

POL 223 African American Politics

Fall 2017

Wednesdays 3:30-6:00PM

This course provides an introduction to the political experience of African Americans. The course is contemporary in focus. Topics include African American political thought, voting and participation, urban politics, race and elected office, and issues of gender, class, age and sexual identity at the intersections of black politics. The course is decidedly introductory and is not meant to be comprehensive. There is a substantial reading requirement. Students are expected to write frequently and to complete an independent final project.

ASSESSMENT

Reading Responses (50%) Students will write FIVE (5) 700-1000 word essays in response to the assigned readings. Students will sign up in Week 1 of class for the weeks they will respond. Each response paper is worth 10% of the grade. Together these papers account for 50% of the grade.

Response Papers are due at **12 Noon each Wednesday** via Sakai. Students may choose to write in any five weeks of their choosing. At least two (2) papers must be submitted in response to readings before midterm.

Midterm Essay (15%) Students will write a midterm essay from one of several possible prompts. Students will have 24 hours to complete the essay. The midterm essay should not exceed five (5), double-spaced, 12-point font, pages with standard one-inch margins.

Final Project (25%) Students will identify an African American political writer, government official, elected office holder, activist or policy maker at the local, state, or national level. Students will conduct an original interview with this individual. The interview must last at least 20 minutes and needs to be either audio taped or video taped. It can be conducted via phone or in-person. Students will

submit a full transcript of the interview with the final project. Students will write an original essay about the individual using themes/ theories from the course. The essay is not to exceed eight (8), double-spaced, 12-point font, pages with standard one-inch margins. More details about the final project will be forthcoming.

Class Participation (10%) Students are expected to complete all readings before each class. The professor will call on students to contribute. Lack of familiarity with the assigned material will have a negative affect on student assessment. Written attendance will be taken.

Extra Credit: Throughout the semester Professor MHP will provide opportunities to attend events or participate in programs to earn extra credit. Students may participate in up to 10 of these opportunities. Each Extra Credit opportunity is then added to the final grade at .33 rate. A student who completes 10 extra credit opportunities can earn up to 3.3 points on the final grade average at the end of the semester.

****Late Assignment Policy****

All students have one **Free Pass** to be used on any written assignment except the final project. One assignment can be turned in up to 48 hours late with no questions asked and no negative consequences for the grade. After the Free Pass is used, any assignment submitted late will be subject to the late assignment policy. Assignments submitted late will lose 1/3 letter grade for any late submission within the first 48 hours. Each additional 24 hours results in another 1/3 letter grade reduction. Exceptions to this policy will only be made for emergencies or health challenges that are documented by a physician or university administrator.

Required Texts

Readings marked with * are available as links from the course Sakai website our course reserves. Books are all available through the university bookstore.

Walton, Hanes, Robert C. Smith, and Sherri L. Wallace. *American Politics and the African American Quest for Universal Freedom*. Taylor & Francis, 2017. 8th edition.

Cohen, Cathy. *Democracy Remixed: Black Youth and the Future of Black Politics*. Oxford University Press. 2010.

Harris-Perry, Melissa. *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes and Black Women in America*. Yale University Press. 2012.

Paul Frymer, *Uneasy Alliances: Race and Party Competition in America*. Princeton University Press. 2010

Transportation

Class will begin promptly at 3:30 pm in the main classroom of the PHI/AJC house. The address is 2599 Reynolda Road. (The corner of Reynolda and Polo Roads). There is ample parking at the house if you drive. The PHI/AJC House is a stop on the Gray Line West shuttle, with stops every 30 minutes. Please plan accordingly.

Attendance Policy

As a course that meets only once per week, attendance is particularly crucial for the learning environment. More than three (3) unexcused absences will result in 1/3 letter grade reduction from the final grade of the course.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious violation of ethical conduct and academic integrity. Plagiarism need not be intentional. All cases of plagiarism – the theft of words, ideas, sources, and conclusions whether from written, audio, oral, or digital materials – will not be tolerated and will be reported to appropriate departmental and dean leadership.

Expectations for Classroom Behavior

We acknowledge that racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, and other forms of interpersonal and institutionalized forms of inequality exist in society. This does not mean we all agree on the causes, consequences, or solutions for these forms of inequality. It does mean we agree to do our best to better understand them, refrain from repeating misinformation, and refrain from personal attack. No student is expected to have all the answers. Mistakes and questions are welcomed in the spirit of cooperative learning.

We will work to create an atmosphere where:

- We keep an open mind and listen;
- Everyone is valued and respected;
- Everyone can work and learn;
- Everyone engages in the thoughtful presentation of ideas, shares the floor, and can critically assess each other's ideas;
- No individual is ridiculed or demeaned for sharing personal experiences and ideas;
- Personal experiences shared in the context of the classroom remain confidential unless otherwise agreed upon;
- No individual is expected to be a representative spokesperson for a given group of people, given there is intra-group diversity of skills, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors.

