

Political Science W3245: Race and Ethnicity in American Politics

Columbia University, Spring Term 2012

Professor: Raymond A. Smith

Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:40-6:55

Office Hours: After class and by appointment

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This course will broadly review the ways in which ethnoracial minority groups shape and are shaped by American politics and public policy. The course is organized into three parts. Part I of the course begins with an overview of concepts in the study of race and ethnicity and a review of the major ethnoracial groups in the US. Part II of the course focuses on political participation by ethnoracial minority groups, including participation in such areas as social movements, interest groups, political parties, elections, and political office-holding. Part III of the course reviews major areas of public policy that are particularly relevant to ethnoracial minority groups, including desegregation, integration, discrimination, affirmative action, reparations, immigration, naturalization, and language policy.

Course Requirements

If at any time you have a problem with a deadline, a course requirement, or anything else which may affect your participation in the course, please contact me as soon as possible and, in particular, before a requirement is due. The TAs and I will try to work with you to resolve any problems, but can't do so unless we know about them in a timely manner.

Exams: There will be *three take-home exams* (one for each of the three parts of the class). Each exam will be worth 30 points of the course grade. Since exams will be based both on course lectures and readings, it is essential that you attend class and complete all the required readings on a timely basis. Take-home exams must be submitted in typed-double spaced format in hard copy. It is your responsibility to be sure that you are able to print out the exam and bring it to class on time; e-mailed exams will not be accepted except by prior arrangement. Exams submitted late (without a documented, university-approved excuse) will be penalized one portion of a letter grade per day (or part thereof) that the exam is late.

Issue Briefs: Each student will also be required to submit a 2-3 page issue brief on a topic of importance to the study of race and ethnicity and/or minority politics and policy in the United States. These issue briefs will be included as part of an online collection of issue briefs prepared by students at Columbia. The issue briefs, along with one or more other Internet-based assignments over the course of the semester, will be worth 10 points of the course grade. More details regarding the issue brief and other Internet-based assignments will be provided in class.

Readings

All books have been ordered at the Columbia Bookstore and have also been placed on reserve in Butler Library.

- CQ Researcher – *Issues in Race and Ethnicity*

- Bowler, Shaun and Gary Segura – *The Future is Ours: Minority Politics, Political Behavior, and the Multiracial Era of American Politics*
- Higham, John -- *Civil Rights & Social Wrongs: Black-White Relations Since WWII*
- Hollinger, David – *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism*
- McClain, Paula D. & Joseph Stewart -- “*Can We All Get Along?*”: *Racial and Ethnic Minorities in American Politics*
- Patterson, Orlando -- *The Ordeal of Integration*

Recommended additional reading (for those desiring more historical background)

- Takaki, Ronald -- *A Different Mirror: A Multicultural History of America*

Course Calendar

(This is the anticipated course calendar, but may be subject to minor revision.)

Part I: Ethnoracial Minorities and American Democracy

In Part I of this course, we will review major concept and ideas in the study of race and ethnicity and examine the position of minorities in majoritarian American democracy. Some of the questions that we will consider in this part are:

- *What are race and ethnicity and how do they relate to one another?*
- *How do the “color dichotomy” and the “ethnoracial pentagon” offer different perspectives on questions of race and ethnicity?*
- *What are the key political attributes of the major ethnoracial minority groups?*
- *How does American democracy manage the issue of “persistent minorities”?*
- *How does the paradigm of multiculturalism affect US politics?*

Week of January 16: Concepts in the Study of Race and Ethnicity

Readings:

- Bowler & Segura: Ch. 1
- CQ Researcher: Ch. 1
- Takaki: 1-3 (optional)

Week of January 23: Majorities and Minorities in a Democracy

Readings:

- James Madison, The Federalist Papers # 10; (can be accessed at: <http://memory.loc.gov/const/fed/fedpapers.html>)
- McClain & Stewart: Ch. 1, 6
- Bowler & Segura: Ch. 2
- Takaki: Ch. 4-8 (optional)

