

**Graduate School of Political Management
George Washington University**

Syllabus: PSC 286.LH4

Course: Congress and the Politics of Ethnicity/Race

Location: Hall of States (444 North Capitol Street)

Date & Time: Tuesdays, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

Professor: Rafael Béjar

Office hours: (By Appointment)

TEXTS:

Required text:

Can We All Get Along? Racial and Ethnic Minorities in American Politics

By Paula D. McClain & Joseph Stewart, Jr.

Suggested texts:

African Americans and the American Political System (4th Edition)

By Lucius J. Barker, Mack H. Jones & Katherine Tate

Latino Politics in America: Community, Culture and Interests

(Spectrum Series)

By John A. Garcia

The Politics of Asian Americans

By Pei-te Lien, M. Margaret Conway & Janelle Wong

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

This course reviews the historical dynamic of ethnic and racial politics in the United States, and examines successful strategies on how to court and mobilize ethnic and racial voters. The first half of the course will be devoted to looking at the politics of ethnic and racial voting from the founding of the United States through the great waves of immigration and political machines of the 1800s to the current immigration crisis. We will also study racial politics as it relates to voter turnout from the Emancipation to the Southern Strategy to the present. The second half of the course will be composed by two interrelated parts: the analysis of current voting patterns and behaviors for African-Americans, Asians and Hispanics voters; and the methods used by the political parties to reach out to and win these voters.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:

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|-------------------------------------|-----|
| 1) A Mid-Term Exam | 40% |
| 2) A Research Project | 40% |
| 3) Book Review | 10% |
| 4) Class Attendance & Participation | 10% |
| Short position papers | |

CLASS SCHEDULE:

January 15	Introduction - Racism, Race and Ethnicity - Frames of Reference for Ethnic & Racial Political discussions - How the American Political Values of Individualism, Equality and Freedom relate to the “Problem”	
January 22	Colonial - Revolutionary America Immigration laws & race relations Readings due: Can We All Get Along? Chapter 1 America’s Dilemmas	1600 - 1800
January 29	Civil War America Immigration laws & race relations Readings due: Can We All Get Along? Chapter 2 Resources and Status of America’s Racial Minorities	1800 - 1900
February 5	Industrial America Great migrations & political machines Readings due: Can We All Get Along? Chapter 3 America’s Racial Minorities in the Contemporary Political System	1800 - 1900
February 12	World War America Immigration laws & race relations Readings due: Can We All Get Along? Chapter 4 Racial Minorities and Policymaking Process	1917 - 1945

CLASS SCHEDULE (continued):

February 19	Civil Rights Movement The Afro-American experience	1940 - 1970
	Readings due: Can We All Get Along? Chapter 5 Coalition or Competition?	
February 26	Modern America Immigration laws & race relations	1970 – present
	Readings due: Can We All Get Along? Chapter 6 Will we “All Get Along”?	
March 4	Mid-Term Exam	
March 11	African American Politics	
March 18	Spring Break	
March 25	Hispanic American Politics	
April 1	Asian American Politics	
April 8	Outreach & Coalition Building	
April 15	Outreach & Coalition Building	
April 22	Outreach & Coalition Building	
May 6	Reading Week	
May 13	Research Project Due	

RESEARCH PROJECT:

The research project will consist of drafting & presenting an Ethnic-Voter Coalition Outreach Campaign plan for a specific political race. Students will be divided into groups and using publicly available, “real world”, data will assume the role of a Coalitions Director for a 2008 presidential candidate and devise a plan to reach out to and win those voters. Each group will be allowed to pick which ethnic group they will be targeting and which presidential candidate they will be working for. (This will be decided on a first come, first basis as there will be no duplication of projects.)

Each plan must include the following sections:

- 1) A brief history of the coalition and why it is important to campaign.
- 2) A message plan describing what specific messages will be used to communicate to and persuade voters of that specific coalition.
- 3) A 15-month Events Calendar from September 1, 2007 – November `8, 2008
Each month must have one specific coalition event per month and each event must have a description of who, what, where and why.

The plans must be presented and defended before the class in PowerPoint format.

BOOK REVIEW:

The book review is a simple, good-old fashioned book report. As there are numerous texts on race & ethnic politics, students will be allow to choose a book and draft a short (3-5 doubled spaced pages) review. Each review must consist of an overall summary of the book, the position taken by the author or authors, whether the reviewer (the student) agrees or not with the premise of the book and why and whether the book is worthy of being used as a text for required reading.

SHORT POSITION PAPERS:

Throughout the duration of the course, subjective, controversial questions regarding racial and ethnic politics will be posed to the class. Each student will draft their own responses detailing their own specific positions and thoughts on the subject. Position papers will be short (2-3 double spaced pages) statements. Each position paper will be due at the next regularly scheduled class period. There will be a total of 5 short position papers assigned throughout the duration of the course with each one worth 2 points.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Throughout the duration of the course, I will endeavor to bring guest speakers to address the class on specific and relevant topics. Representatives from the following organizations may be guest speakers:

NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People)
LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens)
NCLR (National Center for La Raza)
NALEO (National Association of Latino Elected & Appointed Officials)
NRHA (National Republican Hispanic Assembly)
RNC Coalitions Director
DNC Coalitions Director
Asian political groups
Black political groups