

POLS 374: Race, Ethnicity, and U.S. Politics

Instructor: **Dr. Giovanni D. Pleites-Hernandez**
Office: Zageir 204
Office Hours: 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. TTh
Email: gpleites@unca.edu

Semester: Fall 2019
Office Phone: (828) 251-6634
Class: MWF 2:00 – 3:15 p.m.
Room: Zageir 243

Course Description

This course will introduce students to the study of race and ethnicity in American politics. In doing so, students will be exposed to key questions and debates involved in the study of race and ethnicity in American politics. Before embarking on topics such as political participation, intergroup competition, campaigns and elections, and representation, we will explore the theoretical underpinnings and conceptualizations of race and identity in the study of American politics. The last part of the course will focus on contemporary issues in the study of race and ethnicity such as the carceral state, immigration, affirmative action, and intersectionality.

Amongst the questions we will explore over the course of the semester are: What is race? What is identity? How do identities influence political attitudes? How distinct is the behavior of minority groups when compared to that of whites? What is the Voting Rights Act, and how has it impacted minorities? What kinds of interactions are prevalent between minority groups? How are minorities represented in government? Do minority legislators behave differently than non-minority legislators? What is the carceral state? What do the American people think about immigration? What is intersectionality, and how does it influence how we study race and ethnicity in American politics?

Course Structure

This course is an instructor-led reading seminar, which means that there will only rarely be any lectures. In addition, and more importantly, it means that a lot of the work you do will be outside of the classroom. This includes reading the assigned materials, preparing notes based on those readings, and engaging in thoughtful discussion in the classroom. Though I am in charge of leading the seminar, we cannot have a productive discussion in class unless you all thoroughly read and engage with the assigned readings. You should look at our class meetings as opportunities to showcase your thoughts and insights in addition to presenting questions for further thought and/or clarification. In addition to the readings and in-class discussions, there will also be several writing assignments including a term paper, all of which are described in more detail below.

Course-Specific Learning Objectives

After this class, students should be able to:

1. Explain why there is a need to study race and ethnicity within political science.
2. Understand the foundations of individual opinions and political behavior.
3. Critically engage with peer-refereed publications.
4. Describe the extent to which the government is responsive to the interests of the American people.
5. Discuss contemporary issues in the study of racial and ethnic politics.

Political Science (POLS) Student Learning Outcomes

POLS Outcome No. 1: Knowledge of the Field – Concepts and Theories

- Students learn the defining concepts and theories political scientists use to study and explain political phenomena in the discipline.

POLS Outcome No. 2: Writing – Academic Writing and Information Literacy

- Students learn to effectively use argument to communicate claims to know in academic writing appropriate for the discipline.

Departmental and University Requirements Met

POLS 374 contributes to the requirement of at least 20 (of the 34 required for the political science major) that have to come from the 300 to 400 level range. This course also contributes to the required 120 semester hours of credit required for receiving a baccalaureate degree.

Required Materials

No textbook is required for this course.

In an attempt to keep course-related costs down and maximize the number of voices of scholars from under-represented groups, this course will not use a textbook. The assigned articles, book chapters, and any other course-related materials (e.g., handouts, slides, etc.) will be posted on the course Moodle page (<https://learnonline.unca.edu/>) and/or distributed in class.

Required Instructional Technology

Familiarity with the Moodle learning management system.

Student Assessment and Evaluation Methods

Attendance and Participation

You are expected to attend all class meetings, complete the assigned readings before class (on the Monday of a given week), and participate in class discussions.* In addition, you will be required to submit 3 questions (total) each week based on the readings. These questions are to be submitted on Moodle **by 8:00 a.m. on the Monday of each week** and will be factored into your participation grade. Together, attendance (13%) and participation (22%) will make up 35% of your overall course grade. Individuals with more than 3 absences, unless cleared by the instructor, will receive a zero for attendance. Any individual with more than 7 (or more) absences will receive an F for the course.

In addition to the in-class discussions, your participation grade will also include other activities such as in-class group work, presentations, pop-quizzes, and any other activities that don't fall into any of the other assignment categories.

