

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO  
Department of African-American Studies  
AAST103/POLS112 ▪ Fall 2005  
T/R 9:30-10:45 ▪ BSB 161

## INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN-AMERICAN POLITICS

**Professor: Michelle R. Boyd, Ph.D.**

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:00-12:00

### Course Description

With the end of legal segregation, scholars and political commentators began questioning why racial inequities and racial hierarchies still exist *despite* the accomplishments of the civil rights movement. In this course, we will explore that question by examining racial privilege and black political activism from slavery through the contemporary period. We will spend part of our time examining the social processes that racialize and constrain African-Americans. Most of our effort however, will be spent analyzing the strategies blacks employ to combat racial subordination. The ultimate purpose of this course is to enhance your ability to use history to evaluate contemporary racial politics.

### Course Objectives

Everyone has *opinions* about race & race politics—beliefs or impressions that are often based on narrow personal experience and prejudice. The purpose of this course is to improve your *analysis* and *evaluation* of contemporary racial politics using evidence and reason. By the end of the course you should be able to

- identify and analyze the processes that maintain the U.S. racial order over time;
- identify and analyze the major protest and electoral strategies used to combat American racial ordering;
- identify the principal divisions and competing interests between and among U.S. racial populations; and
- evaluate the effectiveness of protest strategies in disrupting contemporary racial ordering.

### Course Methods

To reach these goals, you will:

- read and discuss historical and contemporary descriptions of black social, political and economic life;
- write essays analyzing the history of black politics, and;
- complete a group project examining contemporary political issues.

## Basic Expectations

You can expect me (the professor) to:

- Arrive on time and be prepared for class;
- Follow the syllabus and alert you in advance of any changes;
- Respond as quickly and as thoroughly as possible to your work and concerns; and
- Evaluate your work fairly according to clearly communicated expectations.

I expect you (the student) to:

- Be both prompt and prepared for class;
- Read and follow the written syllabus and ask any clarifying questions in advance;
- Take the initiative in communicating with me *before* problems get out of control; and
- Evaluate your own work according to the expectations of the course.

I'm happy to meet, talk, or email with you about problems, questions, confusions or concerns about the class, and **hope you will take advantage of my office hours (Tuesdays 11:00-12:00)**. Students who require accommodations for access to or participation in the course should register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 312-413-2103 (voice) or 312-413-0123 (TTY) and come and see me immediately.

## Policies & Procedures

- Turn off your cell phone. Turn off your cell phone. Turn off your cell phone.
- Neither extra credit nor make-up assignments will be offered in this course.
- Assignments may only be submitted electronically under certain circumstances (see below). Hard copies not submitted directly to the professor should be taken to the main office in the African-American Studies department, located at 1223 University Hall. These assignments must be signed in by a faculty or staff person.
- Students are strongly urged to familiarize themselves with the definition of plagiarism (which can be easily found at [www.uic.edu/depts/sja/integrit.htm](http://www.uic.edu/depts/sja/integrit.htm)) and avoid it at all costs. Penalties for plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty can include expulsion from the University.

## Required Texts

The readings for this course include one book and a coursepack. The book listed below can be purchased from Chicago Textbook, Inc., 1076 W. Taylor. The coursepack can be purchased in the main office of the African-American Studies department at 1223, University Hall.

Belinda Robnett, *How Long? How Long?: African-American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights* (New York, Oxford Press, 1997).

## Evaluation

There are no exams in this class. Your grade will be based on the following:

### ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION (20%)

The purpose of class is to help you make sense of the day's readings and understand their relationship to material that we have already covered. We'll do that through lectures, in-class writing assignments, small group projects, class discussions and media presentations. Your participation grade will be based on your attendance, attentiveness, involvement, attitude and contribution to group work.

I expect everyone to attend all classes. However, since life does sometime intervene, you may miss a full week (2 class periods) for whatever reason, without penalty. There is no distinction between an "excused" or "unexcused" absence, and you don't need to tell me when or why you'll be absent. Students who are not in the classroom when attendance is taken will be marked absent. For every additional absence over the two allowed, your participation grade will drop one letter grade. You are expected to obtain any missed material from other students in the class. I will not provide a summary of the class during my office hours.

