

POL 235: Politics of American Minorities

University of Wisconsin – Waukesha

Spring 2007

MWF 9:00-9:50 AM

Room: F004

Dr. Joseph J. Foy

Office: A145

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, or by appointment

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Course Description:

“Until justice is blind to color, until education is unaware of race, until opportunity is unconcerned with the color of men's skins, emancipation will be a proclamation but not a fact.” –President Lyndon Johnson

Dr. John Hope Franklin, Professor Emeritus of History at Duke University, once observed, “We know all too little about the factors that affect the attitudes of the peoples of the world toward one another. It is clear, however, that color and race are at once the most important and the most enigmatic.” His insights suggest that while human behavior is comprised of a complex dynamic, one of the most important, yet inscrutable, influences on how we behave is that of race. In the discipline of politics specifically – the study of who gets what, when, where and how – race, racial identity and racism are critical to understanding the democracy in the United States.

This course introduces students to the dynamics of the social and historical construction of race and ethnicity in American political life, and explores the following core questions: What are race and ethnicity? What are the best ways to think about the impact of race and ethnicity on American citizens? What is the history of racial and ethnic formation in American political life? How do race and ethnicity link up with other identities animating political actions like gender and class? What role do American political institutions—the Congress, presidency, judiciary, state and local governments, etc.—play in constructing and maintaining these identity categories? Can we use these institutions to overcome the points of division in American society? Such questions are critical to understanding democracy in America, for, as Cornell West once noted, “A fully functional multiracial society cannot be achieved without a sense of history and open, honest dialogue.”

Course Goals/Objectives:

To help you better understand what I feel is most important to achieve in this course, I have identified four primary objectives that I hope we can achieve together. These include: 1. To learn the basic vocabulary and concepts of political science so that you can understand the political world. 2. To increase awareness of the interrelationship between

power and democracy as they relate to policy outcomes and political behavior. 3. To develop the ability to think conceptually and analytically. 4. To enhance an interest in politics and government. Concomitantly, I know each of you comes in with your own goals and hopes for the class, and I will be happy to help you achieve all that you can in this course. You are making quite an investment in education, and I will make it my job to make sure you have the tools to meet your personal goals as well as the ones I have set for this course.

Course Materials/Required Reading:

- McClain, Paula D. and Joseph Stewart, Jr., *“Can We All Get Along?”: Racial and Ethnic Minorities in American Politics*, fourth edition (Boulder, CO: Westview): ISBN 978-0-8133-4321-1
- Selections from the CQ Researcher, *Issues in Race, Ethnicity, and Gender*, second edition (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press): ISBN 1-156802-872-5
- Roediger, David R. (ed.), *Black on White: Black Writers on What It Means to Be White* (New York: Schocken Books): ISBN 0-8052-1114-4
- In an attempt to reduce your educational costs for this course, there are several online readings that are required throughout the semester. The original links to these readings are provided in the syllabus, and **copies of the reading are made available to you in the “Content” section of the course on D2L.** If you are unable to access any of these readings throughout the semester, please contact me and let me know as soon as possible.

Grade Composition/Course Requirements:

25% (5% each): Five short quizzes

20%: Midterm Exam

30%: Debate (Prepared opening statement, research materials, in-class forum, and questions)

20%: Final Exam

5%: Attendance and Classroom Participation

Grading Scale:

A = 93-100% A- = 90-92.9% B+ = 87-89.9% B = 83-86.9% B- = 80-82.9%
C+ = 77-79.9% C = 73-76.9% C- = 70-72.9% D+ = 67-69.9% D = 63-66.9%
D- = 60-62.9% F = 59.9% and below

Quizzes: The quizzes will be a combination of true/false and multiple choice questions, and will cover material from the readings, lectures, discussion, and films. The quizzes are not cumulative.

Exams: The exams will be composed of multiple choice, key-term identification, and short-answer questions. These questions will be drawn from lectures, films, discussions, and readings. The exams will be based on the two halves of the course (the 1st exam will be based on the first half of the course and the final exam will be based on the second half of the course).

In-Class Debates: Throughout the course of the semester, students are required to participate in at least one of five, in-class debates. The purpose of these debates is to not only to challenge students to do independent research on issues involving race outside of the course, but to offer a more complete evaluation of student mastery of key issues and concepts learned throughout the semester. Debate guidelines are provided as an attachment to the syllabus. Remember, advanced preparation for these debates is absolutely necessary for your success. Give yourself time to not only do your research, but to think about your position and develop sound arguments supported by facts. If you have any questions, please come and talk to me. Students are required to turn in their opening statements and research materials at the conclusion of their debate as part of their overall grade. Students not participating in the debates are required to turn in two prepared questions for both the affirmative and negative positions.

