

Race, Ethnicity and Politics
Political Science 215.201
Fall 2012

Prof. Paru Shah
NWQ 5521
shahp@uwm.edu
Office Hours: Thursday 1-2pm and by appointment.

Teaching Assistant:
Greg Saunders
Saunde26@uwm.edu
Office Hours: by appointment.

Course Description:

This seminar seeks to provoke open debate and discourse about the politics of race and ethnicity in the United States, and the policy responses that attempt to address racial inequality. We will focus on the experiences and activities of African-Americans and Latinos—America’s two largest minority groups—but will also explore the experiences of Asian-Americans and Native Americans in the political realm. In the first part of the course, we begin by considering the concept of racial identity. We then look at the various principles -- primarily equality, but also freedom and solidarity -- that underlie the ways in which we think about and judge racial politics and race-related policies. The second part of the course focuses on race and politics: public opinion, political image, political behavior, and political representation. In the third part of the course, we move to policy-related case studies: health disparities, minority education, affirmative action, immigration and welfare.

The following questions will guide our study of the role of race in American politics: What have been the historical experiences of racial groups in the United States? What is the nature of racial inequality in America today? What are the primary intra- and inter-group dynamics that shape contemporary minority politics? How do the politics of race intersect with the politics of class and gender? What opportunities and challenges exist in mobilizing the members of minority groups for political action in the U.S.? What role has racial issues and attitudes played in the electoral strategies of political parties and candidates and in the electoral choices of voters? What is the nature of minority group representation—both descriptive and substantive— in American politics today? How do the structures and processes of American political institutions affect the efforts of minority groups to secure political influence? How has the rise to power of minority politicians—particularly in many urban areas—affected politics and policymaking? How successful have minority groups been in their quest to use government to provide expanded economic and educational opportunity? How are demographic forces likely to reshape the politics of race—and American politics more generally—in the 21st century?

Required Text:

Paula McClain and Joseph Stewart (**M&S**). 2005. *Can We All Get Along? Racial & Ethnic Minorities in American Politics (4th Edition)*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Additional readings will be made available on D2L.

Course Format: Fully Online

Many students have the misconception that an online course will be less work or will be less rigorous. *This is not the case.* An online course has the same rigor as a face-to-face course, except that you have more flexibility regarding when and where you complete your work. So, the good news is that you can go to course in your pajamas or on your lunch hour. Night owl? No problem. Early bird? Have a worm. Is the baby sitter sick? Don't worry. However, online classes are student-centered, active learning, so rather than listening to a lecture week after week, ***you will have work to complete and submit *each* week.***

The online class is always open, and you can listen to or read the course content anytime. You can even talk about them anytime through threaded discussions. This gives you a chance to think about your response. Because of this, many online students come for the convenience and return for the quality. They find they make more *thoughtful contributions* to these asynchronous conversations than they do in traditional settings. And, everyone participates bringing a variety of viewpoints to bear on complex issues.

However, you also have to be self-disciplined and highly organized, learn how to communicate without meeting face-to-face, and learn how to effectively use the technology to do well in the course. You have to remember to go online and complete the reading and lecture, to actively participate in the discussions on a timely basis and communicate online, and to e-mail or call the professor or a classmate when you are lost or have a questions.

Time Commitment

Even though we do not meet face-to-face, it is still important that you schedule time for yourself to go online. Make sure to schedule at least 3 days a week for one to two hours that you can be online. Further, you need to schedule time off-line to complete readings, develop responses for the discussion questions, and study for quizzes and exams.

You can plan to spend approximately 10 hours a week on this course: 3-6 hours a week online and 4+ hours reading, listening to lectures, completing activities and creating posts for the discussions area, and studying for exams.

Course Requirements

Module Agendas

Module 1 begins in Week 1 (see schedule for details.) The course is divided into 12 modules. Therefore, you should visit the course site Monday morning to review the agenda for the module requirements. Agendas become available at 6:00am.

Each module requires you to complete a reading assignment and lecture notes, and then asks you to apply what you learned to a discussion assignment.

Discussion Assignments

Discussion activities are for you to demonstrate what you have learned from the reading and apply the knowledge in given contexts. It is also an area where you can demonstrate your skills as a critical analyzer - break down the ideas, analyze the parts, and make a coherent argument.

