

**From:** Harrison, Thomas L.  
**Sent:** Friday, April 23, 2021 3:00:42 PM  
**To:** Castree, John W.  
**Subject:** Student Comment Form

Dean Castree,

Please find attached a Student Comment Form. Only **\*after\*** we received the form did the student indicate it was for a course and instructor in Social Sciences.

I trust you will contact the student for further details.

Many thanks,  
Dean Harrison



# INSTRUCTIONAL COMMENT FORM

NAME [REDACTED] STUDENT ID NUMBER [REDACTED]

OCCC STUDENT EMAIL ADDRESS [REDACTED]@MY.OCCC.EDU

PHONE NUMBER [REDACTED] DATE 04/23/2021

COURSE Race and Ethnicity in the U.S. PROFESSOR NAME Sharla Colbert

CLASS DAY AND TIME Online SEMESTER/YEAR Late Spring 2021

All instruction in the Division is under the supervision of the Dean. Whether your comments are positive or negative, please complete all the information requested so that you can be contacted about your comments or situation (if requested). **The Dean may be not able to meet with you immediately.** The Dean may need to make an appointment with you (if requested). Your written comments are helpful. You may be asked to make an appointment with the appropriate department chair or program director.

- Have you spoken to your instructor about this?
  - Yes: What was the outcome? \_\_\_\_\_
  - No: Explain why not. I feel personally attacked for having different views than the professor. She has made it abundantly clear for what she believes, and has had several bothersome comments, as well as videos she made us watch/ write videos over.
- Instructional comments (If more space is needed please use the back of this form.)
  - Other documents attached (email, LMS screenshots, etc.)
  - I have screenshots as well as videos to provide from what this instructor has said.
  - I feel very uncomfortable with her shoving her own personal opinions upon everyone else.
  - I wasn't able to attach them to this form, but I can email you.
- Desired solution (How would you suggest the problem be corrected?)
  - I would like to speak to you regarding this matter, if at all possible.
- Do you feel comfortable with the Dean sharing your identity with the instructor, and others (as needed) in response to your comments?  Yes  No
- Do you request a personal meeting with the Dean?  Yes  No

I certify the information listed above is true and accurate.

[REDACTED]

Student Signature

04/23/2021

2:15

Date

Time

Division Staff Member Initials

Dean's Initials

The Division Office will retain this form and all attachments

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 27, 2021 11:02:00 AM  
**To:** Castree, John W.  
**Subject:** Fw: Exhibits and Concerns Re: SOC 2143

Hello, Mr. Castree! I attached my letter of concerns, along with some exhibits of why I have those concerns. Thank you for taking the time to reply to me. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. Have a great day!

<https://www.theroot.com/redlining-the-origin-story-of-institutional-racism-1834308539> - A link to one of the required videos to watch.



### [How Redlining Continues to Hold Back Black Americans](https://www.theroot.com/redlining-the-origin-story-of-institutional-racism-1834308539)

To understand racism in America, one must first disabuse themselves of the idea that race is a social construct—an idea that has been created and accepted by the people in a society.

[www.theroot.com](http://www.theroot.com)

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 27, 2021 10:57 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Fw: Exhibits

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 27, 2021, 10:57:21 AM CDT  
**Subject:** Exhibits

Download full resolution images

Available until May 27, 2021

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0 bytes

Mr. Castree,

Hello! First I would like to start off by saying I would love to meet with you via Zoom, if that is an available option. I appreciate you taking the time to read this and communicate with me. If I was able to do this, I feel like I would be able to better understand my position and stance in this class. I will attach screenshots and pictures for my examples of why I am writing this letter and contacting you. My phone number is [REDACTED] feel free to contact me. I work Monday – Friday from 8:00 am – 4:00 p.m., but I am available anytime afterwards.

Professor Colbert has mentioned “White Privilege” multiple, multiple times in this class. She has stated that the criminal justice system is biased to every ethnicity, except for whites. Also, in her exams she will make a question regarding racism, and in every single one, she makes the white person end up being the racist, or bad person in the scenario. While I am all for learning, I will not sit her and continue to be bashed for my race. Explaining race is one thing, but when you only put examples of one race, that is where I draw the line. I thought the first time was maybe just one week of it, but it is a constant continuance. Why would I spend my money to be told how “unfair” the system is towards other races when my professor has a bias out? It’s not learning something, it’s her preaching her own personal beliefs towards us, and telling us what to believe.