Preparation, Participation, and Attendance: Students are expected to come prepared to each class, having done the reading assigned for that given day. It is critical to the maintenance of fruitful discussion and learning for students to read and reflect on the materials before their corresponding lectures. Be forewarned that while the lectures and readings for this course parallel each other, they will often provide different insights or perspectives on the central issues we will be examining. Success in achieving our goals as a class, and individual goals on quizzes, essays and exams, is therefore dependant on both individual study and attendance. *No make-up exams, quizzes, or paper assignments will be offered without prior consent of the instructor or in the case of acute, documented medical or personal emergencies.*

A Note on Assessment: A UW Colleges-wide assessment program has been put into place to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the curriculum, programs and services of the institution. The following areas of proficiency will be assessed because they are of primary importance to the education of our students: Analytical Skills, Quantitative Skills, Communication Skills and Aesthetic Engagement. The Political Science Department has also determined a number of core proficiencies for students enrolled in political science classes. As a part of the assessment program, students in political science will be assessed on Analytical Skills, specifically, the ability to “analyze and evaluate arguments.” In addition, students in this course will be assessed on the skill of distinguishing between political fact and political opinion, which the department has deemed vital to all students taking a course in political science. **ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE HAS NO EFFECT ON A STUDENT’S GRADE IN THIS (OR ANY OTHER) COURSE.** Assessment is a tool for the colleges, departments, and instructors to objectively measure our own instructional performance, and does not impact your grades or personal academic progress.

Course Outline

Class 1: (1/22) – Introductions and Course Overview

*No Required Readings

Class 2: (1/24) – Defining America’s “Racial Dilemmas”

*McClain and Stewart, pp. 3-25

Class 3: (1/26) – Defining America’s “Racial Dilemmas” (cnt.)

*CQ, pp. 141-168

Class 4: (1/29) – A Demographic Profile of the United States

*McClain and Stewart, pp. 31-46

Class 5: (1/31) – What is Race, Really?

**Black on White*, pp. 29-37, 56-57; 103-118; 177-180

Class 6: (2/2) – Why Does Race Matter?: Into the Heart of Racist Thinking

**Black on White*, pp. 67-69, 71-84, 85-98

Class 7: (2/5) – A Case of Racism or National Security: Examining the Implications of Japanese Internment

****Quiz #1****

* “A Case of National Security or Racism?: Korematsu v. United States,” article found online at <http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/facts/democrac/65.htm>

Class 8: (2/7) – Is it Racism or Classism?: The Politics of Economic Discrimination

**Black on White*, pp. 102, 119-130, 138-150

Class 9: (2/9) – Is it Racism or Classism?: The Politics of Economic Discrimination

*CQ, pp. 119-136

Class 10: (2/12) – Race and Identity: “Skins”

*No Required Reading

Class 11: (2/14) – Race and Identity: “Skins”

*No Required Reading

Class 12: (2/16) – Debating the Use of American Indian Mascots

****Class Debate****

Class 13: (2/19) – Race, Ethnicity and Political Action

****Quiz #2****

*McClain and Stewart, pp. 67-100

Class 14: (2/21) – Race, Ethnicity and the Policy Process

*McClain and Stewart, pp. 127-140

Class 15: (2/23) – Race, Ethnicity and Political Representation

*CQ, pp. 45-66

Class 16: (2/26) – Race, Ethnicity and Political Representation (cnt.)

*McClain and Stewart, pp. 140-151

Class 17: (2/28) – Racial Violence in America

**Black on White*, pp. 336-349

* “Remembering Vincent Chin,” <http://www.asianweek.com/061397/feature.html>

Class 18: (3/2) – Pursuing Civil Rights

*“Letter from Birmingham Jail,” <http://almaz.com/nobel/peace/MLK-jail.html>

Class 19: (3/5) – Pursuing Civil Rights

****Quiz #3****

*“I Have a Dream,” <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkhaveadream.htm>

Class 20: (3/7) – Pursuing Civil Rights: Comparing Racial and Ethnic Movements in the United States

*McClain and Stewart, pp.47-63

Class 21: (3/9) –Class Cancelled

*No Required Readings

Class 22: (3/12) – Race and Education: A Need for Modern Desegregation

*CQ, pp. 173-194

Class 23: (3/14) – Review for Midterm Exam

*No Required Readings

Class 24: (3/16) – Midterm Exam

*No Required Readings

*****March 19 – March 23: Spring Break – No Classes*****

Class 25: (3/26) – The Politics of Affirmative Action: Origins and History

*CQ, pp. 1-18

**Black on White*, pp. 326-331

Class 26: (3/28) – The Politics of Affirmative Action: Is Affirmative Action Necessary?

*McClain and Stewart, pp. 171-174

Class 27: (3/30) – Debating Affirmative Action

****Class Debate****

*CQ, p. 17 and 164

Class 28: (4/2) – Does Affirmative Action Go Far Enough?: The Reparations Debate

*CQ, pp. 23-41

Class 29: (4/4) – The Immigration Debate

*CQ, pp. 199-216

Class 30: (4/6) – The New Immigrants

*CQ, pp. 219-237

Class 31: (4/9) – Policing the Borders

****Quiz #4****

*CQ, pp. 287-303

Class 32: (4/11) – Debating Immigration

****Class Debate****

* CQ, pp. 235, 257

Class 33: (4/13) – Is Justice Color-Blind?

