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Office Hours Tuesday 10:00-11:00 a.m.



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Race and Politics in the Americas

Political Science 416/Black Studies 416 – Spring Semester 2015

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m., Feinstein Academic Center 209

About This Course

Race and Politics in the Americas is an advanced course about the complex racial politics of North America, the Caribbean, Central America and South America. After completing this course you will understand much more about the foundations and nature of contemporary racial politics, in the United States and elsewhere in the American hemisphere. In particular, you will learn about the political constraints and opportunities facing the region's Native American-, African-, Latino, and Asian-descent communities. For political science majors, PSC 416 can be used to satisfy either the American politics or the comparative politics field requirement. For students minoring in Black studies, BLS 416 is an option in the thematic field of "Social and Structural Analysis."

Assessment Options

To accommodate diverse personal learning styles, academic schedules, and outside commitments, this course offers three different options for assessment and grading. You should choose the option which best suits your needs, but once chosen, your option may not

be changed. You should make your selection no later than January 29. These are your choices:

1) Exam option. Most students will select this option. Includes a classroom presentation at mid-semester, and a 12-20 page take-home final exam. Exam questions will be distributed at the final class meeting on April 30, and completed exams will be due in the professor's office, 316 Howley Hall, between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 9. Mid-semester presentation topics and instructions will be distributed at the February 12 class meeting, and a two-paragraph written update on the progress of your presentation is due on March 3. Presentations will be scheduled March 17 and 19, the week immediately following Spring Break—so plan your time accordingly.

2) Unit essay option. This option includes the classroom presentation at mid-semester, and four reflective research essays, due near the end of each unit. Essays will be 3-5 pages each, with due dates of Feb. 12, Mar. 5, Apr. 14, and Apr. 28. Each essay will identify the most important themes of the unit as they emerge from readings, lectures, and discussions; will incorporate findings from three or four outside sources; and will reflect on broader implications. Mid-semester presentation topics and instructions will be distributed at the February 12 class meeting, and a two-paragraph written update on the progress of your presentation is due on March 3. Presentations will be scheduled March 17 and 19, the week immediately following Spring Break.

3) Research paper option. This option includes the classroom presentation at mid-semester, and a substantial, 15-20 page research paper, on a topic of your choosing, grounded in course readings and themes, which is due on the final day of class—April 30. A two-page research paper proposal is due on March 5, and a preliminary draft of your paper (6-10 pages) is due on April 9. Mid-semester presentation topics and instructions will be distributed at the February 12 class meeting, and a two-paragraph written update on the progress of your presentation is due on March 3. Presentations will be scheduled March 17 and 19, the week immediately following Spring Break.

Reading Groups, Article Retrieval, Online Research

All students will be assigned to a Reading Group (A-E). Reading groups will be used for long reading assignments; from time to time, each group will be assigned to read a chapter, and at the next class, will lead class discussion of key themes in the chapter.

From time to time, the class will be asked to complete brief scholarly or news article retrievals. Article assignments will sometimes be made verbally. The first scholarly article retrieval is due on Thursday, January 22. The first news article retrieval is due on Thursday, February 5.

One or two students with laptop or tablet computers, who are especially adept at quick online searches, may be asked on an ad hoc basis, to locate sources which clarify a point raised in discussion.

Grading System: Mid-Semester and Final Grades

You will receive two grades in this course, one at mid-semester and a final grade when the course is complete. The mid-semester grade (40%) will reflect performance on your presentation, your record of attendance and effort, and any written work you've submitted to date. Your final grade for the course will merge the mid-semester grade with your work after mid-semester (60%), including class participation, effort, and written work.

General Policies

In this course, students take major responsibility for learning outcomes. To do this, you are expected to attend every class, participate fully in discussions, and follow all written and verbal instructions. Assigned readings are essential, and should be completed in full prior to each class. Due dates for written assignments are fixed; extensions are not allowed except in *extraordinary* circumstances. All written assignments must be submitted in printed form; electronic submissions are not acceptable. Attendance is mandatory; unexcused absences will earn compensatory writing assignments, and also lower your grades. Contact the professor *before* missing class, preferably by email, with your specific request for an excused absence.

Academic Policies

Each student is expected to meet all requirements for class participation, attendance, and assignment deadlines, as outlined in this syllabus or as verbally instructed by the professor. In addition, you are expected to honor all of the College's general academic policies—including standards of academic integrity. See those policies here:

<http://www.providence.edu/Dean+of+Undergraduate+Studies/Academic+Policies/>

Classroom Policies

Just as mutual respect is fundamental to racial understanding, respect for the classroom atmosphere, and shared responsibility for its maintenance, are fundamental to the learning experience. You demonstrate respect for fellow students, the professor, and the course material, by taking the following policies seriously:

- You should arrive on time; late entry disrupts the class, and requires that announcements (including assignments, events, and so on) be repeated.
- You should be attentive at all times, including when other students or guests are speaking, when videos are on-screen, and when the professor is lecturing or answering another student's question. Pay attention! Don't sleep, be rude, or talk out of turn.
- It is inappropriate to eat or drink during class. You should arrange your personal schedule so that breakfast, lunch, snacks, coffee, and water are consumed before class begins. We're working in here!
- Phone calls, texts, tweets, email, "Facebooking," etc. are not allowed during class. Cellphones, tablets, and laptops should be used only to record notes, conduct online research on a topic raised in discussion, or communicate with the professor.