I’m tired of constantly feeling like I am attacked for the color of my skin. I don’t agree with everything she says, but I have respected her by doing every assignment she has assigned, whether I agree with her or not. I am not spending thousands of dollars to be told what her opinion is, especially when she states it as if it were factually correct. I was too afraid to speak up before, because I was in fear my grade would slip if I didn’t pretend to agree with everything she said. Because of that, I feared by disagreeing with her, my grade would decrease and I would lose my financial aid. I shouldn’t have to live in fear of that, just like many other students have the same fear.

**From:** Probasco, LiErin  
**Sent:** Friday, May 7, 2021 3:22 PM  
**To:** Smith, Melissa S.  
**Cc:** Castree, John W.  
**Subject:** SOC 2143 - small updates for summer

Hey, Melissa

The political climate around racial issues being what it is, Dean Castree and I have fielded a higher-than-usual number of concerns in the past few weeks about how sociology courses are handling the topic of race. None of those came from any of your students.

John and I firmly agree that our instructors and assignments are handling these topics appropriately for a college context. We also think it wouldn't hurt to put additional measures in place - particularly in the Race and Ethnicity sections that are offered entirely online rather than in person. In particular, we want to emphasize that students are encouraged to express diverse views in open, respectful ways; that we know this course material can bring up discomfort, unexpected feelings, or new and challenging ideas; and that the instructor is their first resource if they have concerns or discomfort with the content of the course or of class conversations.

I'm attaching some recommended actions to this email - everyone teaching 2143 is being asked to incorporate these into their class. I know that you already do much of this. These are small-scale measures we hope will strengthen our students' confidence in our instruction for these courses.

If you want to talk any of it over before your summer section, I'm available by email/phone/Zoom. I can also clarify anything in that document, provide the technical instructions for using Open Grader, get samples, etc.

Thank you for continuing to teach this critical but challenging topic with us!

LiErin

LiErin Probasco  
Chair, Dept. of Sociology  
Oklahoma City Community College  
[www.occc.edu](http://www.occc.edu)  
7777 S. May Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73159  
(405) 682-1611 ext. 7327

## 2143 Recommendations Moving Forward (Summer 2021)

**1) Orienting Video** - “Talking about race/Challenges of this course” Add a brief video on this theme separate from any other orienting info. Might focus on: this content can bring up a lot of feelings and can be uncomfortable to work through; your instructor is a resource for you. Diverse views will be respected in the class (identify how you plan to enforce that – eg., discussion board rules, etc.). If a student ever feels like they can’t express themselves or feels views aren’t heard/respected (even by instructor), they should come to you.

**Optional:** Low-stakes “syllabus quiz” style assignment to confirm the student understands key expectations, discussion board etiquette, what to do if uncomfortable.

**2) PowerPoints** – If you’re using the black & white slides tailored for Prof. Probasco’s in-person sections - may be better to use ones provided by publisher/used in your videos instead.

### 3) Discussion Boards:

- 1) **Use Q&A style forums.** Students post without seeing each other’s comments first, which will help prevent an “echo chamber” that can discourage diverse opinions.
- 2) **Use Open Grader to give specific feedback, particularly early on in the term.** As students are figuring out expectations, concrete feedback/guidance about tone/content may help, even if they’re getting full credit.
- 3) **Monitor forums in advance of deadlines.** Especially early in the term, checking in on the forums a few times through the week and offering general “course correction” if needed
- 4) **MOST IMPORTANT - Clear expectations for “etiquette” written down in Moodle.** May be helpful to repeat near each discussion prompt. Including but not limited to:
  - a. *Respectful discourse.* What does this mean? Does the expectation of respect extend to people outside our class who are the subjects of discussion? Remember that it’s likely members of those groups are in our class, their family members, their friends, etc.
  - b. *Academic standards.* Clarify what is expected in terms of writing formality – conversational ok? Grammar standards? Slang ok/not ok?
  - c. *Evidence standards.* How are students expected to support their opinions in these posts? Are anecdotes appropriate? When making generalizations, are sources required/expected? How rigorous? Different kinds of discussion forums have different goals, but it should be clear for each one HOW students will be expected to support claims (And make sure the prompts align well with the standards of evidence you’re expecting from them.)



**From:** Probasco, LiErin  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 1:22 PM  
**To:** Castree, John W.  
**Subject:** Re: Parental Faculty Complaint - Student [REDACTED]

Thanks.

LiErin Probasco  
Chair, Dept. of Sociology  
Oklahoma City Community College  
[www.occc.edu](http://www.occc.edu)  
7777 S. May Ave.  
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**From:** Castree, John W.  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 1:21:23 PM  
**To:** Probasco, LiErin  
**Subject:** Fw: Parental Faculty Complaint - Student [REDACTED]

LiErin,

Just keeping you in the loop. I will talk to the parent. Thanks.

