

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 310H
THE POLITICS OF RACE
SPRING 2014
TR 12:30-1:45**

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Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to use the characteristic or classification of race to critique and analyze political and governmental systems. In so doing, we will explore the impact of these systems on policy and political processes sensitive to the power of such forces in shaping one's lived experience. Thus, we will examine race as a social, legal and political construct in the United States. Because of the historical legacy of slavery and legalized racism, particular attention is given to the African-American perspective. Since this course uses race as an analytic category by which to make sense of power, politics and government it fulfills the diversity requirement (D) of the university core curriculum.

Course Materials

The following texts are required reading for this course:

Alexander, Michelle. *THE NEW JIM CROW: MASS INCARCERATION IN THE AGE OF COLORBLINDNESS*. New York: The New Press, 2010.

Marrow, Helen. *NEW DESTINATINO DREAMING: IMMIGRATIN, RACE AND LEGAL STATUS IN THE RURAL AMERICAN SOUTH*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011.

McIlwain, Charlton and Stephen Caliendo. *RACE APPEAL: HOW CANDIDATES INVOKE RACE IN U.S. POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011.

Wise, Tim. *COLOR-BLIND: THE RISE OF POST-RACIAL POLITICS AND THE RETREAT FROM RACIAL EQUITY*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2010.

In addition to these books, several articles are required reading as well. They are marked in the course schedule with an asterisk (*) and will be distributed in class or are available on-line. You are expected to complete all required readings to class meetings to enhance class discussions.

Course Requirements

To facilitate critical thinking of our reading as well as our own assumptions about the role and relevance of race in politics, we will engage in several types of analysis throughout the semester. The evaluative components of this course will have the following elements:

1. Analytic Papers. Four short (5-7 typed, double-spaced pages) analytic papers will be

assigned. Paper prompts will be provided to students at least one week before the paper is due. These essays should provide the student with the opportunity to synthesize and evaluate course materials within an analytic framework. Each essay is worth 10% of the course grade. They are due on February 6th, February 27th, March 27th and April 24th. They must be submitted electronically by 11 p.m. on the due date.

2. Analytic Final Exam. A cumulative essay exam will be given during the regularly scheduled final exam period (Tuesday, May 6th from 1:00-2:50 pm) that will provide students with an opportunity to evaluate and respond to material presented in the readings and class discussions in a comprehensive way. Possible exam questions will be posed by me prior to the final and you will be asked to write two essays. In those essays, your task will be to construct arguments that are supported with various course materials and that demonstrate that your understanding of the politics of race has been informed by the entirety of the course. Exams will be evaluated on the basis of the coherence and creativity of the arguments as well as the skill with which course readings and discussions are integrated into the analysis. The final exam is worth 20% of the course grade.

3. Oral Presentation. In addition to reflecting on the readings and discussions in writing, each student is expected to make one presentation to the class. Beginning the week of February 11th and most successive weeks, 2-3 students will have the opportunity to organize class discussion for one class period that week. Presentations should not merely be a description of the readings for the week but instead should offer analysis of the reading that is informed by past reading and discussion. An argument should emerge from the presentation and at least five questions for consideration and discussion by the class should be included in the presentation. Presentation outlines and discussion questions should be submitted to me for review by noon on the Monday preceding the presentation. It is expected that the presentation and discussion will consume the entirety of the class period. In addition, a reflective essay about the presentation detailing what worked, what didn't and how your thinking about race was challenged must be submitted within a week following the presentation. The presentation is worth 20% of the course grade and will be evaluated primarily on the basis of the content – the thoroughness of preparation, level of detail provided from the readings, and rigor and clarity of the argument presented – as well the ability of the questions to foster meaningful discussion and interaction among the class as well as the style and cogency of the presentation itself.

4. Out of Class Experiences. Students are expected to avail themselves of two out of class opportunities (campus lectures, presentations, films and activities) that will inform your understanding of the construction of race at least twice during the semester. In a couple of paragraphs, the experience should be described and evaluated as it relates to course materials. Each reflection is worth 2.5% of the course grade. Reflections on additional events can be submitted for extra credit with each additional one being worth 1% (with a maximum of 5 additional experiences/reflections contributing to the course grade). These reflections should be submitted electronically no later than Thursday, May 1st.

5. Class Participation. Note that class participation (defined as being present, being alert and participatory both in terms of speaking and listening) constitutes the remaining 15% of the grade. Note that quality as well as quantity of participation (e.g. ability to reference reading material in offering comments)) will be considered in determining the participation grade. As a class, we will determine the ground rules for participation and discussion but at a minimum, we would expect that a climate of respect should prevail while appreciating that one must be willing to engage conflict and contentious

discussions for critical thinking and learning in the liberal education tradition to occur. While we have no formal attendance policy, active class participation is dependent upon your physical presence and you should remain aware of that.

All work must be completed in order to receive a passing grade for this course. Late work (including presentation outlines) will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for each day (including weekends) it is late -- e.g. an A becomes an A- if one day late, etc. The following grading scale will be employed: 93-100 is an A, 90-92 is an A-, 88-89 is a B+, 83-87 is a B, 80-82 is a B-, etc. with anything below an average of 60 constituting a failing grade. Please note also that academic honesty is expected for each assignment. An incident of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for that particular assignment.

Students with documented disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations if needed. If you believe you need accommodations, please see Allison West, JCU's Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities (ext.4967) as soon as possible. Accommodations will not be granted retroactively.

Make a note of my office hours. I hope to see each of you in our offices at least once during the semester. Feel free to stop by to discuss the course, your ideas or anything at all.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Race as a Social Construct

Weeks 1-4

January 14-February 6

READ:

1. Week of January 21st:
 - a. Morrison, "Recitatif" (January 21st):
(<http://amb.cult.bg/american/5/morrison/recitatif.htm>)
 - b. Wise, pp. 11-61
2. Week of January 28th:
 - a. Wise, pp.63-152
3. Week of February 4th
 - a. Wise, pp: 153-194
 - b. Tatum, excerpt from "Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" (*)

NO CLASS on Thursday, January 23rd

Essay 1 Due February 6th

Race as Legal Construct

Weeks 5-7

February 11-27

READ:

1. Week of February 11th:
 - a. Alexander, pp. 20-94

- b. Roberts, excerpt from "Killing the Black Body"
(*)
- 2. Week of February 18th
 - a. Alexander, pp.95-172
- 3. Week of February 25th
 - a. Alexander, pp.173-248

Essay 2 Due February 27th

SPRING BREAK

Weeks 8-10

March 10-27

Race as Policy Construct

READ:

- 1. Week of March 11th
 - a. Williams, excerpt from "The Constraint of Race" (*)
 - b. Marrow, pp. 1-50
- 2. Week of March 18th
 - a. Marrow, pp. 53-106
- 3. Week of March 25th
 - a. Marrow, pp.113-175
- 4. Week of April 1st
 - a. Marrow, pp.179-266

Essay 3 Due April 3rd

Race as a Political Construct

Weeks 12-14

April 8-24

READ:

- 1. Week of April 8th
 - a. McIlwain and Caliendo, pp.1-66
 - b. Bedolla and Michelson, excerpt from "Mobilizing Inclusion" (*)
- 2. Week of April 15th
 - a. McIlwain and Caliendo, pp.67-126
- 3. Week of April 22
 - a. McIlwain and Caliendo, pp.139-221

Essay 4 Due April 24th

Course Conclusion

Week 15

April 29-May 1

FINAL EXAM MAY 6 1:00-2:50 PM