

San José State University
Department of Political Science
POLS 110: Race and Politics (Fall 2016)

Instructor:	Dr. Sara M. Benson
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Office Hours:	Tuesday/Thursday 10:30 – 12:00
Class Days/Time:	Tuesday/Thursday 9:00 – 10:15
Classroom:	Engineering 403

Course Catalogue Description

This course examines race and politics in America by focusing on political participation and social movement strategies among minoritized groups. The course explores theories of equality, diversity, and justice, and the changing legal relationship between states and citizens. Prerequisite: Upper division standing or instructor consent.

Course Overview

This course examines the relationship between race and American politics. It focuses on the histories of political participation among minoritized groups, on the social movement strategies of working across racialized differences, on the emergence of multiculturalism and diversity as competing frameworks for justice, and on the changing legal and social relationship between racialized citizens and states. Drawing on a range of interdisciplinary texts (from film to legal documents to secondary literature), the course reconsiders American political development through the lens of critical race theory. It examines race as both an illusion and ordering principle in U.S. society, and asks students to ask critical questions about democracy, citizenship, power, and belonging.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

This course is designed for political science majors. Student success in this course is dependent on an active engagement with course materials. Students will learn methods for reading race alongside law and legal thinking through course assignments designed to situate race as the background of conventional ideas about democracy and civic membership.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO1: Discuss and critically evaluate in written work the history and historiography of “race” as a social category that changes over time (as measured by assignments one and two).

CLO2: Compare and contrast theoretical approaches in both verbal and written work, including theories of racial formation, whiteness as property, racial science, and racialized citizenship (as measured by assignments two and three).

CLO3: Describe and analyze the history and future political participation in different communities, including, but not limited to, Native American, Black/African-American, Chicana/Latina/o, Asian-American, Irish, Italian, Pacific Islander, and European-American peoples (as measured by assignments two and four).

CLO4: Distinguish and work with primary and secondary source materials by studying movements for social justice that work across differences, as well as the contradictory legacies of inclusion, exclusion, disfranchisement, and citizenship (as measured by assignment four).

CLO5: Write at the upper-division level about difference and equality, diversity and multiculturalism, and justice and difference (as measured by assignments four and five).

Political Science Program Learning Outcomes

PLO1: Breadth

Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.

PLO2: Application

Students should be able to apply a variety of techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.

PLO3: Disciplinary methods

Student should be able to formulate research questions, engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources, have competence in systematic data gathering using library sources, government documents, and data available through electronic sources, should be able to evaluate research studies, and should be able to critically analyze and interpret influential political texts.

PLO4: Communication Skills

Students should master basic competencies in oral and written communication skills and be able to apply these skills in the context of political science. This means communicating effectively about politics and/or public administration, public policy, and law.

PLO5: Citizenship

Students should acquire an understanding of the role of the citizen in local, state, national, and global contexts and appreciate the importance of lifelong participation in political processes.

Required Texts/Readings

Required Textbooks

Paul Frymer, *Uneasy Alliances*

W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*

Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation*

***Additional articles available on Canvas**

Course Workload Expectations: Succeeding in a Four-Unit Course

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per

week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. Because this is a **four-unit course**, you can expect to spend a minimum of nine hours per week, in addition to time spent in class, on scheduled tutorials, assignments, or activities. This additional unit will allow for more in-depth investigation and engagement with course topics. Careful time management will help you keep up with readings and assignments and enable you to be successful in all of your courses. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

Course Requirements, Assignments, Grading Policy

Assignment One: Participation	10% of course grade
Assignment Two: Midterm Exam	25% of course grade
Assignment Three: Book Review (first draft and final draft, each worth 10% of the overall assignment grade)	20% of course grade
Assignment Four: Group Presentation	20% of course grade
Assignment Five: Final Exam	25% of course grade

Assignment One: Participation

Participation will be graded on a routine willingness to engage the material in class discussions. This includes course readings and films. Students may occasionally be called on in class to read out loud, answer reading comprehension questions, or find quotes. This means that you are expected to bring your materials to class.