John Castree  
Dean of Social Sciences

Oklahoma City Community College

7777 S. May Avenue

Oklahoma City, OK 73159

Telephone: 405-682-1611 ext. 7297

Email: [John.W.Castree@OCCC.edu](mailto:John.W.Castree@OCCC.edu)

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**From:** Havrilla, Valerie A.  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 12:25 PM  
**To:** Castree, John W.  
**Subject:** Parental Faculty Complaint - Student [REDACTED]

John,

Had a call from a very irate father of a student and I really wasn't able to get anywhere with him. The student is [REDACTED] and apparently has already talked with you. Said the student has been trying to set up a meeting with the instructor but he didn't think that his daughter should have to go to the instructor first and wants to talk with you. He did call on your direct line.

I did ask if the student had filed a FERPA form, to which he turned from the phone and asked her if she did. I heard her reply in the background, Yes, I've already talked with him which I'm assuming meant you.

Instructor: Told me Charlotte Cobert but looking at list see that it is Sharla Colbert.

Class: He said Critical Race but records show she is teaching Race & Ethnicity

Father: [REDACTED] called from [REDACTED] phone number, according to webpage, he is the [REDACTED]. The return phone number he gave is [REDACTED].

Subject of conversation: He [REDACTED] has watch the course videos, doesn't like what is being taught, will hire a lawyer if he needs to, and conversation did get political about Republicans and a reference to being racist but not certain what he was referring to.

Not certain what your status is with the student. The above conversation info is a basis of most of the things the parent said to me.

Call me if you want, I'll just be hanging out here during lunch.

Valerie Havrilla  
Secretary, Social Sciences  
Ext. 7573

**From:** Castree, John W.  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 2:30 PM  
**To:** Havrilla, Valerie A.  
**Subject:** Re: [REDACTED]

Valerie,

I will call him presently. Thank you.

John Castree  
Dean of Social Sciences  
Oklahoma City Community College  
7777 S. May Avenue  
Oklahoma City, OK 73159  
Telephone: 405-682-1611 ext. 7297  
Email: [John.W.Castree@OCCC.edu](mailto:John.W.Castree@OCCC.edu)

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**From:** Havrilla, Valerie A.  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 2:23:08 PM  
**To:** Castree, John W.  
**Subject:** [REDACTED]

Just FYI, [REDACTED] just called again. Wanted to know if you were going to call him back, asked for LiErin, is getting ready to call the President's office, wanted to know when you would be back to the office

Informed him I had forwarded all of his information, there are no faculty on campus, and that you would be off campus all day today. He commented, "...so he may or may not call me..." I again assured him I had forwarded all of his information.

Valerie Havrilla  
Secretary, Social Sciences  
Ext. 7573

**From:** Probasco, LiErin  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 18, 2021 11:50 AM  
**To:** Smith, Melissa S.  
**Cc:** Castree, John W.  
**Subject:** Race & Ethnicity cancelled for summer

Hi, Melissa

I'm sorry to say that we've decided to cancel the section of Race & Ethnicity that was scheduled to run this summer. While it was fully enrolled, this course specifically is facing challenges (and specific complaints) in light of the new HB 1775 law. Senior leadership at OCCC wants more time to discuss whether and how this will impact our curriculum for this course.

I'll keep a close eye on fall enrollment to see if this shift warrants adding an additional section. And of course, as decisions get made about curriculum, I'll keep you posted.

Let me know if you have any questions/want to discuss.

LiErin

LiErin Probasco  
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**From:** Landry, Kaylin R.  
**Sent:** Friday, June 4, 2021 1:07 PM  
**Cc:** Castree, John W. <[john.w.castree@occc.edu](mailto:john.w.castree@occc.edu)>  
**Subject:** Sociology 2143 Summer Offering

Good Afternoon,

This message is notification that Sociology 2143, Race and Ethnicity in the U.S., will be offered for the summer term at Oklahoma City Community College. The course will run exactly as it has in previous terms, no alterations have been made to course content. Students may enroll in Sociology 2143 or remain in their approved substituted course. *OCCC will honor all degree substitutions previously arranged for students who enrolled in different courses.* If you have any questions or would like assistance enrolling in Sociology 2143 please contact Dean Castree. The new course section information is listed below. Thank you.

**SOC-2143-TW02U** Race and Ethnicity in the U.S.

Best Regards,

Kaylin Landry  
Social Science Division Assistant



OKLAHOMA CITY  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**From:** Castree, John W.  
**Sent:** Friday, June 4, 2021 12:50 PM  
**To:** Smith, Melissa S.  
**Subject:** Re: SOC 2143 Summer

Great, thank you!!

