Political Science 711: Race, Ethnicity and Politics

Professor Sophia Wallace
1633 Patterson Office Tower
sophia.wallace@uky.edu

Course Website:
Class Meeting: Thursday 3:30-6:00pm Bradley Hall Room 12
Office Hours: Tuesday 3:30-5:00pm Or By appointment

Course Overview:
This course will examine critical questions and debates in racial and ethnic politics (REP).
It utilizes a multi-disciplinary approach to investigate the history of minorities in the U.S. and examine the interaction of minority politics with broader American politics. Students will read both canonical and contemporary works in the field of REP. The course begins with theoretical conceptions of race and ethnicity and how they inform notions of citizenship and group membership. Subsequent topics include electoral politics, segregation and discrimination, protest politics, immigration and assimilation, campaigns and media, representation, redistricting and cooperation and competition within and among minority groups. Finally, selected contemporary policy issues will be discussed and evaluated. The goal is to familiarize students with both the theoretical underpinnings of REP as well as how theories in REP can be applied to other topics in American politics.

Course Requirements:
1. Students are required to write three memos on the readings
2. Submit weekly discussion questions
3. Regular Participation in seminar
4. Attend class every week
5. Facilitate Discussion
6. Author’s Defendant
7. Research Paper or Take Home Exam

Weekly Memos
Each memo should be 2-3 double spaced pages and should focus on 1-2 readings from the week. Memos are due by 6 pm on Tuesday night by email to the professor and the class. Memos should be analytical in nature rather than summarize the readings. Your goal is to develop an original argument (theoretical, empirical or methodological) which improves our understanding of the underlying issues of the week’s topic. Late memos will not be accepted. Memos cannot overlap with the weeks you facilitate discussion or assume the role of author’s defendant. Late memos will not be accepted.

Discussion Questions
All students are required to email me discussion questions on the readings by 3pm every Wednesday. The questions should speak to methodological approaches, theories, contributions, how the articles fit together, and critiques of the work. I will utilize these to frame the discussion and clarify any points of confusion.
Participation
Attendance and participation in the weekly seminar meeting is required. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings before class and come prepared to discuss the material. Quality of comments is valued over quantity. If students come to seminar unprepared the quality of discussion will be radically diminished.

Depending on the number of participants in the seminar, students will be required to facilitate discussion and be the authors’ defendant throughout the semester. There will be a sign-up at the start of the semester.

Facilitate discussion
Students will be asked to lead discussion by presenting core aspects of the work in a 10 minute presentation. This will include the following:
   a. What is the author’s methodological approach?
   b. What is the author’s central contribution?
   c. What are the core concepts and questions in the work?
   d. Does the method allow the author to effectively answer those questions?
   e. What are some possible alternatives to the approach taken by the author?

Author’s Defendant
As the authors’ defendant you must seek to defend the theory, method, and value of the readings for a given week. As is the case in many graduate seminars, critiques of work are plentiful however there is little praise or defense of work. Your job is to defend the value and merit of the readings from unjust attacks in order to keep the discussion balanced.

Research Paper/Take Home Exam
The final assessment can be an original research paper on a topic of your choosing in REP or a take-home exam. If you select the paper option, a 3-page research proposal is due by Thursday October 7th. I strongly encourage first year graduate students to utilize the exam option. The take home exam will be a 72 hour, 3 question, 25 page, take home exam on the readings from the course. The exam is a great opportunity to solidify your knowledge of a body of literature and good preparation for comps. Final papers or take home exams will be due by Thursday December 16th at 9:00am. Hard copies are to be turned into my faculty mailbox or my office. Electronic copies will not be accepted.

Grade Breakdown:
Memos: 10%
Facilitate discussion: 10%
Authors’ defendant: 10%
Participation/Weekly Discussion Questions: 20%
Final Exam/Paper: 50%

** Please note that in order to receive a passing grade in this course, all assignments must be completed**
Grading Scale:
90-100%  A
80-89.9%  B
70-79.9%  C
60-69.9%  D
59.9 and below E

Course Materials:
I strongly recommend that you buy the all of the books used in this course to build your REP library if this your intended area of focus in your dissertation. Books with large selections on the syllabus are listed as required for purchase. Book selections from optional books will be circulated to the class via one large Zip file. Articles are available via the UKY library databases such as JSTOR and through the Course Readings Zip file.

Books Required for Purchase

Readings and Seminar Schedule

Week 1 (August 26): First Class/Overview of Class
Wright, Lawrence. 1994.“One Drop of Blood” The New Yorker, July 25, 4 v. 70 n.. 22

Week 2 (September 2): Conceptualizing Race
Week 3 (September 9): Identity & Group Membership
Prewitt, Kenneth. 2006. “Immigrants and the Changing Categories of Race.” In Taeku Lee, S. Karthick Ramakrishnan, and Ricardo Ramírez, eds. Transforming Politics, Transforming America (pp. 19-31)

Week 4 (September 16): Citizenship
Bedolla, Lisa Garia. 2006. “Rethinking Citizenship” In Taeku Lee, S. Karthick Ramakrishnan, and Ricardo Ramírez, eds. Transforming Politics, Transforming America (pp. 51-70)
Spiro, Peter. 2008. Beyond Citizenship. Oxford; Oxford University Press Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5

Week 5 (September 23): Slavery, Reparations & Race-Conscious Policy

Week 6 (September 30): Segregation, Prejudice & Discrimination
Week 7 (October 7): Intergroup Competition & Coordination

Week 8 (October 14): Voting Rights & Redistricting

Week 9 (October 21): Representation
Rocca, Michael and Gabriel Sanchez 2008. “The Effect of race and ethnicity on bill sponsorship and co-sponsorship in Congress” American Politics Research 36: 130-152

Week 10 (October 28): Social Movements & Protest Politics


**Week 11 (November 4): Minority Groups & Political Participation**


**Week 12 (November 11): Campaigns & Media**


**Week 13 (November 18): Inequality**


**Week 14 (December 2) : Immigration & Assimilation**


Huntington, Samuel P. 2004. *Who Are We?: The Challenges to America’s National Identity*. Chapter 8


**11/25: **No Class Thanksgiving Break**

**Week 15 (December 9): Immigration Control & Border Politics**


**FINAL PAPER or TAKE HOME EXAM due Thursday December 16th at 9:00am**