

Comparative Minority Politics

Af Am 151; Chc / Lat 147; Pol Sci 124C; Asian Am 132

Instructor: Dr. Zahra Ahmed

E-mail: ahmedz@uci.edu

Office: Aldrich Hall 636

Office Hours: Thurs. 2:30-3:30

Course Website: <https://eee.uci.edu/11s/20070>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

“Race” and ethnicity have posed enduring conflicts and questions for the leaders as well as the citizens of the United States. This is especially pertinent when it comes to the policy making process and the creation of equitable public policies. The primary objective of this course is to consider the socio-political experiences of four specific groups that have been subjected to systematic discrimination and political subordination in U.S. history: American Indians, African Americans, Latino Americans, and Asian / Pacific Americans. We will investigate specific characteristics of each group and engage in comparing and contrasting how these groups fare in the U.S. political system. By examining these groups within the broader context of the U.S. political system, we hope to understand not only the basis for continuing conflicts and dilemmas, but also to identify spaces for intra-and inter-group solidarity and coalition-building.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will:

- Analyze key socio-political characteristics and contexts of four American ethnic groups including American Indians, African Americans, Latino Americans, and Asian / Pacific Americans.
- Engage in dialogue regarding differences and similarities in the experiences of each ethnic group studied in class.
- Produce a written and an oral report comparing two ethnic groups along several dimensions, including: demographics, political representation, social movements, partisan identification, and social policy impacts.
- Engage in a social action which addresses an issue of relevance to an ethnic group of your choice.

COURSE TEXTS

- *Can We All Get Along? Fifth Edition.* Paula D. McClain & Joseph Stewart Jr.
- *The Perennial Struggle. Third Edition.* Michael C. LeMay.
- *Additional Readings As Assigned*

REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE COURSE

1. **Prepare:** In order for you to successfully participate in the class and contribute to our classroom community, it is important that you complete all of your readings and assignments on time.
2. **Think Critically:** The course readings and lectures are meant to be a starting point for you to consider the terrain and implications of African American politics. However, this course requires that you do more than read; you must critically engage your readings in order to successfully complete the course assignments.
3. **Participate:** I believe that students have insightful and engaging ideas. However, your classmates and I do not benefit from those ideas unless you express them! This course is structured to create several opportunities for student participation. Therefore, I strongly encourage you to ask questions and express comments – always in a respectful manner of course.

****Please note: Respect, consideration, and courtesy are important elements of this course. The structure of the course and the nature of the topics covered may inspire strong opinions. However, it is also important to remember to be considerate and respectful of your fellow classmates during our group discussions and debates. Please remember that the behavior of one individual can have an impact on the entire class, so be considerate and responsible.**

Course Assignment Point Totals		
Assignment	Points	Total
Attendance	20 points	20
Participation	20 points	20
On-line Current Events	10 points	10
Midterm Exam	50 points	50
Comparative Team Research Projects	100	100
- Team Progress Reports & Evaluations	20 points [2 progress reports @ 10 points each]	
- Oral Powerpoint Presentation	30 points	
- Written Report	40 points	
- Creative Visual Aid	10 points	
Course Point Total		200 points

Attendance [20 points]

Attendance is an integral aspect of the course. You cannot contribute to our learning if you are not in class. Therefore, I will take attendance each day.

Participation [20 points]

Participation is an integral aspect of the course. Therefore, you will be rewarded for actively contributing to the class. Participation is defined as actively contributing to course activities and discussions. This includes asking questions and being prepared to respond when called upon.

On-line Current Events [10 points]

Each week, everyone will be required to identify a news article related to our course, post a link or reference for the article and post a comment discussing how/why you believe the issue being addressed is worthy of note for our class. The article and your discussion must be related to the topics and issues covered in this class. Your discussion must be at least one paragraph long and it should explain: A) Why the article interested you and B) How you believe it is relevant to the course. To post to our on-line community, please go to www.eee.uci.edu and go to the message board entitled, "Current Events Message Board". **You must post to the correct week in order to receive your points.**

Midterm Exam [50 points]

The midterm exam will be given on Thursday May 5, 2011. It will consist of fill-in-the blank, multiple choice/multiple answer, and critical true/false questions. We will have a midterm review session on Tuesday May 3, 2011. For our review, you may create and submit sample questions that you think should be on the exam.

