Rutgers Academic Integrity webpage (http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/), “academic integrity requires that all academic work be wholly the product of an identified individual or
individuals... Ethical conduct is the obligation of every member of the University community, and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses.” I expect everyone to adhere to the policies set forth by the University. All work must be your own, and the use of others’ ideas must be appropriately cited. With the exception of the New Brunswick street observation, none of the other assignments are collaborative projects among students unless otherwise noted.

Policy on Late Assignments
In fairness to all students, assignments may not be turned in late, except for approved extensions for illness or personal/family emergencies (see absence reporting below). Extensions will not be granted for routine conflicts, other curricular requirements, computer glitches, etc. Late work without an extension will drop by 10 points per day, including weekends.

Absence reporting
Please use the following link: [https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/](https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/) to report absences. Rutgers University is now employing a system-wide procedure for student absences, which ensures students and faculty that there is an official record of student absences. If you know in advance that you will miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website [https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/](https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/) to indicate the date and reason for your absence. If you anticipate missing more classes than that, you should see me so we can determine whether this semester is a good time for you to take this course. The system will automatically send an email to me. If you miss unexpectedly due to illness, please report it at that time.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
Students who require accommodations for disabilities are urged to contact the Office of Disability Services at 732-932-2848 or dsoffice@rci.rutgers.edu. This office works with students to document any disability and to determine appropriate accommodations. I am unable to create accommodations on an individual basis. Please see me if you have further questions.

Required Readings
Journal articles are available for you to download through Rutgers’ libraries. Search for the periodical title in the catalog, and navigate to the appropriate year and volume, where you can obtain a PDF. Other readings are located in Sakai, and are demarcated with a Ψ.

The following required books are available for purchase at the Rutgers Bookstore.


A nice book to have (but not required) is:


Course schedule
Required readings are outlined for each class day. Readings are due on the date for which they are listed, so be prepared to discuss them that day (and thereafter, of course).
September 1: Introduction to the class

September 6: The terrain of racial segregation, past and present


Homework due Sept. 6
Yes

September 13: More on the processes of segregation


Homework due Sept. 13
Yes

Sept. 15: The role of real estate brokers (plus, sneak preview on health outcomes)


Homework due Sept. 15
Yes
Sept. 20: Fundamental causes of health—socioeconomic status, residential segregation


Homework due Sept. 20
Yes, watch Inner City Blues, a documentary viewable with RealPlayer at: http://greatlakestv.org/documentary/view/index.php

Sept. 22: Urban renewal and public housing
Ψ Kwate, N.O.A. GIS map of Stuyvesant town.


The website for Stuyvesant Town (stuytown.com). Go to the website and read all the pages.

Homework due Sept. 22
Yes

Sept. 27: Suburbia


Homework due Sept. 27
No
Sept. 29: Race and retail resources

Chapter 8: “The House I Live In”: Race, Class, and African American Suburban Dreams in the Postwar United States. AAUH

Homework due Sept. 29
Yes

Oct 4: Income inequality and social status
Ψ Change to Win & Cure CVS. (2008). From low quality to high prices, CVS is failing our communities.


Weems, R.E. (2009). African American Consumers since World War II. AAUH.

Homework due Oct. 4
Yes

Oct. 6: Neighborhood infrastructure and aesthetics

Homework due Oct. 6
No

Oct. 11: Mid-course recap and questions
**Take-home mid-term assigned today!

Homework due Oct. 11
No

Oct. 13: Cumulative effects of segregation

Homework due Oct. 13
No

Oct. 18: Perceived disorder

MIDTERM DUE!

Oct. 20: Social networks and spatial mismatch


Homework due Oct. 20
Yes

Oct. 25: Planned shrinkage

Homework due Oct. 25
No

Oct. 27: The mark of segregation


**Homework due Oct. 27**
Yes

**Nov. 1: Civil disturbances**
Mumford, K. (2009). *Harvesting the Crisis: The Newark Uprising, the Kerner Commission, and Writings on Riots*. AAUH.

**Homework due Nov. 1**
No

**Nov. 3: Educational disparities**


**Homework due Nov. 3**
Yes

**Nov. 8: The Black middle class & Black suburbia**


Brown, E. S. (2009). The Black Professional Middle Class and the Black Community: Racialized Class Formation in Oakland and the East Bay. AAUH.

**Homework due Nov. 8**
Yes

**Nov. 10: Outside looking in—Public discourse on the ghetto**
Grant, E. (2009). Race, Place, and Memory: African American Tourism in the Postindustrial City. *AAUH.*


**Homework due Nov. 10**
No

**Nov. 15: Gentrification**


**Homework due Nov. 15**
No

**Nov. 17: The current housing & foreclosure crisis**


**Homework due Nov. 17**
No

**Nov. 22: Health disparities in the United States**


Homework due Nov. 22
Yes

**Nov. 29: In class film, part I**


Ψ The University of Chicago Laboratory Schools Middle School Student Handbook (Excerpt).


Homework due Nov. 29
Yes

**Dec. 1: In class film, part II**


Homework due Dec. 1
No

**Dec. 6: The Moving to Opportunity Experiment**

National Bureau of Economic Research. A Summary Overview of Moving to Opportunity: A Random Assignment Housing Mobility Study in Five U.S. Cities


**Homework due Dec. 6**
No

**Dec. 8: NO CLASS MEETING—Conduct New Brunswick street observation**
Reading: TBA.

**Dec. 13: Last Class! Presentation of street observation data**

**Dec. 20: 5 PM -- FINAL PROJECT DUE**
Your choices to hand in the final project are:
1. Uploaded to Sakai
2. A printed hard copy in my mailbox
3. A printed hard copy in front of / under my door
4. A printed hard copy in my hand

No email!