*Note: I reserve the right to assign in-class pop-quizzes for the assigned readings. I will only resort to this if it is clear that students are not doing the readings.

Readings

A large part of your success in this course is directly related to you actively reading and engaging with the assigned readings. Some of the assigned readings will be challenging, both

theoretically and methodologically, which is why I recommend that you don't wait until the last minute to look at them, as quick scans will not adequately prepare you for the in-class discussions we will have throughout the course of the semester. In addition to being tied to your participation grade, the readings also have a bearing on your grades for your critical reviews and annotated bibliography (more on those assignments shortly).

As you read and prepare for the week, keep in mind that this course is structured primarily as a reading seminar, which means that for any given article (or chapter) assigned, you are expected to be able to summarize and provide a critique for it. One way to help with doing so is by thinking of – and being able to provide a response for – each of the following questions:

1. What is the core question motivating this work?
2. What is the theory being developed in this piece?
3. What literature does this particular work speak to?
4. What are the theoretical expectations? Are they clearly linked to the theory?
5. How did the author(s) structure their study (i.e., research design, data collection, constructs used, etc.)?
6. What are the key findings? What kind of support do they provide for the theory?
7. How might this work be improved?

You may find it useful to write out responses for these questions and any others that arise when you are reading the material, as they can be very useful for our discussions in class.

Critical Reviews

You are responsible for writing **3 critical reviews** during the semester. You can choose what weeks you want to do these assignments for, but there are some limitations that will be outlined below. The purpose of this assignment is for you to engage with the week's readings and critically evaluate the merits of those works (theoretical and/or methodological). These papers should be approximately three double-spaced pages (2.5 – 3 pages; no more than 3 pages) in length and are expected to be well-organized, proof-read, and properly cited. Summaries should be kept to a minimum; the objective is to evaluate the readings, not to solely demonstrate that you have read them.

For an idea of what a critical review is supposed to look like you can look at one of the major political science journals as they usually have them at the end of issues (e.g., *The Journal of Politics*). I will also post several examples on the Moodle course page. For the weeks that you choose to submit these assignments, you must have them **submitted to Moodle by 11:59 a.m. on Monday of the corresponding week**. For example, if you are submitted a critical review for the readings of Week 4, then you must submit your assignment through Moodle by 11:59 a.m. on that Monday, September 9th by 11:59 a.m.

Note: You cannot submit a critical review (or annotated bibliography) once the deadline for a given week has passed. Make sure you stay on top of the deadlines because you cannot submit these assignments late or even double-up for a given week (i.e., trying to submit a critical review and annotated bibliography entry for the same week).

Annotated Bibliography

You are required to write entries for each of the week's assigned readings for 6 of the weeks (from weeks 2 to 14). **These can only be done for weeks where you have chosen not to write a critical review (and vice versa).** These are **due by 11:59 a.m. on Monday** of the chosen week. Here, the expectation is that you briefly summarize the work and provide the reader with an idea of what the core contribution of each article (or chapter) is. Handouts that outline expectations, provide guidance, and examples will be posted on the Moodle course page.

Term Paper

For this assignment you are expected to choose an issue area (e.g., healthcare, criminal justice, immigration, education, gun rights, LGBTQ+ rights, etc.) in American politics. Then you are to choose a proposed policy (or law passed) that falls within your chosen issue area with respect to a minority or under-represented group in our society.

In order to receive full credit, you must do the following: 1) provide an explanation of the issue at hand that lead to that policy proposal (or law) being crafted in the first place; 2) explain how this policy (or law) will affect (or has already impacted) a given minority (or under-represented) group; 3) describe how this policy (or law) will affect (or has already impacted) American society more broadly; and 4) provide your own policy prescription for addressing the problem originally identified above.

This is expected to be a **5-7 page paper (double-spaced) with at least 10 scholarly sources cited.** This means that you are expected to adequately research the policy chosen and issue area more broadly as both are important for responding to the prompt with sufficient detail. More details regarding formatting and citations will be discussed in class and posted on Moodle.