Comparative Team Research Projects [100 points]

These projects will comprise the capstone for the course and they represent your opportunity to critically engage our course readings as well as additional sources and resources that you identify through your research. Your team projects will allow you to engage in a comparative investigation of two of the ethnic minority groups covered in class. These groups include: American Indians, African Americans, Latino Americans, and Asian / Pacific Americans. You will select a team based on the groups you wish to compare and create a comprehensive report and presentation analyzing several specific elements of the minority political experience in the U.S.

Each team will consist of 5-6 students. Sign-ups are first come, first served. **THE DEADLINE FOR TEAM SIGNUPS IS TUESDAY APRIL 5, 2011 at 10:00 pm. After that, you will be assigned to a team, and you will not be able to change teams.** To sign up for a team, go to www.eee.uci.edu, locate this course, and click on "Signup Sheet".

The Comparative Team Research Project is divided into four components:

1. Team Progress Reports & Team Member Evaluations – 10 points each: Each team will make a brief, **10 minute** oral presentation updating the class on their team's progress on the comparative research project. Progress Report #1 will be given on Tuesday April 26, and Progress Report #2 will be given on Tuesday May 17. Each Progress Report should discuss each team member's responsibilities and your progress to date on your Comparative Team Research Projects. Both reports should also include discussion of your Creative Visual Aid. **Each team member should be prepared to answer questions about your project after each progress report is given.**

On Tuesday April 12, 2011, each team must turn in an outline detailing team member duties and responsibilities. Each team may determine the role of each member. It is understood that this outline is subject to change, but if it does your team must submit a new outline. I will use this information when grading Progress Reports as well as the other components of the Comparative Team Research Projects.

Team Member Evaluations are meant to make each student accountable to their team members. Each member must contribute to the Comparative Team Research Project in a positive and constructive way. If you are not doing your fair share of the work, you can count on your fellow team members to communicate that through the evaluations. When completing the evaluation form, please consider all of the contributions your classmates have made up to that point. **Please complete the evaluations individually, during your personal time.** All evaluations will be kept anonymous, so please be honest about your fellow team members' performance. I will take these evaluations into account when calculating your project grade.

2. Oral PowerPoint Presentation – 25 points: Each team will create a PowerPoint presentation which addresses each element of the project. Presentations should provide an overview of the written report and highlight especially important information. **Each team member must speak about their part in completing the project.** Presentations should be between 12-15 minutes in length, not including your discussion of your Creative Visual Aid. **Please practice your presentations so you do not exceed your time limit.**
3. Written Report – 40 points: Each team should follow the outline provided for this part of the project. If your team includes each section addressed in the outline and thoroughly answers all questions, you will successfully complete your written report. Each team is allowed to use their discretion in deciding to add more information which extends above and beyond what is asked in the outline. However, at minimum, your reports must address each section in the outline to receive a satisfactory grade.

4. Creative Visual Aid – 10 points: Each team must create a visual aid to complement their presentation. **This will be in addition to the Powerpoint presentation.** An example of a creative visual aid includes a video, a poster, or a photographic slide show. The visual aid may contain poetry, music, film clips, or other media sources. The visual aid must represent some of the key issues and ideas addressed in your written research project and your oral presentation. However, your teams are free to be creative in expressing your ideas. Your team’s discussion of your visual aid will occur after your oral presentation and should take no more than 3-5 minutes total.

Teams will deliver the oral, written, and visual aid components of your Comparative Team Research Project During Week 10, on Tuesday May 31 and Thursday June 2. This will complete the course expectations. You will have no final exam.

Out of consideration for your classmates, everyone must attend class on BOTH presentation days. If you are absent on either of those days, I will deduct 10 points from your final grade unless your absence is excused.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

* Instructor reserves the right to adjust this schedule as necessary.		
Date	Topic	Assignments
Week 1		
Tue. 3/29	Introduction to Course	
Th. 3/31	Interrogating Whiteness	Horsman: (81-86) (92-96) (98-101); (102-108) Roediger: (3-8) Lopez: (xiii-3) (9-19) (39-47)
Week 2		
Tue. 4/5	Dilemmas in Ethnic Politics	McClain & Stewart: Ch. 1 (3-27) Deadline: sign up for team
Th. 4/7	Language of Ethnic Politics Team Project Time	LeMay: Ch. 1 (1-30)
Week 3		
Tue. 4/12	Foundations of Political Participation: Group I.D.,	McClain & Stewart: Ch. 2 (70-80)