*CQ, pp. 69-79

Class 34: (4/16) – Racial Politics and Law Enforcement

*CQ, pp. 79-94

Class 35: (4/18) – Debating Racial Profiling

****Class Debate****

*CQ, pp. 78-79

Class 36: (4/20) – Future of Minority Politics in the United States

* “Asian-Americans Leapfrog into Politics,”

<http://www.mercurynews.com/mld/mercurynews/news/politics/16334407.htm>

* “Black Candidates Paint New Picture for GOP Politics,”

http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-06-26-black-gop_x.htm

Class 37: (4/23) – Future of Minority Politics in the United

*CQ, pp. 241-260

Class 38: (4/25) – Future of Minority Politics in the United

*CQ, pp. 265-283

Class 39: (4/27) – Interminority Relations: Coalition or Competition

****Quiz #5****

*McClain and Stewart, pp. 181-206

Class 40: (4/30) – Film: “Do the Right Thing”

*No Required Reading

Class 41: (5/2) – Film: “Do the Right Thing”

*No Required Reading

Class 42: (5/4) – Film: “Do the Right Thing”

*No Required Reading

Class 43: (5/7) – Debating “Do the Right Thing”: Is Violence a Justified Response to Political Oppression?

******Class Debate******

Class 44: (5/9) – Can (and Will) We All Get Along?: The Future of Racial and Ethnic Politics in the United States

*McClain and Stewart, pp. 207-218

******Final Exam: Monday, May 14 from 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM******

POL 235: Politics of American Minorities
In-Class Debate Format, Guidelines, and Resolutions

Throughout the course of the semester, students are required to participate in at least one of five, in-class debates. The purpose of these debates is to not only to challenge students to do independent research on issues involving race outside of the course, but to offer a more complete evaluation of student mastery of key issues and concepts learned throughout the semester.

Requirements:

Students will be assigned to a resolution and side. The affirmative side is the one that supports the resolution, and the negative side is the one that opposes the resolution. You may not be assigned the side you normally agree with, but I encourage you to use that as an opportunity to better understand the reasoning and arguments that support such a position.

After a brief introduction of the topic and debaters by the instructor, the student defending the affirmative position will present their opening constructive from a prepared statement that they will turn in at the conclusion of the debate. After the affirmative has concluded, the negative will present their opening constructive from a prepared statement that they will turn in at the conclusion of the debate. Participants may use visual aids, but you need to make sure they are a supplement to your statements and not the central focus.

Following the opening statements, the affirmative will get to ask the negative questions for two minutes, and then the debaters will switch roles and the negative will question the affirmative for two minutes. Although some questions may come up during the course of the debate, I highly encourage both sides to have several questions prepared in advance.

Once the cross-examinations are complete, I will open the floor to the class for five minutes of questions and answers for the affirmative debater and five minutes for questions and answers for the negative debater. Everyone is expected to have at least one question for both sides, which they will turn in to me at the conclusion of the debate.

After all questions are finished, the negative side will offer a closing statement, and then the affirmative side. Again, although you may find new things to say during the course of the debate in these closing arguments, I encourage both sides to prepare a few closing comments in advance.

In addition to participating in the debate, students are required to turn in the following:

Participants must turn in a copy of their opening statement (typed, double-spaced), **and all research materials** (this could include copies of articles, or just a full bibliography of materials used during your research). *Opening statements must be complete, not just an outline, and should include proper citations where appropriate.*

Non-participants are required to turn in at least two, complete questions (one for the affirmative and one for the negative). **These questions need to be typed and prepared in advance, and must be turned in immediately following the debate.**

Debate Format:

Introduction

Affirmative, Opening Statement (3-5 minutes)

Negative, Opening Statement (3-5 minutes)

Affirmative Interrogates Negative (2 minutes)

Negative Interrogates Affirmative (2 minutes)

Class Questions for Affirmative (5 Minutes)

Class Questions for Negative (5 Minutes)

Negative Closing Statement (1-2 minutes)

Affirmative Closing Statement (1-2 minutes)

Wrap-up: Reflection and Discussion

Debate Resolutions:

- Be it resolved that the use of American Indian nicknames, images, and mascots should be banned from all NCAA and professional sports teams.
- Be it resolved that violence is a justified response to racist political oppression in the United States.
- Be it resolved that the use of racial profiling by law enforcement officials is a necessary power for the preservation of order and security in the United States.
- Be it resolved that the United States Federal Government should substantially increase its enforcement and regulation of immigration into America.
- Be it resolved that Affirmative Action programs are outdated and no longer necessary in the United States.