Term Paper Presentation

Part of your grade will come from presenting your term paper to the class on Friday, November 22nd or Monday, November 25th (more on the logistics as we get closer to those dates). This will /be a short (7-10 minute) presentation where you provide us with an idea of what your paper is about and a summary of each of the sections in said paper. You should spend a large part of your time talking about your own policy prescription for your chosen policy (or law).

Late Work

No late work will be accepted except in extraordinary circumstances. Make sure you pay attention to the due dates and the times at which these assignments are due.

Extra Credit

One extra credit opportunity will be made available before Thanksgiving break. More information will be presented in class and/or Moodle.

Examinations

There are no examinations in this course.

Key Dates

Term Paper Presentations in Class: on November 22nd and 25th

Term Paper: due by Wednesday, December 11th at 2:00 p.m. in person

Grading and Course Requirements

Your final grade will be determined by your performance on the abovementioned assignments. See the following grading scale and assignment breakdown:

Grading Scale				Grading Formula	
A	92 – 100	C	72 – 77	Attendance & Participation	35
A-	90 – 91	C-	70 – 71	Annotated Bibliography	20
B+	88 – 89	D+	68 – 69	Critical Reviews	20
B	82 – 87	D	60 – 67	Term Paper Presentation	5
B-	80 – 81	F	Below 60	Term Paper	20
C+	78 - 79			Total	100%

Office Hours

You must make an appointment to meet with me by email. I have office hours Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. in Zageir 204. In addition to the set hours, I am willing to work around your schedule whenever possible.

Technology

Computers and tablets are allowed in the classroom for note-taking and other class-related purposes. You are not allowed to use these devices for browsing the internet, social media, or checking email. Cell phones must be silenced and cannot be used in class at all. **Failure to comply with these rules will result in a zero for both attendance and participation for the day. In addition, you may be asked to leave for the day.**

Communication of Announcements

Announcements will be sent via e-mail to your official UNCA e-mail address and/or posted on Moodle. You are responsible for monitoring your school e-mail account and the course Moodle site (<https://learnonline.unca.edu/>) daily.

E-Mail

All emails sent to me must include the following: the student's name, course section number (i.e., POLS 374), a proper and formal greeting, a clear subject line about the purpose of the e-mail, and the actual request or question that prompted the email. You should expect a response within 72 hours. If you have not received a response within 72 hours, then please send me another email.

The Writing Center

You are encouraged to visit the University Writing Center (<https://writingcenter.unca.edu/>) on campus for help with assignments for this and other courses. The center supports writers in one-on-one sessions lasting 10 to 45 minutes. Consultants can help writers organize ideas, document sources, and revise prose. If you visit the UWC, bring a copy of your assignment, any writing or notes you may have, and the sources you are working with. Make an appointment by

visiting writingcenter.unca.edu and clicking on “Schedule an Appointment” or drop in during open hours Monday-Friday.

Academic Integrity

All rules concerning academic honesty as set out in the current edition of the university’s academic catalog (<http://catalog.unca.edu/>) will be enforced. Particular attention should be paid to the policies regarding cheating and plagiarism.

Academic Alerts

Faculty at UNC Asheville are encouraged to use the university's [Academic Alert](#) (AA) system. The purpose of this system is to communicate with students about their progress in courses. Academic Alerts can reflect that a student’s performance is satisfactory at the time the alert is submitted or they can indicate concerns (e.g., academic difficulty, attendance problems, or other concerns). Professors use the AA system because they are invested in student success and want to encourage open conversations about how students can improve their performance. When a faculty member submits an alert that expresses a concern, the student receives an email from Academic Advising notifying them of the alert and subsequent registration hold on their account. To clear the hold, the student must complete an online Response Form included in the alert e-mail. The student’s responses will be shared with the instructor and advising staff. If a student receives three or more alerts, they will need to meet with an advisor by scheduling an appointment using the online appointment service at advising.unca.edu and select ‘Academic Alert Appointment’ as the type of appointment. The professor may also request to meet with the student to discuss the alert. It is in the student's best interest to complete the alert process quickly, as students who do so are more likely to earn credit for the course. Failure to complete the alert process means the student won't be able to register for the next semester's classes until they have submitted the required form and completed any requested meeting requirements. Questions about the alert system can be directed to Anne Marie Roberts (amrober1@unca.edu) in the [Academic Success Center](#).