REQUIRED BOOKS, CHAPTERS ON RESERVE, VIDEOS & MULTIMEDIA

Required Books

- Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. 2014. *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Franklin, Sekou M. 2014. *After the Rebellion: Black Youth, Social Movement Activism, and the Post-Civil Rights Generation*. New York: New York University Press.
- Affigne, Tony, Evelyn Hu-DeHart, and Marion Orr, Editors. 2014. *Latino Politics en Ciencia Política: The Search for Latino Identity and Racial Consciousness*. New York: New York University Press.
- Aoki, Andrew L., and Okiyoshi Takeda. 2008. *Asian American Politics*. Malden, MA; Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Reserve Chapters (see Class Schedule for details)

- Gonzalez, Juan. 2011. "Part I—Roots (*Las Raíces*)," in *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*. Revised Edition. New York: Penguin Books.
- Miller, Jay. 1992. "A Kinship of Spirit," in *1492: The World of the Indian Peoples Before the Arrival of Columbus*. Alvin M. Josephy, Editor. New York: Knopf.
- Momaday, N. Scott. 1992. "The Becoming of the Native: Man in America before Columbus," in *1492: The World of the Indian Peoples Before the Arrival of Columbus*. Alvin M. Josephy, Editor. New York: Knopf.
- Pinkney, Alphonso. 1992. "Historical Background," in *Black Americans, 4th Edition*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Sherzer, Joel. 1992. "A Richness of Voices," in *1492: The World of the Indian Peoples Before the Arrival of Columbus*. Alvin M. Josephy, Editor. New York: Knopf.
- Wilkins, David E., and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark. 2011. "Indigenous People are Nations, not Minorities," and "Indigenous Governments: Past, Present, and Future," in *American Indian Politics and the American Political System*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Videos and Multimedia (see Class Schedule for details)

- 1492: Conquest of Paradise*. 1992. Ridley Scott, Director. Performances by Gérard Depardieu, Sigourney Weaver, Armand Assante, Frank Langella. Videocassette. Touchstone Pictures.
- Alcatraz is Not an Island*. 2001. James M. Fortier, Director. Benjamin Bratt, narrator. Videocassette. Diamond Island Productions. Video.
- Sankofa*. 1993. Haile Gerima, Director. Performances by Kofi Ghanaba, Mutabaruka. Videocassette. Mypheduh Films.
- Viva la causa: 500 years of Chicano history*. 1992. Elizabeth Martinez and Doug Norbert, directors. Luis Monterrosa, narrator. Videocassettes. Southwest Organizing Project and Collision Course Video Productions.
- Hidden Cities of San Francisco : Chinatown*. 1997. Felicia Lowe and Charlie Pearson, Directors. Videocassette. San Francisco: KQED, Inc.

CLASS SCHEDULE with READING and WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

UNIT I • RACIAL STRATIFICATION and the EUROPEAN CONQUEST

In the United States and other nations of the New World, wealth and power are not evenly distributed. Pervasive inequalities correspond closely to the way “races” of people, as defined by the dominant culture, are ascribed social roles and political rights. In fact, racial stratification in the Americas today looks much like the order established by white settler societies, during the European invasion, conquest, and colonial period, from the 15th to the 19th centuries. Even now, descendants of that era’s Indigenous, African, and Asian people remain sharply disadvantaged—in basic living conditions and access to the modern world’s opportunities—as compared to descendants of the European colonists. In Unit 1, historians describe Indigenous life before the 1492 arrival of Columbus.

Jan. 13 – Course Introduction and Overview

Jan. 15 – America’s Indigenous People before Columbus

Read: Momaday, “The Becoming of the Native: Man in America before Columbus”

Read: Sherzer, “A Richness of Voices”

Jan. 20 – **NO CLASS**

Jan. 22 – Contact with Europeans

Read: Miller, “A Kinship of Spirit”

Video Clips: “1492: Conquest of Paradise”

DUE: [Scholarly article: “American civilizations before Columbus”](#)

UNIT 2 • NATIVE AMERICAN POLITICS of RESISTANCE and ADAPTATION

Virtually everywhere in the Americas, communities of Indigenous people continue to exist as distinct groups and nations, still contesting absolute European rule, more than five hundred years after soldiers, settlers, and priests arrived at the dawn of the Conquest. For these five centuries, Indigenous peoples’ entral political struggles have been to restore sovereignty, renew cultures, rebuild populations, and strengthen local economies, despite pervasive social exclusion and continued economic marginalization.

