

Race and Politics (RPOL)

CTY Course Syllabus

About the Course

With Barack Obama's victory in 2008, media and political commentators hailed the election as the "historic" triumph of civil rights progress. They talked of a "new era" in race relations and American politics. Even as Obama's triumph demonstrated the advancement of racial equality, the debates surrounding his nomination and election along with those surrounding the subsequent nomination of Hurricane Katrina and immigration policy also highlight the continued importance of the category of race in American politics. These recent controversies point to only a few of the many ways race and racism have influenced politics, including electoral politics, grassroots politics, cultural politics, and other types, throughout American history.

In this course, students will learn how the concept of race has influenced and been influenced by American politics from colonial times to the present. We will begin by defining race, racism, identity, and politics. Throughout the course, we will continually revisit our definitions and consider how these concepts are malleable and contested in history. Furthermore, we will explore a variety of different constructions of both race and politics, considering biological, cultural, and political definitions of race as well as a range of kinds of politics. This class will utilize a multiplicity of voices and communities to explore the connections between race and politics in American history. Beginning with early contact between Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans, moving to slavery and ideas of race in Revolutionary America, Cherokee removal, the Civil War, Imperialism and Western expansion, Jim Crow America, early 20th century immigration, Japanese Internment, civil rights, and finally, to the modern United States and comparisons with other nations.

To explore these topics, students will examine primary and secondary sources using a multi-disciplinary approach. We will examine books, essays, interviews, literature, music, photographs, and films. Students will read these sources critically and use them to make sophisticated connections between race and politics. They will demonstrate their learning and further their analytical skills through a variety of assignments (below), debates, and discussions. The course will include as much flexibility and choice for students as possible. At the same time, students will be expected to participate in a thoughtful and engaged manner throughout the course.

Learning Objectives

- Students will understand the multiple ways race has been defined historically and currently
- Students will understand the interconnectedness of power, race, and politics
- Students will define politics broadly and will understand some of the ways in which different groups (different races and other power differentials) participate in and attempt to influence U.S. politics

- Students will know there is a close tie between domestic racial politics and international events
- Students will improve their critical analysis skills
- Students will improve their argumentation skills
- Students will improve their writing skills

Texts

- Miné Okubo, *Citizen 13660*
- Philip A. Klinkner with Rogers M. Smith, *The Unsteady March: The Rise and Decline of Racial Equality in America*
- Nella Larsen, *Passing*
- Additional readings as assigned

Assignments

Students will regularly be evaluated, receive feedback, and evaluate themselves on each of the assignments listed below. Students will work hard during class, but all assignments will be completed during class time.

Participation:

The success of this course depends on everyone's active, quality participation. All students are expected to come to every class having completed all assigned reading and writing. Students should *also* be prepared to talk and think about those assignments. Our class is small and the schedule intensive. Consequently, students should think of themselves as learners, but also as teachers as each day, we will each spend time listening, talking, presenting, teaching, working, and learning. Further, our topic will sometimes be sensitive or controversial. Everyone is expected to treat each other with respect and be mindful of the community we are creating together. Students are encouraged to share their perspectives and opinions, but also to strive to gain a greater depth of knowledge about controversial subjects, including the ability to consider debates and topics from multiple angles.

In Class Writing:

Throughout the course, students will be given a variety of writing assignments, ranging from free writes to analytical essays, persuasive pieces, and even summaries of readings or webquests. These assignments are designed to assess students' writing, understanding, and analysis of course concepts and material. They will each be thoroughly explained and students will receive evaluation throughout the course.

Current Events:

Two to three times throughout the course, we will journey to the computer lab or library to look for newspaper and magazine articles related to current issues dealing with race and politics. Students will have approximately an hour to find an article, read it, and take notes on it. Students will write a short, handwritten response (a page or so) to the article, summarizing its contents and relating it to the larger themes of the course. We will present these current events to the class.

Final Research Paper:

Students will be asked to submit a final research paper, on a topic of their choosing. We will have conferences to help each student narrow his/her topic, think about potential source materials, and consider the wider implications of the subject and research. We will discuss this assignment further the first week of class.

Nomination Assignment:

Students will also be asked to give an oral nomination of a person related to their research paper to a special CTY Race and Politics Awards Category (think the Oscars for our class). In addition, students will produce an accompanying poster/billboard/advertisement for their individual. There will be time for students to conduct research on their nominee, prepare an outline of their presentation, and make the poster. Since this nomination will stem from the research paper, this is an opportunity for students to learn more about one person related to their topic and to share some of their research with the class. We will discuss this assignment further the first week of class.

Day to Day Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction and Race in Early America

Day	Session	Topic Covered/Work Done
Day 1- Monday Intro to Course	Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topics:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ What is this course about and what do I bring to it?○ How is race defined?• Work Done:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Introductions/Icebreakers○ Course Outline○ Pre-assessment○ Discussion-What are we doing here? What are the goals of this class?
	Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topics:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Defining key terms○ Establishing rules for the class• Work Done:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Discussion-How do we have a respectful discussion? Ground Rules.○ Video Clip and Power of Illusion and online activities.○ Start working on definitions in small groups.

Day	Session	Topic Covered/Work Done
	Evening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Defining key terms • Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Finish definitions ○ Read and discuss “Does Race Exist?”
Day 2 - Tuesday Race in the Colonial World	Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Defining key terms. ○ The Census and Race ○ Early slavery • Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Morning group check in. ○ Review definitions and talk a little about ways of looking at race. ○ Discussion of research project. ○ Census Activity. ○ Lecture/discussion on defining race, slavery, and its racialization. ○ Intro to sociology lecture
	Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The racialization of slavery in the law • Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Webquest on slave codes and slave trade. ○ During this time, individual conferences on research paper. ○ Write one page summary on Slave Codes/Slave Trade.
	Evening	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International events/slave rebellions. • Race and the Founders <p>Work Done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary source activity on Haitian Revolution. • Read Wilkins. • Quiet Reading • Teach each other activity on Klinkner Chapter 1.