Week of January 30: A Brief Review of the “Ethnoracial Pentagon”

Readings:

- Hollinger: 1-3

- CQ Researcher: Ch. 11
- Takaki: Ch. 9-14 (optional)

Week of February 6: Multiculturalism and Beyond

Reading:

- Hollinger: Ch. 4-6, Epilogue (“Postscript” is optional)

Part II: Political Participation

In Part II of the class, we will examine both unconventional (e.g., protest, social movement activity) and conventional (e.g., interest group activity, electoral behavior) modes of political participation by ethnoracial minority groups. Some of the major questions that we will consider in this part are:

- *How does the collective action dilemma affect ethnoracial minority participation?*
- *How and when do ethnoracial minorities employ different political strategies?*
- *How and when do ethnoracial minorities achieve their political goals?*
- *How can minorities overcome their disadvantages under majority-rule democracy?*
- *How do institutional factors influence the ability of minorities to participate?*

Week of February 13: Protest Politics and Social Movements

*****Discussion sections for Part I to be held on Thursday, February 16*****

*****Exam #1 due in discussion sections on Thurs., February 16*****

Readings:

- McClain & Stewart: Ch. 2
- Bowler & Segura: Ch. 7, 9

Week of February 20: Interest Group and Party Politics

Readings:

- Higham: Ch. 1, 3
- Bowler & Segura: Ch. 4

Week of February 27: Electoral Behavior

Readings:

- McClain & Stewart: Ch. 3
- Bowler & Segura: Ch. 6, 8
- CQ Researcher: Ch. 2

Week of March 5: Political Office-holding

*****First draft of Issue Brief due to be posted on Courseworks by Thursday, March 8*****

Readings:

- McClain & Stewart: Ch. 4
- Bowler & Segura: 3

Week of March 12 – Spring Break; No class meetings

Part III – Public Policy

In Part III we will examine the products of the political process – namely areas of public policies that are of particular salience to ethnoracial minority groups. Some of the questions that we will consider in this part are:

- *How does public policy result from the political process?*
- *Why has de-segregation by law been largely completed but not integration?*
- *In what ways does inequality persist for ethnoracial minorities?*
- *Why does affirmative action remain controversial?*
- *What are the arguments for and against reparations?*
- *How does immigration and language policy impact ethnoracial minorities?*

Week of March 19: Ethnoracial Minorities and Public Policy

*****Discussion sections for Part II to be held on Tuesday, March 20*****

*****Exam #2 due in discussion sections on Tuesday, March 20*****

Readings:

- Bowler & Segura: Ch. 5, 10

Week of March 26: Desegregation & Integration

*****Comments on peers' Issue Briefs due on Courseworks by Thursday, March 30*****

Required Reading:

- Higham: Ch. 2
- CQ Researcher: Ch. 4,5
- Patterson: 1, 2, 3

Week of April 2: Debates over Affirmative Action and Reparations

Required Reading:

- CQ Researcher: Ch. 3,8
- Higham: Ch. 3, 4
- Patterson: Ch. 5, Conclusion

Week 12 – Week of April 9: The Persistence of Inequality: Poverty, Crime, Health, and other Disparate Outcomes

Required Reading:

- Higham: Ch.2 (review), 5

Week 13 – Week of April 16: Immigration, Naturalization, & Language Policy

******Final draft of Issue Brief due to be posted on Courseworks by Thursday, April 19; Be prepared to discuss in class******

Required Reading:

- Bowler & Segura: Ch. 11
- CQ Researcher: Ch. 9, 10

Week 15 – Week of April 23: Course Conclusion

******Discussion sections for Part III to be held on Thursday, April 26******

*****Exam #3 due in discussion sections on Thursday, April 26*****

Reading:

- Bowler & Segura, 12, 13