RESOURCES FOR RESEARCHERS: Guidance Document

Race & Ethnicity

Race refers to the concept of dividing people into groups based on various sets of physical characteristics and the process of ascribing social meaning to those groups.

Ethnicity describes the culture of people in a given geographic region, including their language, heritage, religion and customs.

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) required federal agencies (under the 1997 standards) to collect race data using a minimum of five categories: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. The Census Bureau also uses a sixth category, "Some Other Race," for respondents who do not identify with the OMB race categories. Respondents may select more than one race, and those responses are tabulated as "Two or more races" (or "More than one race").

The table below compares the current minimum reporting categories with the new, more inclusive reporting categories as permitted by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget:

Current Reporting Categories (5+2 format)	**New Reporting Categories (8+2 format)**
Five race/ethnicity categories	**Eight race/ethnicity categories**
Hispanic	Hispanic or Latino or Spanish Origin of any race
American Indian or Alaskan Native	American Indian or Alaskan Native
Asian or Pacific Islander	Asian
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
	Middle Eastern or North African (MENA)
Black, non-Hispanic	Black or African American
White, non-Hispanic	White
	Two or more races
Two additional categories	
Non-Resident Alien	Non-Resident Alien (of any race or ethnicity)
Race and Ethnicity unknown	Race and Ethnicity unknown

Research Support Services
Division of Research and Innovation
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-1950
Phone: (619) 594-6622
Email: IRB@sdsu.edu

DEFINITIONS:

American Indian or Alaska Native. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Asian: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Black or African American: A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. Terms such as "Haitian" or "Negro" can be used in addition to "Black or African American."

Hispanic or Latino: A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term, "Spanish origin," can be used in addition to "Hispanic or Latino."

Middle Eastern or North African: Individuals with origins in any of the original peoples of the Middle East or North Africa.

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

White: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Two or more races: People may choose to provide two or more races either by checking two or more race response check boxes, by providing multiple responses, or by some combination of check boxes and other responses. For data product purposes, "Two or More Races" refers to combinations of two or more of the aforementioned race categories.

Research Support Services
Division of Research and Innovation
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-1950
Phone: (619) 594-6622
Email: IRB@sdsu.edu

Examples:

The following are examples of ways to ask about social identities. This list is not exhaustive, and each example has limitations. Researchers must carefully consider the complexities of the social identities participants will be asked to disclose, and carefully consider the cultural context in which the research is being conducted. These considerations will impact how the following questions should be framed.

Some Americans are often stereotyped as foreign, to avoid conveying this assumption, researchers who are recruiting participants from the United States may wish to incorporate participants' American identity into questions about racial and ethnic identities.

Example A: Describe your racial and ethnic identity (or leave blank if you prefer not to say): _____

Example B: What is your families' ethnic background and/or country of origin (e.g., Haitian/Haiti; Brazilian/Brazil; French/France; Indonesian/Indonesia, etc.)? Leave blank if you prefer not to say:

_____

Example C: With which racial and ethnic groups do you identify? Please select all that apply:

American Indian or Alaskan Native
Asian / Asian American

Black or African American

Hispanic or Latinx / Hispanic American

Middle Eastern or North African / Middle Eastern American
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander / Pacific Islander American
White / European American

Prefer to self-describe: _____
Prefer not to say

Research Support Services
Division of Research and Innovation
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-1950
Phone: (619) 594-6622
Email: IRB@sdsu.edu

Example D: With which racial and ethnic groups do you identify? Please select all that apply:

American Indian or Alaskan Native
Asian

Black or African American
Hispanic or Latinx

Middle Eastern or North African
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
White

Prefer to self-describe: _____
Prefer not to say

References:

American Psychological Association. (2015). *Guidelines for psychological practice with transgender and gender nonconforming people. American Psychologist,* 70(9), 832–864. Retrieved July 19, 2022.

de Onís, C. M. (2017). *What's in an "x"? An exchange about the politics of "Latinx." Chiricú Journal: Latina/o Literatures, Arts, and Cultures,* 1(2), 78–91. Retrieved July 20, 2022.

Diffen LLC. (2022). *Ethnicity vs Race.* Retrieved July 20, 2022.

National Institute of Health. (2015). *Not-OD-15-089: Racial and ethnic categories and definitions for NIH Diversity Programs and for other reporting purposes.* Retrieved July 20, 2022.

Office of Management and Budget. (1997a) *Recommendation from the Interagency Committee for the Review of the Racial and Ethnic Standards to the Office of Management and Budget Concerning Changes to the Standards for Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity, Federal Register: 62: 36873-36946.* Retrieved July 19, 2022.

Research Support Services
Division of Research and Innovation
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-1950
Phone: (619) 594-6622
Email: IRB@sdsu.edu