### ANALYTICAL ESSAYS (60%)

You will write one 5-7 page essay for each of the 4 units in the course. This includes the final unit, which will, in part, be taught by you and your classmates (see below). Each essay question will be handed out one week before it is due and will address the major themes and issues from the unit. A strong essay will integrate course materials, clearly and explicitly articulate an argument or thesis; make precise and appropriate use of relevant concepts; support arguments with evidence; draw upon multiple and pertinent class sources; and of course, be carefully and elegantly formatted, edited, organized and composed.

Hard copies of the analytical essays must be submitted at the beginning of class. Electronic copies will only be accepted if you are unable to attend class and they must have a time-date stamp prior to the beginning of class. Late papers will not be accepted. Papers receiving a grade of C or below may be revised and resubmitted for a second grading. If you choose to do an R&R, you must submit your revised paper within a week of receiving your original grade.

### TEAM TEACHING (20%)

You will work in teams of 4-5 to research and teach about a contemporary black political issue and one strategy being used to address it. This is a group assignment with both a written and an oral component: each team member will research one section of the lesson plan, and be responsible for teaching what s/he has learned to the rest of the class. Please note my use of the word "teach" rather than "present." Although your classmates will be responsible for completing an assigned reading, the teaching team is responsible for providing important contextual information, raising important theoretical issues, clarifying the day's readings, and facilitating a productive class discussion. The required written materials that will accompany the lesson plan are due on Tuesday, November 15 and you won't be surprised to read that late assignments will not be accepted.

## READING SCHEDULE

### Unit I: Theorizing Black Politics

- Wk 1** Aug 23 **Introduction—Why Black Politics?**
- Aug 25 **Racial Disparities in the Post-Civil Rights Era: Inequality vs. Privilege**  
Jennifer Hochschild, Chapters 2 & 3 from *Facing up to the American Dream* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 39-71.  
Thomas M. Shapiro “The Racial Wealth Gap” in *The State of Black America, 2005* (NY: National Urban League 2005), 41-48.
- Wk 2** Aug 30 **The Process of Racial Ordering: Maintaining Racial Privilege**  
Melvin Oliver & Thomas Shapiro “Ch 2: Race, Wealth & Equality” in *Black Wealth/White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality* (NY: Routledge, 1995), 33-52.  
Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” in Scott Plous, ed., *Understanding Prejudice & Discrimination* (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2003), 191-195.
- Sept 1 **Intersectionality & Intra-Racial Contestation: Confounding Racial Privilege**  
Patricia Hill Collins, “Toward a New Vision: Race, Class and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection” Keynote Address delivered at the Integrating Race and Gender into the College Curriculum Workshop, May 24, 1989.  
Belinda Robnett, *How Long? How Long?: African-American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights* (New York, Oxford Press, 1997), pp. 12-26.
- Wk 3** Sept 6 **Defining & Mobilizing Racial Group Interests**  
Cathy Cohen, “Marginalization: Power, Identity and Members” in *The Boundaries of Blackness: Aids and the Breakdown of Black Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 33-77.

### Unit II: From Slave to Subordinate—Early Black Politics

- Sept 8 **Racial Ordering during Slavery**  
Winthrop Jordan, “‘The Mutual Causation’ of Racism and Slavery” and Edmund S. Morgan, “The Paradox of Slavery and Freedom” in Thomas Holt and Elsa Barkley Brown, eds., *Major Problems in African-American History Vol. I* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 2000), 92-109.
- Wk 4** Sept 13 **Resisting the Slave Racial Order**  
Deborah Gray White, “The Nature of Female Slavery” in *Ar’n’t I A Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 1985), 62-90.  
**EXAMI** “A Slave Man Resists, 1845” and “A Slave Woman Resists, 1861” in Thomas Holt and Elsa Barkley Brown, eds., *Major Problems in African-American History Vol. I* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 2000), 208-214.  
**DUE**

Sept 15 **Race Uplift I: Self Help in the post-Emancipation Period**  
James Anderson, Chapter 1, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 4-32.

**Wk 5** Sept 20 **Electoral Politics in the Reconstruction Era**  
Eric Foner and Olivia Mahoney “The Politics of Reconstruction...” and  
“Reconstruction Government in the South” in *America’s Reconstruction* (NY: HarperPerennial 1995), 73-119.