Assignment Two: Midterm Exam

The midterm exam will be comprised of multiple choice and short essay questions that require students to identify course authors, legal cases, critical concepts, and theoretical frameworks. On the essay, students should explain, referring to key texts where appropriate, the significance of major debates, theoretical approaches, and critical interventions in the study of race.

Assignment Three: Group Presentation

This assignment requires that students offer a practiced presentation on selected chapters of W.E.B. Du Bois's *Black Reconstruction* by moving thematically through the required pages. Students will not simply summarize the readings from note cards or use multimedia to show information. You do not have time to say everything. Instead, students should synthesize the ideas by presenting a set of themes and showing how certain quotes and arguments illustrate the broader themes that connect the chapters. Try to build a conversation rather than simply restate Du Bois's ideas in order. The purpose of this assignment is to develop a deep engagement with *Black Reconstruction* and the history of "race" as an idea about alliances and strategies. Students will be graded on their individual contributions to the collective project.

Assignment Four: Book Review

Students will select one book from the course and develop a book review of publishable quality that should be *no less than 7-10 double-spaced pages*. The essay should be a polished account of the book major's themes, one that is both descriptive *and* analytical. Students will receive feedback from the course instructor on the selection of themes, the arrangement of the narrative, and the overarching argument of the review by submitting a draft 5-page for review. Students with excellent grades on this assignment are encouraged to submit their work to *Themis*, an undergraduate journal at SJSU.

Assignment Five: Final Exam

The take-home final exam (distributed one week before the due date) will consist of three short essays (2-3 pages each), but will be cumulative and comprehensive. Students should cite a minimum of three sources in each of the three essays.

Grading Information and Policies

No late papers will be accepted.

No extra credit is available.

97-100	A+
93-96	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
63-69	D
60-62	D-
<60	F

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>. Please review the information about university policies on plagiarism, which may result in a failing grade. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

Classroom Protocol

Students should attend all class meetings and participate in class exercises, assignments and discussions. During class time, we work collectively to read widely in the field. Your cell phone should not ring. You should not text under the desk. You do not need your computer. Please bring your course materials, a notebook, and a pen to class. Late arrivals are inappropriate. If you absolutely must enter late, please be prepared to enter quietly and without disruption. Please be respectful of your colleagues during class discussions and exams.

Political Science Departmental Writing Policy and SJSU Writing Center

Students of political science should develop the ability to write in clear, grammatical English. Spelling and grammar count! Students must take care that appropriate citations are used. Direct quotations must be so indicated with quotation marks and a specific reference to the page in the source from which it was taken. Failure to cite your sources constitutes academic misconduct which carries with it serious sanctions. A tutorial on citations is available at the library website at http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/literacy/info_comp/citing.htm. For assistance with writing, please see me or visit the SJSU Writing Center located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment, visit the Writing Center website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>.