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION
August 30

Jelani Cobb, "The Battle of Charlottesville"

Isaac Chotiner, "Are the Charlottesville White Supremacists Really "Nazis"? A Conversation with Jelani Cobb on what to call them"

WEEK 2: STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK
September 6

Walton, Smith, and Wallace. Chapters 1 and 2

**How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America: Problems in Race, Political Economy and Society.* Foreword by Leith Mullings, A Critical Re-assessment and Introduction to the First Edition by Manning Marable

WEEK 3: BLACK POLITICAL THOUGHT TRADITIONS
September 13

*Martin Luther King, Jr. "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"

*Coalition Statements:
Combahee River Collective, "Black Feminist Statement"
Black Lives Matter, Black Lives Matter Network
Limits of Anti-Racism , Adolph Reed

*Dawson, Michael, *Black Visions: the Roots of Contemporary African-American Political Ideologies* Chapter 1 and 2

*Thomas Sowell "Is the Family Becoming Extinct", "Life at the Bottom", "Minimum Wage Laws" and "Role of Economics" all from *The Thomas Sowell Reader*, 2011

WEEK 4: BLACK IDENTITY, CONSCIOUSNESS, LINKED FATE
September 20

Walton, Smith, and Wallace. Chapters 3

*Michael Dawson, *Behind the Mule*, Chapters 1-3

*Richard Shingles. "Black Consciousness and Political Participation: The Missing Link." *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 75, No. 1. (Mar., 1981), pp. 76-91

WEEK 5: INTERSECTIONS- GENDER AND SEXUALITY

September 27

Harris-Perry, *Sister Citizen*

*Cathy Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?" *GLQ: Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. May 1997. Pp. 437-468.

WEEK 6: INTERSECTIONS-GENERATION

October 4

Cathy Cohen, *Democracy Remixed*

WEEK 7: MIDTERM ESSAY AND FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL

October 11

No class meeting. Midterms essay and final project proposals due by 5pm

WEEK 8: RETHINKING COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

October 18

No regular class meeting on Wednesday
Students will assist with Rethinking Community events
October 19-21

WEEK 9: PUBLIC OPINION

October 25

Walton, Smith, and Wallace Chapter 4

*Harris-Lacewell, Melissa. *Barbershops, Bibles, and BET: Everyday Talk and Black Political Thought*. Chapter 1

*Schuman, Steeth and Bobo *Racial Attitudes in America Trends and Interpretations*, Chapter 4

*Sigelman and Welch. *Black Americans' Views of Racial Inequality*. 1991. Chapter 5,

*Dawson, Michael, *Black Visions*, Chapter 1 and 2

WEEK 10:**VOTING AND CANDIDACY**

November 1

Walton, Smith, and Wallace Chapter 9

*Morris, Irwin L. "African American voting on Proposition 187: Rethinking the prevalence of inter-minority conflict." *Political Research Quarterly* 53.1 (2000): 77-98.

Uggen, Christopher, and Jeff Manza. "Democratic contraction? Political consequences of felon disenfranchisement in the United States." *American Sociological Review* (2002): 777-803.

*Angela Behrens, Christopher Uggen & Jeff Manza. "Ballot Manipulation and the 'Menace of Negro Domination': Racial Threat and Felon Disenfranchisement in the United States, 1850-2002." *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 109, No. 3. (Nov., 2003), pp. 559-605.

*Gregory A. Petrow. "The Minimal Cue Hypothesis: How Black Candidates Cue Race to Increase White Voting Participation." *Political Psychology*, Vol. 31, No. 6 (December 2010), pp. 915-950

*Charlton D. McIlwain and Stephen M. Caliendo. "Black Messages, White Messages: The Differential Use of Racial Appeals by Black and White Candidates." *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 5 (May, 2009), pp. 732-743

WEEK 11:**POLITICAL PARTIES**

November 8

Walton, Smith, and Wallace Chapter 8

Paul Frymer, *Uneasy Alliances*, Chapters 1 2, 4, 5 and

*Nancy Weiss, *Farewell to the Party of Lincoln*, Chapter 10, *Why Blacks Became Democrats*

WEEK 12:**OBAMA**

November 15

Walton, Smith, and Wallace Chapter 11

*Walters, Ron. "Barack Obama and the Politics of Blackness." *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 1, (Sep., 2007), pp. 7-29

*Randolph Burnside and Kami Whitehurst. "From the Statehouse to the White House? Barack Obama's Bid to Become the Next President." *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 1, The Barack Obama Phenomenon (Sep., 2007), pp. 75-89

Public Addresses by Barack Obama

Philadelphia "Race" Speech, 2008

DNC Nomination Acceptance, 2008

First Inaugural Address, 2009

Second Inaugural Address, 2013

On the George Zimmerman Verdict, 2013

Eulogy for Charleston Murder Victims, 2015

CBC Phoenix Dinner, 2015

2016 DNC Speech, 2016

WEEK 13: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

November 22

NO CLASS

WEEK 14: CONGRESS

Walton, Smith, and Wallace Chapter 10

*Katherine Tate, *Black Faces in the Mirror* Chapters 1 and 2

*Kerry Haynie, *African American Legislators in the American States*. Chapters 1 and 2

*Richard Fenno. *Going Home: Black Representative and Their Constituents*. Chapter 1 & 7 November 29

WEEK 15: FLEX WEEK

December 6

Possible Guest Speaker