Sept 22 **Southern Redemption & the Consolidation of White Supremacy, 1876-1900**  
Eric Foner and Olivia Mahoney “The Ending of Reconstruction” in *America’s Reconstruction* (NY: HarperPerennial 1995), 119-138.  
Richard Wright “The Ethics of Living Jim Crow” in Paula S. Rothenberg, ed., *Race, Class and Gender in the U.S.: An Integrated Study* (New York: St. Martin’s Press), 36-45.

**Wk 6** Sept 27 **Black Accommodation to White Supremacy, 1870-1900**  
Booker T. Washington, “The Atlanta Exposition Address, September 1895” in *Up From Slavery* (NY: Doubleday & Co., 1901).  
W.E.B. Dubois, “Of Booker T. Washington & Others,” in *The Souls of Black Folk* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1903).

Sept 29 **Race Uplift II: The Politics of Social Adjustment, 1890-1930**  
Beverly Jones, “Mary Church Terrell and the National Association of Colored Women, 1896 to 1901” *Journal of Negro History* 67(1): 20-33. 1982.

<b>Unit III: From Subordinate to Equal—The Growth of Collective Protest</b>
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**Wk 7** Oct 4 **The Great Migration & the Origins of Urban Racial Ordering**  
Thomas Philpott “The Outlines of the Ghetto” in *The Slum and the Ghetto: Immigrants, Blacks, and Reformers in Chicago, 1880-1930* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1991), 116-146.

Oct 6 **Brokerage Politics**  
Beth Tompkins-Bates, “The Politics of Paternalism & Patronage” *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America, 1925-1945* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press 2001), 40-62.  
**EXAM II DUE**

**Wk 8** Oct 11 **Labor and Working Class Politics Among Blacks**  
Cheryl Greenberg, “Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work” in “*Or does it explode?*”: *Black Harlem in the Great Depression* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 114-139.

Oct 13 **Movement Mobilization: Legal Challenges to Segregation, 1940-1950**  
William Chafe et al, “Resistance & Political Struggles” in *Remembering Jim Crow* (NY: New Press, 2001), 268-303.

- Wk 9** Oct 18 **Movement Emergence: Boycotts, 1954-1960**  
 Aldon Morris, “The Baton Rouge Bus Boycott” in Jonathan Birnbaum and Clarence Taylor, eds., *Civil Rights Since 1787* (NY: New York University Press, 2000), 435-442.  
 Belinda Robnett, Chs. 3 & 4, “Women & the Escalation...” and “Sustaining the Momentum...” in *How Long? How Long? African-American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 53-85.
- Oct 20 **Movement Expansion: Sit-Ins & Freedom Rides, 1960-1963**  
 Belinda Robnett Chs. 5 & 6, “Sowing the Seeds of Mass Mobilization” and “Bridging Students to the Movement,” 1997, 86-114.  
 Nicolaus Mills, “What Really Happened at the March on Washington?” in Birnbaum and Taylor 2000, 493-500.
- Wk 10** Oct 25 **Movement Peak & Decline: Civil and Voting Rights, 1964-65**  
 Belinda Robnett Chs. 8 & 9, “Bringing the Movement Home” and “Cooperation & Conflict,” 1997, 140-172.  
 Steven F. Lawson “The Selma Movement and the Voting Rights Act of 1965” Birnbaum and Taylor 2000, 539-545.
- Oct 27 **Movement Transformation: The Rise of Black Militancy, 1966-1968**  
 Belinda Robnett Ch 10, “The Movement Unravels from the Bottom,” 1997, 173-189.  
 Adam Fairclough, “The SCLC and Chicago” in Birnbaum and Taylor eds. 2000, 565-573.  
 Stokely Carmichael “What We Want” in Birnbaum and Taylor, eds. 2000, 611-614.  
 Huey Newton “The Black Panther Party Ten-Point Program” in Birnbaum and Taylor, eds. 2000, 615-617.
- Wk 11** Nov 1 **Black Incorporation: Representation & Inclusion, 1968-1970s**  
 Rufus P. Browning, Dale Rogers Marshall and David H. Tabb, eds., “Minority Mobilization in Ten Cities: Failures and Successes” in *Racial Politics in American Cities* (NY: Longman, 1990) 8-30.