Part 1: Complete the short writing assignment, posted on Monday mornings. These should be 350-400 words in length, and are due on Wednesday night by 11:59p.m. CST. In the subject line write your name and module. (i.e., Shah, Module 4).

Part 2: Response: You must *critically* and *substantively* respond to at least **two** classmates' posts. Please note that by substantial, I mean you should address the topic under discussion and comment on what others have posted, based on readings and lecture notes. Also, feel free to stimulate the interactions with new thoughts and ideas, but be respectful of your fellow classmates. Be sure you relate what you say to what others have said, as well as integrating course concepts into your messages. You must include support from the text, research, or experience for your response. You cannot submit your responses within 12 hours of your initial post.

Your responses are due by the Friday night at 11:59p.m. CST.

There are 12 graded discussion assignments, one for each module. Part 1 is worth 10 points, and each response is worth 5 points/each (20 points total). Thus, the 12 graded discussions are worth a total of 240 points (45% of overall grade) to be earned for discussion activity and participation. See the grading rubric for discussions grading criteria under Content on D2L.

A Note on Civility

There are few opportunities outside of the classroom setting to have honest and open discussion about race and politics, and often these discussions makes us feel uncomfortable because they require us to question our own prejudices and ways of thinking about politics. I hope that the discussion prompts and responses require you to think critically about your own views and the views of your classmates and that we can have civil debates that make you feel uncomfortable. But I require all debates to be conducted under the principals of respect and civility – when responding, you should ask yourself if you would say face-to-face the same thing to someone who you know would not agree with you. If the answer is no, it is not an appropriate thing to post under the cloud of anonymity an on-line class brings.

Exams

Three exams for this class are scheduled (see dates below). Each of the first two exams will be available from Monday at 12:01 AM to Sunday at 11:59 PM of that week. For the final, you will have a one-week period from the last day of classes. Exams will be multiple choice and taken through the D2L site.

You can take an exam at any time during the week it is available. But you will only have one opportunity to take it – once you begin the exam, you must finish it. You cannot start an exam, then enter again at a later time to finish it. Also, exams will be timed (1hour), so you will have a set amount of time to take the exam once you begin. You should make sure that you have set aside the whole time allotted to take the exam (in case you need it) and you should make sure you have a secure connection before you begin. Also, since you have a limited amount of time, you cannot look up every answer as you do the exam. You should study and prepare for these exams in the same way you would any closed-book exam and be prepared to complete the exam on your own.

Each exam is worth 100 points (300 points (46% of final grade)).

Grade distribution:

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following distribution:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-
100-94%	93-90%	89-88%	87-82%	81-80%	79-78%	77-72%	71-70%	69-68%	67-62%	61-60%

Students are encouraged to keep track of their progress in the course and consult with me in person should they have questions or concerns about their performance. Please note I will not discuss grades via email or telephone.

Expectations

It should go without saying, but sadly it must not, that even though this is an online course, your work must still be your own. Quizzes are not opportunities to share with friends, the exam windows are not designed so that you might get a little heads up, and short answer discussions are not good times to commit plagiarism. Please take pride in and responsibility for submitting your own work.

Additionally, by taking an online course you have the responsibility to ensure regular access to adequate and reliable technology for all course requirements. Technological failures will not extend deadlines. Please make sure that your home, office or campus computers are appropriate for your needs and are not going to fail on you at key times.

I do not accept late assignments – all quizzes and short answer assignments not turned in by the due date will receive a zero.

Course Schedule

Part 1: The Theoretical and Historical Contexts of Race in US Politics

Module 1 (September 4-7): America's Dilemmas

Reading : M&S: Chapter 1: "America's Dilemmas" + lecture notes

Discussion Assignment #1: Due Wednesday, September 5th at 11:59pm.
Responses due by Friday, September 7th at 11:59pm.

Module 2 (September 10-14): Conceptualizations of Race and Ethnicity

Watch Race: The Power of an Illusion

Discussion Assignment # 2: Due Wednesday, September 12th at 11:59pm.
Responses due by Friday, September 14th at 11:59pm.

Module 3 (September 17-21) **The Politics of Racial Identity & Skin Color**

Reading: (1) Masuoka, Natalie. 2011. "The 'Multiracial' Option: Social Group Identity and Changing Patterns of Racial Categorization." *American Politics Research*, 39(1): 176-204. (2) Hochschild, Jennifer and Vesla Weaver. 2007. "The Skin Color Paradox and the American Racial Order." *Social Forces*, 86(2): 643-670. + lecture notes

Discussion Assignment # 3: Due Wednesday, September 19th at 11:59pm.
Responses due by Friday, September 21st at 11:59pm.