	Culture, and Ideology Turn in outline of team member duties / responsibilities.	
Th. 4/14	Ethnic Group Demographics & Minority Representation	McClain & Stewart: Ch. 2 (29-45); Ch. 4 (135-158); Ch. 4 (160-165)
Week 4		
Tu. 4/19	Minority Group Social Movements & Interest Groups	McClain & Stewart: Ch. 2 (45-57); Ch. 3 (125-130)
Th. 4/21	Minority Group Social Movements & Interest Groups	LeMay: Ch. 8 (309-316)
Week 5		
Tu. 4/26	Partisan I.D. Team Progress Report #1 and Evaluations	McClain & Stewart: Ch. 3 (80-91)
Th. 4/28	The Policy Process & Implications for Minority Groups	McClain & Stewart: Ch. 4 (132-135) Schneider & Ingram: (106-125) Fuchs: (206-224)
Week 6	MIDTERM	
Tu. 5/3	Midterm Review	
Th. 5/5	Midterm Exam	
Week 7		
Tu. 5/10	Intra-Group Tensions & Possibilities for Alignment	Cohen: (70-77) Brooks & Fox: (152-158)

Th. 5/12	Intra-Group Tensions & Possibilities for Alignment	Brooks & Fox: (219-224) Brooks & Fox: (239-243) McClain & Stewart: Ch. 6 (217-230)
Week 8		
Tu. 5/17	Team Progress Report #2 and Evaluations	
Th. 5/19	Film	
Week 9		
Tu. 5/24	Team Meeting Time	
Tu. 5/26	Team Meeting Time	
Week 10		
Tu. 5/31	Final Presentations	
Th. 6/2	Final Presentations & Wrap-up	
Final Exam Day		
Tu. 6/7	4:00-6:00 pm	NO FINAL EXAM

Comparative Minority Politics
Comparative Team Research Project Outline [100 points]

- This outline addresses the key elements your team should include in your written report and oral Powerpoint presentation. If your team includes each section addressed in the outline and thoroughly answers all questions, you will successfully complete your written report. Your team should also use this outline and the information contained in your report to structure your Powerpoint presentation. Your reports must address each section in the outline to receive a satisfactory grade.
- You must include a Works Cited page with references in APA format. In addition to course texts, reports should include a **minimum of ten additional sources**. At least five must be academic books or journals. The other five may include newspaper articles, documentary films, magazines, etc.
- Final written report should be typed, stapled, double-spaced, in 12 -point font, with standard margins, and submitted in hard copy in a report folder.

Report Sections:

I. Demographics, Representation, and Partisan Identification

- a. What are the demographics for each group you are comparing?
- b. What are the implications of these demographics for each groups political representation?
- c. What level of representation does each group have at the local, state, and national levels of government?
- d. How do members of each group identify politically?
- e. What explanations are available for each group's partisan identification?

II. Social Movements

- a. What social movements has each group participated in?
- b. What were the goals and objectives of each social movement?
- c. What were the outcomes of each social movement?
- d. How did each social movement positively or negatively impact the groups you are studying?
- e. What current social movements are relevant to the groups you are studying?

III. Interest Groups

- a. What local, state, and national interest groups are currently working to represent the interests of the groups you are studying?
- b. What are the stated goals and objectives of each interest group?
- c. What are the tactics used by each interest group? (Example: lobbying, protesting, phone banking, social networking, multiple.)
- d. What successes have these interest groups had in representing the interests of the groups you are studying?

IV. Policy Implications – Choose one social policy at either the state or national level and compare its effects among both groups you are studying.

- a. What issue does the policy address? (Example: education, crime, healthcare, etc.)
- b. What are the stated goals of the policy? (Example: increase test scores, reduce crime, provide universal healthcare, etc.)
- c. What target group does the policy focus on? (Example: students, teachers, “criminals”, the general public, people with pre-existing conditions, etc.)
- d. How does this policy construct the target population(s)? (Example: advantaged, contenders, dependents, deviants, combination.)
- e. What is the policy’s (potential) impact among both groups you are studying?

V. Group Tensions & Alignments

- a. Identify key issues where secondary marginalization takes place within both groups.
- b. What are the implications of these occurrences of secondary marginalization? What does it mean for each group you are studying?
- c. What issues represent opportunities for both of the groups you are studying to align their interests?
- d. Suggest 2-3 strategies for creating more inter-group cooperation based on your knowledge of the issues each group is facing.

VI. Engagement

- a. Identify an issue(s) relevant to one or both groups you are studying.
- b. **Each team member** must engage in some type of social action which aims at addressing this issue / issues. Describe each team member’s action and the rationale behind it.