Political Science 110: Race and Politics

The schedule is subject to change with fair notice.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
0	Thursday, August 25	Course Opening
1	Tuesday, August 30	<u>Race and the Study of Power</u> Film Screening: <i>Race: The Power of an Illusion</i> (Episode 2: The Story We Tell) (Participation Grade 1)
1	Thursday, September 1	<u>Learning Race: Science, Law, Popular Culture, and the State</u> Angela Y. Davis, “Gender, Class, and Multiculturalism” (Canvas) Audre Lorde, “Age, Race, Class, and Sex” (Canvas)
2	Tuesday, September 6	<u>Race as a Language</u> Reading: Transcript of <i>Race: The Floating Signifier</i> (Canvas) <i>Race: The Floating Signifier</i> (a lecture by Stuart Hall)
2	Thursday, September 8	<u>Race as a Changing Cultural Construction</u> Matthew Fyre Jacobson, “Whiteness of a Different Color” (Canvas) Cheryl Harris, “Whiteness as Property” (Canvas)
3	Tuesday, September 13	<u>Race as a Formation: Racialization and Racial Projects</u> Omi and Winant, <i>Racial Formation</i> , pp. vii-5 and Chapters 4 and 5 (Participation Grade 2)
3	Thursday, September 15	Omi and Winant, <i>Racial Formation</i> (pp. vii-5 and chapters 4 and 5) Discussion of <i>Black Reconstruction</i> Assignment (Participation Grade 3)
4	Tuesday, September 20	<i>Black Reconstruction</i> group meetings
4	Thursday, September 22	<u>Critical Race Theory and the Theory of Power: Retelling US History</u> Foreword & Introduction to <i>Critical Race Theory</i> (in book or online)
5	Tuesday, September 27	<u>Immigration Law and the Two-Party System as Racial Projects</u> Paul Frymer, <i>Uneasy Alliances</i> (Introduction and Chapter 2)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
5	Thursday, September 29	<u>Settler Colonialism as a Racial Project</u> Selection from Paul Prucha, <i>Documents of US Indian Policy</i> , pp. 166-178, including: Elk v. <i>Wilkins</i> (1884) Major Crimes Act (1885) <i>United States v. Kagama</i> (1886) “Indian Commissioner Atkins on the Five Civilized Tribes” (1886) General Allotment Act (Dawes Act) (1887) “Use of English in Indian Schools: Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs” (1887) “Marriage Between White Men and Indian Women” (1888) “Indian Commissioner Morgan on Indian Policy: Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs” (1889)
6	Tuesday, October 4	Film Screening: <i>Alcatraz Is Not an Island</i>
6	Thursday, October 6	Exam Review
7	Tuesday, October 11	Midterm Exam
7	Thursday, October 13	<u>Discussion of Book Review Assignment and Guidelines</u> Wendy Belcher, “Writing the Academic Book Review” Miroslava Chávez-García, “Review of Maylei Blackwell’s <i>Chicana Power!</i> ” (both distributed in class & available on Canvas)
8	Tuesday, October 18	<u>‘The House That Race Built’: Race and the Study of Democracy</u> W.E.B. Du Bois, <i>Black Reconstruction</i> (Introduction by David Levering Lewis and Chapter XVII, “The Propaganda of History”) (Participation Grade 4)
8	Thursday, October 20	<i>Black Reconstruction</i> meetings
9	Tuesday, October 25	Group 1 Presentation on <i>Black Reconstruction</i>
9	Thursday, October 27	Group 2 Presentation on <i>Black Reconstruction</i>
10	Tuesday, November 1	Group 3 Presentation on <i>Black Reconstruction</i>
10	Thursday, November 3	Group 4 Presentation on <i>Black Reconstruction</i>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
11	Tuesday, November 8	<u>Social Movements: Coalitions, Alliances, Elections</u> Chela Sandoval, excerpt from <i>Methodology of the Oppressed</i> (Canvas) Discussion of “Cowboy Indian Alliance” (http://rejectandprotect.org/) & “Sophie Cruz and the Pope” (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yPq5WWXcaTU)
11	Thursday, November 10	<u>Studying Social Movements: Theory and History</u> Film Screening: <i>Mountains That Take Wing</i> (Participation Grade 5)
12	Tuesday, November 15	<u>Social Movements: Pan-Ethnicity and Electoral Politics</u> Kim Geron et al, “Asian Pacific Americans’ Social Movements and Interest Groups” (Canvas) Film Discussion: <i>Mountains That Take Wing</i> (Participation Grade 6) Book Review Drafts Due (no late papers accepted)
12	Thursday, November 17	Film Screening: <i>Chicano! Volume 2: Struggle in the Fields</i> (Participation Grade 7)
13	Tuesday, November 22	Film Screening: <i>Chicano! Volume 3: Taking Back the Schools</i> (Participation Grade 8)
13	Thursday, November 24	No class. Campus Holiday.
14	Tuesday, November 29	Book Review Final Drafts Due Film Screening and Discussion: <i>Black Power Mixtape</i> (Participation Grade 9)
14	Thursday, December 1	<u>Remembering Social Movements: Race and Civil Rights</u> Film Discussion: <i>Black Power Mixtape</i> (Participation Grade 10)
15	Tuesday, December 6	<u>Race Matters</u> Natalie Havlin, “To Live a Humanity Under the Skin” (Canvas)
15	Thursday, December 8	Course Closing Distribution of Final Exam Questions

Final Exam: Friday, December 16 from 7:15 – 9:30 AM