Student Accommodations

UNCA values the diversity of our student body as a strength and a critical component of our dynamic community. Students with disabilities or temporary injuries/conditions may require accommodations due to barriers in the structure of facilities, course design, technology used for curricular purposes, or other campus resources.

Students who experience a barrier to full access to this class should let the professor know, and/or make an appointment to meet with the Office of Academic Accessibility as soon as possible. To make an appointment, call 828.232.5050; email academicaccess@unca.edu; use this link <https://uncaoaaintake.youcanbook.me/>; or drop by the Academic Accessibility Office, room 005 in the One Stop suite (lower level of Ramsey Library). Learn more about the process of registering, and the services available through the Office of Academic Accessibility here: <https://oaa.unca.edu/>.

While students may disclose disability at any point in the semester, students who receive Letters of Accommodation are strongly encouraged to request, obtain and present these to their

professors as early in the semester as possible so that accommodations can be made in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to follow this process each semester.

Sexual Harassment and Misconduct

All members of the University community are expected to engage in conduct that contributes to the culture of integrity and honor upon which the University of North Carolina at Asheville is grounded. Acts of sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking jeopardize the health and welfare of our campus community and the larger community as a whole and will not be tolerated. The University has established procedures for preventing and investigating allegations of sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking that are compliant with Title IX federal regulations. To learn more about these procedures or to report an incident of sexual misconduct, go to <https://titleix.unca.edu/>. Students may also report incidents to an instructor, faculty or staff member, who are required by law to notify the Title IX Office.

Health and Wellness

UNCA offers resources for students who are coping with both physical and mental health issues. If you would benefit from assistance, please contact the Health and Counseling Center. Contact information can be found at <https://healthandcounseling.unca.edu/>.

Alteration of this Syllabus

The instructor reserves the right to revise, alter, and/or amend this syllabus as necessary. Students will be notified by email and/or Moodle of any such revisions, alterations, and/or amendments.

Key Resources for Students

Political Science Department Website: <https://politicalscience.unca.edu/>
Academic Planning: <https://advising.unca.edu/>
Student Affairs: <https://studentaffairs.unca.edu/>
University Catalog: <http://catalog.unca.edu/>
Ramsey Library: <https://library.unca.edu/>
Career Center: <https://career.unca.edu/>

Schedule and Topics

Week 1: Course Introduction & Race, Ethnicity and Politics in Political Science

August 19th: Introduction and Syllabus Review

August 21st:

Smith, Rogers. 2004. "The Puzzling Place of Race in American Political Science." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 1: 41-45.

Fraga, Luis R., John A. Garcia, Rodney Hero, Michael Jones-Correa, Valerie Martinez-Ebers, Gary M. Segura. 2006. "*Su Casa es Nuestra Casa: Latino Politics Research and the Development of American Political Science.*" *American Political Science Review* 100(4): 515-519.

August 23rd:

Hutchings, Vincent and Nicholas Valentino. 2004. "The Centrality of Race in American Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science* 7: 383-408.

Week 2: Thinking About "Race" Conceptually – Group Membership, Consciousness, and Linked Fate

August 26th:

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. 2014. *Racial Formation in the United States*. Routledge, NY, Ch.4 "Theory of Racial Formation."

August 28th:

Dawson, Michael C. 1994. *Behind the Mule: Race and Class in African-American Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chs. 3 and 4.

August 30th:

Masuoka, Natalie, and Jane Junn. 2013. *The Politics of Belonging: Race, Public Opinion, and Immigration*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. "Chapter 4: Perceptions of Belonging: Race and Group Membership."

Week 3: Racial Resentment, Racism, and Stereotypes

September 2nd: Labor Day

September 4th:

Gilens, Martin. 1995. "Racial Attitudes and Opposition to Welfare" *The Journal of Politics* 57(4): 994-1014.

