Course Description

This course examines the various controversies that surround the role of race and ethnicity in American society. These controversies, or issues, affect public opinion, political institutions, political behavior, and salient public policy debates. This course will assess and evaluate the contemporary influence of race and ethnicity in each of these domains while also exploring their historical antecedents. The course explores the following core questions: What are race and ethnicity? What are the best ways to think about the impact of race and ethnicity on American citizens? How do other identities such as gender, class, and sexual orientation impact racial formation? What is the history of racial and ethnic formation in American political life? How do race and ethnicity link up with other identities animating political actions like gender and class? What role do American political institutions—the Congress, presidency, judiciary, state and local governments, etc.—play in constructing and maintaining these identity categories? Can we use these institutions to overcome the points of division in American society?

Required Text

Readings will be available on Blackboard and through the PIUS Library journal database. If you are assigned a journal article that is not posted to Blackboard, I expect that you will access the article through the PIUS journal database. I will post readings from books will be posted to Blackboard.

Academic Integrity Statement

*Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors.* The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern. The governing University- level Academic Integrity Policy was adopted in Spring 2015, and can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at: http://www.slu.edu/Documents/provost/academic_affairs/University-wide%20Academic%20Integrity%20Policy%20FINAL%206-26-15.pdf. Additionally, each SLU College, School, and Center has adopted its own academic integrity policies, available on their respective websites. All SLU students are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions, and appeals. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your
faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program, or the Dean/Director of the College, School or Center in which your program is housed.

**Disability Services Academic Accommodations**

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Please contact Disability Services, located within the Student Success Center, at Disability_services@slu.edu or 314.977.3484 to schedule an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services and viewed within Banner via the instructor’s course roster.

**Title IX Statement**

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU’s Title IX coordinator, Anna R. Kratky (DuBourg Hall, room 36; akratky@slu.edu; 314-977-3886) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK. To view SLU’s sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: http://www.slu.edu/general-counsel-home/office-of-institutional-equity-and-diversity/sexual-misconduct-policy
www.slu.edu/here4you .

**Student Success Center Statement**

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. The Student Success Center, a one-stop shop, which assists students with academic and career related services, is located in the Busch Student Center (Suite, 331) and the School of Nursing (Suite, 114). Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring services, university writing services, disability services, academic coaching, career services, and/or facets of curriculum planning) by visiting the Student Success Center or by going to www.slu.edu/success.
Course Structure

This is a seminar course. Critical discussion of the assigned readings is major component of the course. Students are to come to class prepared to participate in the class dialogue and discussion. Students will also be expected to be discussion leaders for at least two sessions.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to help students broaden their knowledge, skills and values so that they will be able to:

• under the importance of race and ethnic identity in the shaping of the American political system
• critique and assess scholarly theories and evidence
• discuss and defend ideas orally
• engage in meaningful and productive dialogue with others
• evaluate, critique, and synthesize competing theoretical explanations in race and ethnic politics and produce a comprehensive review of the scholarly literature
• produce original research that investigates political processes pertaining race and ethnic politics in the United States in a methodologically-sound and persuasive manner and contribute to ongoing scholarly debates
• present the results of their research in public forums

Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation: 25%

This course is reading and discussion intensive. You are expected to be an active participant in our discussions and classroom activities. An emphasis will be put not only on quantity of participation, but the quality of comments. If speaking in class is difficult for you, come see me. Class attendance is required. You will be allowed one unexcused absence over the course of the semester. After that, each additional unexcused absence will lower your attendance grade by one letter grade. If you miss more than 4 classes, you will fail the course. If you know you will be missing a class, please let me know as soon as possible. This class is a discussion-based course and I want to minimize disruption. If you are not in class by 4:20pm, please do not walk in and interrupt the conversation. You will be marked absent no exceptions. The instructor can also institute pop quizzes as part of your participation grade if it becomes clear that students are not reading.

Final Paper: 40%

You will write a 10 page (undergraduate) research design or 20-page (graduate) research paper on a topic relating in some way to race/ethnicity in American Politics. Undergraduates may also write research papers if they choose, but it is not required. Papers are due in class on December 2. Late papers will not be accepted except under extraordinary circumstances. I do not accept papers emailed to me. They must be turned in during the class period. You will also be required to present your research to your colleagues during the last two class sessions. You should prepare a 10-minute presentation outlining your theory, expectations, and analysis. As this is an upper division/graduate seminar, I expect work of the highest caliber. Writing is a process; therefore it
cannot be accomplished in the final week before the assignment is due. I have scheduled the week of November 18th for paper meetings. By the meeting I expect you have solid draft of your paper. The quality of the draft will also be assessed as part of your final paper grade.

Each student will bring in a full rough draft that we will go over together. You should also plan on meeting with me earlier in the semester to discuss a paper topic.

Final Exam: 35%
There will be an in-class written final exam. The final exam will be held during the assigned period: December 9th, 2015 from 4PM-5:50PM. This will be a cumulative examination on material covered throughout the semester.

Final Grade Scale

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Note-Taking for Readings
As you do the readings, you should keep the following questions in mind (this is also how you will want to be taking notes):

- TYPE: What type of reading is this? Is it a theoretical piece? Is it a literature review? Is it an empirical piece?
- PROPOSITIONS/HYPOTHESES: What are the propositions, or hypotheses, advanced by the author?
- EVIDENCE: If it is a theoretical piece, what are the justifications? If it is a literature review, what are the sources? If it is an empirical piece, what data are analyzed?
- CONCLUSIONS: What are the conclusions that the author reaches? Are they justified given the evidence presented?
- REMARKS: What are your reactions to this piece? What questions does it answer? What does it leave unanswered? If you have criticisms, how would you improve upon the piece?
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

The schedule is subject to change based on the needs of the class

Week 1 (8/26): Introduction

Week 2 (9/2): NO CLASS-APSA Annual Meeting

Week 3 (9/9): The Meaning of Race/Ethnicity.

- Diamond, Jared. 1994. Race Without Color, Discover


- Delgado, Richard and Jean Stefancic. Critical Race Theory: An Introduction

- http://www.understandingrace.org/history/


Week 4 (9/16): Meaning of Race in the United States


• http://www.theroot.com/views/why-biracial-means-black


**Week 5 (9/23): Meaning of Race in Outside of the U.S.**


• Torres-Saillant , Silvio. (1998). The Tribulations of Blackness: Stages in Dominican Racial Identity


**Week 6 (9/30): Race/Ethnicity and the American Political Experience**


• [The Hispanic Challenge (to America) By Samuel P. Huntington](#)

**Week 7 (10/7): Are Blacks, Latinos and Asians Political Groups?**


• Peter Skerry (1997). “E Pluribus Hispanic?” In Pursing Power: Latinos and the Political System, F. Chris Garcia (Editor), pp 16-30


Week 8 (10/14): Voting Rights

• Lani Guinier (1992) "Voting Rights and Democratic Theory: Where Do We Go From Here?" in Grofman and Davidson, Controversies in Minority Voting: The Voting Rights Act in Perspective. Pp 283-292


Week 9 (10/21): Minority Voting


Week 10 (10/28): White Attitudes


- McConnaughy, Corrine M. & Ismail White. “Identity Politics Complicated: Race, Gender, and Election 2008.”


Week 11 (11/4): Black and Latino Attitudes


Week 12 (11/11): Race, Crime and The Legal System


**Week 13 (11/18): Paper Meetings**

**Week 14 (11/25): NO CLASS-THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Week 15 (12/2): Papers Due in Class. Research Presentations**

**Week 16 (12/9): IN-CLASS FINAL EXAM**