Module 4 (September 24-28): **The Politics of Race & Immigration**

Reading: (1) Logan, John. 2003. "How Race Counts for Hispanic Americans." Lewis Mumford Center. (2) Tafoya, Sonya. 2004. "Shades of Belonging." Pew Hispanic Center Report. (3) Waters, Mary. 1994. "Ethnic and Racial Identities of Second-Generation Black Immigrants in New York City." *International Migration Review* 28(4): 795-820. + lecture notes

Discussion Assignment #4: Due Wednesday, September 26 at 11:59pm.
Responses due by Friday, September 28th at 11:59pm.

Exam #1: October 1-5.

Part 2: Race and Politics

Module 5 (October 8-12) Public Opinion and Ideology

Reading: (1) M&S: Chapter 3, pp.65-79 “Group Identity and Perceptions of Discrimination;” “Political Ideology” + Lecture notes

Discussion Assignment #5: Due Wednesday, October 10th at 11:59pm.
Responses due Friday, October 12th at 11:59pm.

Module 6: (October 15-19) Political Behaviors and Participation

Reading: (1) M&S: Chapter 3, pp 80-124: “Partisan Identification, Voting Behavior, 1996-2004 Elections, Interest Group Activities”; (2) Leighley, Jan & Arnold Vedlitz. 1999. “Race, Ethnicity and Political Participation: Competing Models and Contrasting Explanations.” *Journal of Politics*, 61(4): 1092-1114. + Lecture Notes

Discussion Assignment # 6: Due Wednesday, October 17th at 11:59pm.
Responses due Friday, October 19th at 11:59pm.

Module 7: (October 22-26) Minorities in Elected Office

Watch: Streetfight

Discussion Assignment # 7: Due Wednesday, October 24th at 11:59pm.
Responses due Friday, October 26th at 11:59pm.

Module 8: (October 29-November 2) Descriptive and Substantive Representation

Reading: (1) Browning, Marshall & Tabb. 2003. *Racial Politics in American Cities*: Introduction and Chapter 1; (2) Owens, Chris. 2005. “Black Substantive Representation in State Legislatures from 1971-1994.” *Social Science Quarterly*, 86(4): 779-791; (3) Gay, Claudine. 2002. “Spirals of Trust? The Effect of Descriptive Representation on the Relationship between Citizens and Their Government.” *American Journal of Political Science*, 46(4): 717-732. + Lecture Notes.

Discussion Assignment # 8: Due Wednesday, October 31st at 11:59pm.
Responses due Friday, November 2nd at 11:59pm.

Module 9: (November 5-9) Coalition Politics

Reading: (1) Kaufmann, Karen. 2003. “Cracks in the Rainbow: Group Commonality as Basis for Coalition between Latinos and African-Americans.” *Political Research Quarterly*, 56(2): 199-210. (2) M&S Chapter 5: “Coalition or Competition?”

Discussion Assignment # 9: Due Wednesday, November 7th at 11:59pm.
Responses due Friday, November 9th at 11:59pm.

Exam #2: November 12-16.

Part 3: Race and Public Policy

Module 10: (November 19-30) Racial Health Disparities

Watch Unequal Consequences

Reading (1) LaVeist, Thomas. 2005. "Theories of Racial/Ethnic Differences in Health." In *Minority Populations and Health* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass), pp. 133-156. (2) Institute of Medicine. 2003. *Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Healthcare*. Washington, DC: Author. Chapters 3&4. + Lecture Notes.

Discussion Assignment # 10: Due Wednesday, November 28th at 11:59pm.
Responses due Friday, November 30th at 11:59pm.

Module 11: (December 3-7) The Politics of Race and Education

Reading (1)CQR: Racial Diversity in Public Schools; (2) CQR: Affirmative Action.

Discussion Assignment # 11: Due Wednesday, December 5th at 11:59pm.
Responses due Friday, December 7th at 11:59pm.

Module 12: (December 10-12) The New Politics of Immigration

Reading (1) CQR: Immigration Debate + TBA + Lecture Notes.

Discussion Assignment # 12: Due Wednesday, December 12th at 11:59pm.

Exam #3: December 17-21.