Day	Session	Topic Covered/Work Done
Day 3 - Wednesday Race and the Founders	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race • The Founders • The Constitution Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Reading/quiet reading time if needed. • Reading of Declaration for Independence. • Election of 1800 and 3/5th compromise activity in computer lab.
	Afternoon	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race and the founders Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debate on Thomas Jefferson and race
	Evening	Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on removal • Calloway picture essay.
Day 4 - Thursday Cherokee Removal	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Projects • Native American Removal Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on final research projects in lab. • Discuss myths of the noble/ignoble savage. • Short lecture on Native American removal with projector. • Teach each other readings on removal.
	Afternoon	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cherokee Removal Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socratic discussion of ideas of civilization and nationhood in relation to Cherokee Removal. • Short Video Clip. • Persuasive Essay.
	Evening	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antebellum Slavery Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Klinkner Chapter 2

Day	Session	Topic Covered/Work Done
Day 5 - Friday Antebellum Slavery	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Events • Antebellum Slavery Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research in the computer lab on current events and final research project. • Teach each other on Klinkner. • Lecture on the state of slavery and abolition. • Moot Court preparation.
	Afternoon	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dred Scott Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moot Court
Day 6 - Sunday Study Hall	Evening	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abolition to Civil War Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrote Dred Scott Decision • Read aloud Frederick Douglas Speech. • Discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why was Dred Scott a turning point? ○ Why was it so important? ○ What do we think of this case? • Klinkner Chapter 3. • Jeopardy review last week.

Week 2: Race in the 19th Century and early 20th Century

Day	Session	Topic Covered/Work Done
Day 7 - Monday Reconstruction	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Events • Reconstruction Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Events discussion. • Very short lecture/discussion on Civil War. • Review Klinkner. • Stations on visions of politics after Civil War.

Day	Session	Topic Covered/Work Done
	Afternoon	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rise of Jim Crow Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of why these opportunities closed. • Ben Tilman speech and discussion • Screening of excerpt of <i>Birth of a Nation</i> and discussion.
	Evening	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rise of Jim Crow and black responses Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Smith together. • Short response to Smith. • Klinkner Chapter 4. • Other readings on Booker T Washington, WEB DuBois, and Marcus Garvey.
Day 8 - Tuesday Research Projects and changing definitions of race	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fighting back during Jim Crow Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racebook Activity. • Library research on projects.
	Afternoon	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Papers Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research in the library with presentation from librarian
	Evening	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific Racism Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiet reading • Do Army Tests • Read Gould
Day 9 - Wednesday Imperialism, American Expansion, and Race throughout the 20th Century	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Imperialism Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture/discussion on Early American imperialism with cartoons. • Discuss the definition and legacies of early imperialism. • Small groups on White Man's Burden ideas. • Lecture on cultural Imperialism. • Activities on Cultural Imperialism.

Day	Session	Topic Covered/Work Done
Day 9 - Wednesday Imperialism, American Expansion, and Race throughout	Afternoon	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention and Imperialism today • Research Projects Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Events on intervention • Blog Post • Research Project
	Evening	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial Identity • The Harlem Renaissance Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Passing</i>
Day 10 - Thursday The Politics of Representation	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial Identity • The Harlem Renaissance period Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small and large group discussions on <i>Passing</i>. Multiple rounds.
	Afternoon	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stereotypes and Politics Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch clip of <i>The Grace Lee Project</i> film. • Make political cartoon.
	Evening	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Japanese Internment Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Okubo.
Day 11- Friday	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race and WWII • Internment Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss/lecture on the relationship between race and WWII. • Stations on Internment.
	Afternoon	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internment Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Lecture from Dean. • Medium Socratic discussions of <i>Citizen 13660</i>.

Day	Session	Topic Covered/Work Done
Day 12 - Sunday	Evening	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil rights movement Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read in groups and prepare for debate

Week 3: Race and Politics in Postwar America

Day	Session	Topic Covered/Work Done
Day 13 - Monday Civil Rights Movement	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil rights movement Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm what we know about the civil rights movement. • Lecture on Movements. • Reading and work together on teach each other • Discuss various tactics in groups.
	Afternoon	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil rights Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defend a tactic debate
	Evening	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final projects Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nomination Person
Day 14 - Tuesday The Racial Politics of Illegal Immigration	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil rights Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil rights slide show and discussion • Individual work on nomination project
	Afternoon	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture/discussion on immigration • Watch clip on illegal immigration and discuss
	Evening	Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish draft of paper in lab.

Day	Session	Topic Covered/Work Done
Day 15 - Wednesday Comparisons and Environmentalism	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration and international comparisons Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jigsaw groups on immigration current event articles. • Handout and discussion on South Africa or Australia comparison. • Group policy proposal • Read article on the Oil Spill if time
	Afternoon	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Racism Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of the concept of environmental racism. • Group primary document activities on race and the environment—News Casts.
	Evening	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeopardy. • “Post-Racial” Article • Nomination work
Day 16 - Thursday Modern America and Beyond	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race and politics today Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini-discussions on race in modern American politics. • Socratic discussion on what we’ve learned and our revised definitions of race and politics. • Poster • Work on Nomination Presentation.
	Afternoon	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and conclusion Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post assessment • Work on Projects
	Evening	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research projects Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish Projects.

Day	Session	Topic Covered/Work Done
Day 17- Friday Course Celebration/ Presentations	Morning	Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project conclusions Work Done: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final Celebration• Presentations• Movie