John Castree  
Dean of Social Sciences

Oklahoma City Community College

7777 S. May Avenue

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Email: [John.W.Castree@OCCC.edu](mailto:John.W.Castree@OCCC.edu)

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**From:** Smith, Melissa S.  
**Sent:** Friday, June 4, 2021 12:48:33 PM  
**To:** Castree, John W.  
**Subject:** Re: SOC 2143 Summer

Then I'm good to go! As soon as I see the course on Moodle, I will start working on it to have it ready for Monday.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 4, 2021, at 12:34, Castree, John W. <[john.w.castree@occc.edu](mailto:john.w.castree@occc.edu)> wrote:

Professor Smith,

These are very valid questions, and I appreciate the concerns. There will be no changes to the curriculum of the course. The course will be taught as it always has been. The plan for Sociology moving forward is to offer more courses per semester, giving students more options as far as which class they take. Additionally, HP is going to add more courses along with SOC 2143 on their degree plans, giving their students more options in course selection. No changes to any curriculum are going to occur. As far as student complaints, we have given every student who was registered in 2143 options for course substitution. Those options will remain for

students this summer. You will be compensated for the course regardless of whether it runs or not. If I did not answer one of your questions, or if additional ones come up, please continue to ask. I appreciate your willingness to teach the course. Thank you.

John Castree  
Dean of Social Sciences

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**From:** Smith, Melissa S.  
**Sent:** Friday, June 4, 2021 12:26:08 PM  
**To:** Castree, John W.  
**Subject:** Re: SOC 2143 Summer

Hello Dean Castree,

Yes, I would absolutely love the opportunity to teach the course, but I have some concerns and questions.

Erick Worrell is quoted in the Washington Post as saying the course needs “substantial changes to the curriculum” and any teaching of white privilege is in direct violation of the law.

1. Am I required to make changes to the curriculum or can I teach the course the way that I always have? I am concerned about the quality of the curriculum if I rush to change it over a weekend.
2. If I teach it the way I always have and include significant discussions and assignments surrounding white privilege, how will the college respond to student complaints?
3. How can the college allow me to teach white privilege if it is in fact a violation of state law? Or is Mr. Worrell’s statement incorrect or misquoted?
4. If no one enrolls since the course begins in two days and the course is cancelled for lack of enrollment, would my contract still be honored? Right now, because the course was closed due to evaluation of the law, I am still being compensated for the course.

I am in no way trying to be difficult; I just want to make sure I don't do anything to get myself or the college into trouble based on this ridiculous law. I know OCCC has been doing what they need to do to ensure we all follow the law.

Thank you for offering the course back to me.

Melissa

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 4, 2021, at 11:49, Castree, John W. <[john.w.castree@occc.edu](mailto:john.w.castree@occc.edu)> wrote:

Professor Smith,

Good morning. We are going to re-open SOC 2143 for the Summer term. The course will be run as long as a student is registered. Students who were previously registered are being notified of the course's reopening. Would you like to teach the summer section of 2143? Thank you.

John Castree  
Dean of Social Sciences

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Email: [John.W.Castree@OCCC.edu](mailto:John.W.Castree@OCCC.edu)



**From:** Castree, John W.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 9, 2021 1:30 PM  
**To:** Smith, Melissa S.  
**Subject:** Re: SOC 2143 Summer

Outstanding, thank you for working with your student!

John Castree  
Dean of Social Sciences

Oklahoma City Community College

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Email: [John.W.Castree@OCCC.edu](mailto:John.W.Castree@OCCC.edu)

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**From:** Smith, Melissa S.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 9, 2021 1:30:19 PM  
**To:** Castree, John W.  
**Subject:** Re: SOC 2143 Summer

Hello!

I've already been in touch with my one student and we've discussed altering the assignments as necessary. You and I are completely on the same page! Thanks for your support.

Melissa

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 9, 2021, at 10:14, Castree, John W. <[john.w.castree@occc.edu](mailto:john.w.castree@occc.edu)> wrote:

Professor Smith,

Good morning. As I am sure you are aware, you have 1 student in SOC 2143. Our intention is to let the class run with that single student. I am sure there may be need to modify the class due to the single student (alter discussions etc...). Feel free to make any changes you see fit

that will improve the student experience. Additionally, if the student does not want to take a class by themselves, we would allow the student to move to another course and would make any needed degree substitutions. As previously stated, you will be compensated for the course in any case. Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can help in any way.

John Castree  
Dean of Social Sciences

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