Jan. 27 – Settler Colonialism

Read: Dunbar-Ortiz, Introduction and Chapters 1-3

Jan. 29 – The Roots of Genocide

Read: Dunbar-Ortiz, Chapters 4-6

DEADLINE: [Assessment option selection](#)

Feb. 3 – The “White Man’s Burden”

Read: Dunbar-Ortiz, Chapters 7-9

Feb. 5 – The Ghosts of History

Read: Dunbar-Ortiz, Chapters 10-11, Conclusion

DUE: [News article: “Native American land claims”](#)

Feb. 10 – Resistance and Self-Determination

Read: Wilkins and Stark, “A Tour of Native Peoples and Native Lands,” “Indigenous People are Nations, not Minorities” and “Indigenous Governments: Past, Present, and Future”

Feb. 12 – Review of Native American Politics

Video: “Alcatraz is Not an Island”

[DUE: Essay #1: “European conquest and Native resistance”](#)

UNIT 3 • AFRICAN AMERICAN POLITICS from SLAVERY to EMPOWERMENT

The politics of African-descent people in the Americas are shaped by nearly four centuries of Atlantic slavery, lasting from 1502 to 1890. During that period, Black men and women of Africa were kidnapped, shipped as trade goods across the Atlantic to be bought and sold as bound prisoners, they and their children forced to live without freedom and work without pay, in white-owned plantations, mines, mills, and private homes. Even today, 122 years after the abolition of slavery, American labor markets remain racially stratified in similar ways, so that landlessness, low wages, unemployment, and poverty are still concentrated among the nominally-emancipated African-descent population. It thus should come as no surprise that political goals in the American Black diaspora continue to be what they have always been: an end to racial subordination, and access to social opportunities.

Feb. 17 – Black Enslavement and White Supremacy

Read: Pinkney, “Historical Background”

Video: “Sankofa”

Feb. 19 – Slave Rebellion and Black Resistance

Video: “Sankofa”

Feb. 24 – Black Activism after the Civil Rights Movement

Read: Franklin, Part I

Feb. 26 – Resources, Organization, Empowerment in Black America

Read: Franklin, Part II

[DUE: News article: “#BlackLivesMatter”](#)

Mar. 3 – Social Control and Social Justice

Read: Franklin, Part III

[DUE: Progress report, mid-semester presentation \(two paragraphs\)](#)

Mar. 5 – Review of African American Politics

[DUE: Essay #2: “Legacies of white supremacy in America”](#)

[DUE: Research paper proposal \(two pages, with title, hypothesis, sources\)](#)

Mar. 10 – NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK

Mar. 12 – NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK

Mar. 17 – **Presentations**

Mar. 19 – **Presentations**

UNIT 4 • LATINO POLITICS: COLONIZATION, MIGRATION, and CULTURE

Most people known in the United States today as “Hispanic” or “Latino” are immigrants or descendants of immigrants, from former colonies of the Spanish Empire, especially México, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. Since the mid-1980s these three oldest and largest Latino communities have seen their own populations swell with new births and continued immigration, and have been joined by migrant populations from the Spanish Caribbean, Central America, and South America. By 2043, as the nation’s minority groups together become its majority population, Latinos will be the largest of them all, comprising nearly one-third of the U.S. total, a share already surpassed in New Mexico, California, and Texas, as well as in dozens of major cities.

Mar. 24 – Roots of the Latino Presence

Read: Gonzalez, Part I—Roots (*Las Raíces*)

Mar. 26 – Latino Identity

Read: Affigne et al., Chapters 1-4

Mar. 31 – **NO CLASS**

Apr. 2 – **NO CLASS**

Apr. 7 – Becoming “American”

Read: Affigne et al., Chapters 5-6

DUE: Scholarly article: “Cultural assimilation among Latinos in the U.S.”

Apr. 9 – Latino Racial Consciousness

Read: Affigne et al., Chapters 7-10

DUE: Research paper draft (two pages, with title, hypothesis, sources)

Apr. 14 – Review of Latino Politics

Video: “Viva la causa: 500 years of Chicano history”

DUE: Essay #3: “Latino identities and empowerment”

UNIT 5 • ASIAN AMERICAN POLITICS: DIVERSITY and PAN-ETHNICITY

People of Asian descent, including those with ancestry in the Pacific Islands, have been in the Americas for a very long time. (The earliest people in the New World were walking migrants from Asia, perhaps 75,000 years ago.) The European colonial period from 1492 to the 1960s, brought many millions of Asians to the Americas, primarily from China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Indian subcontinent. More recently, many people from southeast Asia have joined earlier migrants to Canada, the United States, and Latin America.

Apr. 16 – The Racialization of Asian Americans

Read: Aoki and Takeda, Chapters 1-3

Apr. 21 – Asian American Representation and Group Interests

Read: Aoki and Takeda, Chapters 4-6

Apr. 23 – Cultural Image, Intersectional Experience, and Ethnic Identity

Read: Aoki and Takeda, Chapters 7-9

Apr. 28 – Perpetually Foreign, Here at Home in America

Video: “*Hidden Cities of San Francisco : Chinatown*”

DUE: Essay #4: “Asian American pan-ethnicity”

CONCLUSION • RACE and POLITICS in the AMERICAS

Apr. 30 – Discussion - Final class meeting

DUE: Final research paper

DISTRIBUTION: Final exam questions

May 9 – Scheduled Final Exam (2:00-4:00 pm)

DUE: Take-home final examination