

POLS W3245:

Race and Ethnicity in American Politics

Columbia University, Spring Term 2015

Professor: Raymond A. Smith, Ph.D.

Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:10-2:25

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. 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 at the end of each of the three parts of the course). 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 3-5 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 brief will be worth 10 point of the course grade (along with one or two other small internet-based assignments). More details 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. The course readings are:

- McClain, Paula D. & Joseph Stewart -- "*Can We All Get Along?*": *Racial and Ethnic Minorities in American Politics*, 6th Edition (CQ Press, 2013)
- Hollinger, David – *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism*, 10th Anniversary Edition (Basic Books, 2006)

- Bowler, Shaun and Gary Segura – *The Future is Ours: Minority Politics, Political Behavior, and the Multiracial Era of American Politics* (CQ Press, 2011)
- Higham, John -- *Civil Rights & Social Wrongs: Black-White Relations Since WWII* (Penn State University Press, 1999)
- CQ Researcher – *Issues in Race and Ethnicity, 8th Edition* (CQ Press, 2014)
- Kennedy, Randall -- *The Persistence of the Color Line: Racial Politics and the Obama Presidency* (Vintage, 2012)

In addition, several other single-chapter readings are noted below and are available via Reserve services at Butler Library.

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 does American democracy manage the issue of “persistent minorities”?*
- *How do the “color dichotomy,” the “ethnoracial pentagon,” and the “post-ethnic perspective” offer different vantage points on questions of race and ethnicity?*
- *What are the key political attributes of the major ethnoracial minority groups?*
- *How does the paradigm of multiculturalism influence US politics?*

Week of January 18: Concepts in the Study of Race and Ethnicity

Readings:

- Bowler & Segura: Ch. 1
- CQ Researcher: Ch. 2, 8

Week of January 25: 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

Week of February 1: A Review of the “Ethnoracial Pentagon”

Readings:

- Hollinger: 1-3
- CQ Researcher: Ch. 8

Week of February 8: Multiculturalism and Beyond

Readings:

- Hollinger: Ch. 4-6, Epilogue (“Postscript” is optional)
- Higham: Ch. 6,7
- Hochschild et al.: Excerpt from *Creating a New Racial Order*, Chapter 1 (available via Course Reserves)

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 numerical disadvantages under majority-rule democracy?*
- *How do institutional factors influence the ability of minorities to participate?*

Week of February 15: Ethnoracial Minorities and Political Participation

First take-home exam due in class on Thursday, February 19

Week of February 22: Protest Politics and Social Movements

Readings:

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

Week of March 1: Interest Group and Party Politics

****First draft of Issue Brief due to be posted on Courseworks by Tuesday, March 3****

Readings:

- Higham: Ch. 1, 3
- Bowler & Segura: Ch. 4
- Kennedy: 1-2

Week of March 8: Electoral Behavior

Comments on peers' Issue Briefs due on Courseworks by Thursday, March 12

Readings:

- McClain & Stewart: Ch. 3
- Bowler & Segura: Ch. 6, 8
- CQ Researcher: Ch. 1, 3, 4
- Kennedy: 3-4

Week of March 15 – Spring Break; No class meetings

Week of March 22: Political Office-holding

Readings:

- McClain & Stewart: Ch. 4
- Bowler & Segura: 3
- Kennedy: 6-8

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 desegregation by law been largely completed but not integration?*
- *In what ways does socioeconomic inequality persist for ethnoracial minorities?*
- *How does the criminal justice system disproportionately affect 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 29: Ethnoracial Minorities and Public Policy

****Second take-home exam due in class on Tuesday, March 31****

Readings:

- Bowler & Segura: Ch. 5, 10
- CQ Researcher: Ch. 7, 8

Week of April 2: Desegregation & Integration

Reading:

- Higham: Ch. 2
- CQ Researcher: Ch. 11
- Patterson: Excerpt from *The Ordeal of Integration*, Chapter 1 (available via Course Reserves)

Week of April 12: Debates over Affirmative Action and Reparations

*****Final draft of Issue Brief due to be posted on Courseworks by Tuesday, April 13; Be prepared to discuss in class*****

Reading:

- CQ Researcher: Ch. 10
- Higham: Ch. 3, 4
- Kennedy: Excerpt from *For Discrimination*, Chapter 2 (available via Course Reserves)

Week of April 19: The Persistence of Inequality: Poverty, Crime, Health, and other Disparate Outcomes

Reading:

- Higham: Ch.2 (review), 5
- CQ Researcher: Ch. 9
- Alexander: Excerpt from *The New Jim Crow*, Introduction and Chapter 1 (available via Course Reserves)

Week of April 26: Immigration, Naturalization, & Language Policy

****Take-home exam #3 due in class on Thursday, April 30****

Reading:

- Bowler & Segura: Ch. 11, 12, 13
- CQ Researcher: Ch. 5, 6, 7