September 6th:

Tesler, Michael. 2016. *Post-Racial or Most-Racial?: Race and Politics in the Obama Era*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. "Chapter 1: Racial Attitudes and American Politics in the Age of Obama."

Week 4: Minority Group Attitudes

September 9th:

Griffin, John D. and Brian Newman. 2008. *Minority Report: Evaluating Political Equality in America*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. "Chapter 3: Differences in Political Preferences and Priorities."

Lien, Pei-te. et al. 2001. "Asian Pacific-American Public Opinion and Political Participation." *Political Science & Politics* 34(3): 625-630.

September 11th:

Branton, Regina. 2007. "Latino Attitudes Toward Various Areas of Public Policy: The Importance of Acculturation." *Political Research Quarterly* 60(2): 293-303.

September 13th:

Gay, Claudine. 2004. "Putting Race in Context: Identifying the Environmental Determinants of Black Racial Attitudes." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 547-562.

Week 5: Competition and Coalitions**September 16th:**

Eric Oliver, J., & Wong, J. 2003. "Intergroup Prejudice in Multiethnic Settings" *American Journal of Political Science* 47(4): 567-582.

September 18th:

Kaufmann, Karen M. 2003. "Cracks in the Rainbow: Group Commonality as a Basis for Latino and African-America Political Coalitions" *Political Research Quarterly* 56(2): 199-210.

September 20th:

Gay, Claudine. 2006. "Seeing Difference: The Effect of Economic Disparity on Black Attitudes Toward Latinos." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(4): 982-997.

Week 6: Minority Group Behavior**September 23rd:**

Bowler, Shaun and Gary Segura. 2012. *The Future is Ours: Minority Politics, Political Behavior, and the Multiracial Era of American Politics*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press. "Chapter 6: Taking Part in Politics: The Essence of Democracy."

September 25th:

Gay, Claudine. 2001. "The Effect of Black Congressional Representation on Political Participation." *American Political Science Review* 95(3): 589-602.

September 27th:

Anoll, Allison P. 2018. "What Makes a Good Neighbor? Race, Place, and Norms of Political Participation" *American Political Science Review* 112(3): 494-508.

Week 7: Minority Voting Rights and Mobilization**September 30th:**

Bowler, Shaun and Gary Segura. 2012. *The Future is Ours: Minority Politics, Political Behavior, and the Multiracial Era of American Politics*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press. "Chapter 8: Representation: Representatives, Elections, and Electoral Reform."

Desmond-Harris, Jeneé. 2016. "What is the fight over voting rights about?" *Vox*. February 14, 2016. <https://www.vox.com/2016/2/14/17619164/voting-rights-fight-explained-what-is-the-fight-over-voting-rights-about>

October 2nd:

Hajnal, Zoltan, Nazita Lajevardi, and Lindsay Nielson. 2017. "Voter ID Laws and the Suppression of Minority Votes" *Journal of Politics* 79(2): 363-379.

October 4th:

Michelson, Melissa R. 2005. "Meeting the Challenge of Latino Voter Mobilization" *The Annals of the American Academy* 601(1): 85-101.

Week 8: Campaigns, Elections, and the Media

October 7th:

Abrajano, Marisa. 2010. *Campaigning to the New American Electorate: Advertising to Latinos*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press. "Chapter 3: Campaigning to Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the U.S."

October 9th:

Kinder, Donald R., and Lynn M. Sanders. 1996. *Divided by Color: Racial Politics and Democratic Ideals*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Ch.8 "The Electoral Temptation of Race."

October 11th:

Gilens, Martin. 1999. *Why Americans Hate Welfare*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Ch. 5 "The News Media and the Racialization of Poverty."

Mendelberg, Tali. 2001. *The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages and the Norm of Equality*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, Ch. 5 "Crafting, Conveying, and Challenging Implicit Racial Appeals: Campaign Strategy and News Coverage."

Week 9: Descriptive Minority Representation

October 14th: Fall Break

October 16th:

Pantoja, Adrian D. and Gary M. Segura. 2003. "Does Ethnicity Matter? Descriptive Representation in the Legislatures and Political Alienation Among Latinos" *Social Science Quarterly* 84(2): 441-460.