<p><b>Unit IV: The Limits of Equality—Maintaining Racial Privilege in the Post Civil Rights Era</b></p>
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- Nov 3 **The Retreat from Racial Justice I: Culture of Poverty/Underclass Ideology**  
 U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Policy Planning and Research, “The Tangle of Pathology” in *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, March 1965.  
 William Julius Wilson, “The Ghetto Underclass” in “Manning Marable and Leith Mullings, eds., *Let Nobody Turn Us Around* (Lanham, MD Rowman & Littlefield 2000), 557-567.  
 Herbert Gans “Deconstructing the Underclass: The Term’s Dangers as a Planning Concept” *Journal of the American Planning Association* 56: 271-77.

- Wk 12** Nov 8 **Retreat from Racial Justice II: Slashing the Social Safety Net**  
 Jill Duerr Berrick “What is Welfare” in *Faces of Poverty: Portraits of Women and Children on Welfare* (NY: Oxford University Press), 5-21.  
**EXAM III DUE** Mimi Abramovitz and Ann Withorn, “Playing by the Rules: Welfare Reform and the New Authoritarian State” in Adolph Reed, Jr., ed., *Without Justice for All: The New Liberalism and our Retreat from Racial Equality* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 151-173.  
 “The Republican Contract With America” <<http://www.house.gov/house/Contract/CONTRACT.html>> (August 5, 2005) & “The Personal Responsibility Act” <<http://www.house.gov/house/Contract/persrespd.txt>> (August 5, 2005).
- Nov 10 **The Rise of Color Blind Racism**  
 Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Chs. 1 & 2, in *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the U.S.* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Ltd, 2003), 1-52.
- Wk 13** Nov 15 **Teaching Team I: Disfranchisement & Voting Rights**  
 Dianne Pinderhughes “The Renewal of the Voting Rights Act” in *The State of Black America 2005* (NY: The Urban League 2005), 49-62.  
 Stephen Hill “Proportional Representation,” in Jonathan Birnbaum and Clarence Taylor, eds., *Civil Rights Since 1787* (NY: New York University Press, 2000), 885-889.
- Nov 17 **Teaching Team II: Affordable Housing & Mixed Income Communities**  
 Sudhir Venkatesh “An Invisible Community: Inside Chicago’s Public Housing” *American Prospect* 1997 (34), 35-40.  
 Antonio Olivo et al “Landlords Fail to Fix Poor’s Housing Woes” *Chicago Tribune* May 22, 2005.
- Wk 14** Nov 22 **Teaching Team III: Job Discrimination & Affirmative Action**  
 Dinesh D’Souza “A World Without Racial Preferences” in Curtis Stokes et al, eds., *Race in 21<sup>st</sup> Century America* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2001), 247-253.  
 Adolph Reed Jr., “Assault on Affirmative Action” in *The Progressive* 59: 18-20, June 3 1995 reprinted in Robert Long, ed., *Affirmative Action* NY: H.W. Wilson Co., 1996.
- Nov 24 **Thanksgiving Holiday—No Class**  
 Arundhati Roy, “Does the Turkey Love Thanksgiving?” in *An Ordinary Person’s Guide to Empire* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2004), 83-94.

<b>Wk 15</b>	Nov 29	<p><b>Teaching Team IV: Race Privilege &amp; Reparations</b></p> <p>Robert L. Allen, “Past Due: The African American Quest for Reparations,” <i>Black Scholar</i> v28 n2 (Summer 1998): 2-17.</p> <p>David Horowitz “Ten Reasons Why Reparations for Slavery is a Bad Idea for Blacks—and Racist too” reprinted in <i>Black Scholar</i> v31 n2 (Summer 2001): 48.</p> <p>Adolph Reed, Jr., “The Case against Reparations,” <i>The Progressive</i> v64 n12 (Dec 2000): 15-17.</p>
	Dec 1	<p><b>Conclusion—Whither Black Politics?</b></p> <p>Manning Marable “Toward a New Protest Paradigm” 849-852</p> <p>George Lipsitz, “Why Inter-Ethnic Anti-Racism Matters Now” 853-855;</p> <p>Peter Dreier, “What Farrakhan Left Out,” 880-882;</p> <p>Patricia Hill Collins, “We Don’t Need Another Dr. King” 907-908, all in Jonathan Birnbaum and Clarence Taylor, eds., <i>Civil Rights Since 1787</i> (NY: New York University Press, 2000).</p>
<b>Finals Week</b>	Dec 8	<p><b><u>EXAM IV DUE</u></b></p>