October 18th:

Skim: Butler, Daniel and David E. Broockman. 2011. "Do Politicians Racially Discriminate Against Constituents? A Field Experiment on State Legislators" *American Journal of Political Science* 55(3): 463-477.

Broockman, David E. 2014. "Distorted Communication, Unequal Representation: Constituents Communicate Less to Representatives Not of Their Race." *American Journal of Political Science* 58(2): 307-21.

Week 10: Symbolic and Substantive Minority Representation

October 21st:

Dancey, Logan and Jasmine Masand. 2017. "Race and Representation on Twitter: Members of Congress' Responses to the Deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner" *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 1-20.

October 23rd:

Griffin, John D. and Brian Newman. 2005. "Are Voters Better Represented?" *Journal of Politics* 67(4): 1206-27.

Cameron, Charles, David Epstein, and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1996. "Do Majority-Minority Districts Maximize Substantive Black Representation in Congress?" *American Political Science Review* 90: 794-812.

October 25th:

Casellas, Jason P. 2008. "Latino Representation in Congress: To What Extent Are Latinos Substantively Represented?" pp. 219-31, in *Latino Politics: Identity, Mobilization, and Representation* Edited by Rodolfo Espino, David L. Leal, and Kenneth J. Meier.

Week 11: The Carceral State**October 28th:**

Alexander, Michelle. 2012. *The New Jim Crow*. New York: New Press. Ch. 5 "The New Jim Crow"

October 30th:

Enns, Peter K. 2014. "The Public's Increasing Punitiveness and Its Influence on Mass Incarceration in the United States." *American Journal of Political Science* 58(4): 857-872.

November 1st:

Lerman, Amy and Vesla Weaver. 2014. *Arresting Citizenship: The Democratic Consequences of American Crime Control*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 8)

Week 12: Immigration**November 4th:**

Skim: Huntington, Samuel P. 2004. "The Hispanic Challenge." *Foreign Policy* 141(2): 30-45.
Citrin, Jack, et al. 2007. "Testing Huntington: Is Hispanic Immigration a Threat to American Identity?" *Perspectives on Politics* 5(1): 31-48.

November 6th:

Brader, Ted, Nicholas A. Valentino, and Elizabeth Suhay. 2008. "What Triggers Public Opposition to Immigration? Anxiety, Group Cues, and Immigration Threat." *American Journal of Political Science* 52(4): 959-978.

November 8th:

Collingwood, Loren and Benjamin Gonzalez O'Brien. 2018. "Public Opposition to Sanctuary Cities in Texas: Criminal Threat or Immigration Threat?" *Social Science Quarterly* Forthcoming.

Week 13: Affirmative Action and Discrimination**November 11th:**

Katel, Peter. 2010. "Affirmative Action: Is It Time to End Racial Preferences?" in *Issues in Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Class: Selections from CQ Researcher*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press

November 13th and 15th: To Be Determined (TBD)

Week 14: Intersectionality & Multiracialism (and Term Paper Presentations)

November 18th and 20th:

Hancock, Ange-Marie. 2007. "When Multiplication Doesn't Equal Quick Addition: Examining Intersectionality as a Research Paradigm." *Perspectives on Politics* 5(1): 63-79.

Simien, Evelyn M. "Doing Intersectionality Research: From Conceptual Issues to Practical Examples." *Politics & Gender* 3(2): 264-71.

Brown, Nadia E. 2014. "Political Participation of Women of Color: An Intersectional Analysis." *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy*. 35(4): 315-48.

Hochschild, Jennifer and Vesla Weaver 2010. "'There's No One as Irish as Barack O'Bama': The Politics and Policy of Multiracialism in the United States" *Perspective on Politics*

November 22nd: Term Paper Presentations (Day 1)

Week 15: Term Paper Presentations

November 25th: Term Paper Presentations (Day 2)

November 27th- 29th: Thanksgiving

Week 16:

December 2nd: TBD

December 4th: Reading Day

Week 17: Finals Week

December 11th: Course Wrap-Up (Last Day)

Physical Copy of Term Paper Due in Class