

Race and Politics in the U.S.
POSC 273 – Winter 2024
Hasenstab Hall, Room 105
(MW 11:10a.m.-12:20p.m. & F 12:00-1:00p.m. – 3a Schedule)
Carleton College

Instructor: Professor Christina Farhart

Office Hours: Friday (in person) 11am-12:00pm; Tues./Thurs. (virtual) by appointment

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I. Course Description

This course addresses race and ethnicity in U.S. politics. Following an introduction to historical, sociological, and psychological approaches to the study of race and ethnicity, we apply these approaches to understanding the ways in which racial attitudes have been structured along a number of political and policy dimensions, e.g., welfare, education, immigration, criminal justice, and election administration. The course then transitions, examining the explicit and implicit racialization of political decisions. Students will gain an increased understanding of the multiple contexts that shape contemporary racial and ethnic politics and policies in the U.S., and will consider the role of institutional design, policy development, representation, and racial attitudes among the general U.S. public and political environment.

II. Course Objectives

The goal of this course is to introduce you to two lenses to view the relationship between race and ethnicity and U.S. politics: 1) the crafting and implementation of domestic policies (such as welfare, education, and the criminal justice system) and 2) the framing of political decisions.

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Understand a variety of approaches to the study of race and ethnicity
- Analyze how U.S. policy and politics are influenced by social identities
- Identify and critique instances of explicit and implicit racialization in American politics

III. Required Course Readings

This class features mostly academic books and articles. The required books are listed below and are available at the college bookstore or from Amazon or other places online.

There are required texts for this course [available as course reserves]:

Alexander, Michelle. (2020). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press. [ebook available through Gould Library via [EBSCOhost Ebooks](#)]

Mendelberg, Tali. (2001). *The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [ebook available through Gould Library via [JSTOR](#)]

Oliver, J. Eric. (2010). *The Paradoxes of Integration: Race, Neighborhood, and Civic Life in Multiethnic America*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. [selected readings]

Shaw, Todd, Louis DeSipio, Diane Pinderhughes, and Toni-Michelle C. Travis (2018). *Uneven Roads: An Introduction to U.S. Racial and Ethnic Politics*. 2nd Edition. Los Angeles: CQ Press. [Scanned chapters available via Moodle]

- Occasionally, supplemental readings have been assigned, which will be available on Moodle. This means that material for exams will come the required text, as well as from class lecture and discussion. This heightens the importance of class attendance and obtaining notes from a classmate when you must miss a class.
- As we will discuss historical and contemporary racial politics, I encourage you to pay attention to a quality daily newspaper (recommended papers include The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, The Hill, and The Wall Street Journal).
- Podcasts such as <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/>

IV. Class Structure and Expectations

I will often briefly lecture on key topics of the day or extensions of our course material. However, this course will not be lecture-heavy because you are expected to have read the material and discussions are more interesting. Most of the class will be spent on discussion and activities designed to help you integrate the readings and materials. If schedules permit, we will also have guest speakers occasionally join us. Please come to class prepared to discuss the day's readings, as this is a key component of this course.

You can also expect me to arrive to class on time, to return assignments in a timely manner, and to be accessible during my office hours. I will strive to make this course understandable and accessible for all students. If you have any questions about the content or structure of the course or about specific assignments, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am always happy to help if you come to me before assignments are due. Please do not wait to ask for help until after the due date, come talk to me before if you are struggling.

V. Course Requirements and Grading

The requirements for this course involve both the completion of assignments on your own outside of our class meetings and your active and informed contributions to our discussions in class. Some of your assignments will be submitted electronically via Moodle. It is your responsibility to make sure the file is not corrupted (you should be able to download and view the file after you upload it to Moodle). If you use .pages, rather than Word (.doc or .docx) please convert to .pdf before submitting completed assignments to Moodle. Corrupted files will be treated as though they are late until they are correctly uploaded.

Grades are based on four different components, described in more detail below.

Reading Quizzes (Top 6 – 5% each)	30%
Response Essays	20%
Literature Review	
Research Questions	Required for Grade
Annotated Bibliography	Required for Grade
First Draft	Required for Grade
Peer Review Participation	Required for Grade
Paper Conference Attendance	Required for Grade
Final Paper	40%
Participation	10%

READING QUIZZES: (30% TOTAL) While midterm and final exams place a premium on memorization and intense study rather than a cohesive synthesis of the material we read, we will utilize weekly reading quizzes. However, the readings for this class were chosen with intention and are important for students to get the most out of our class. I will not lecture much on the readings, as I believe classroom discussions are both more enjoyable and a better way for students to learn the ability to critique and challenge the works we read. In order for you to be prepared for these discussions, you will need to do the readings. While I would love to be able to simply ask “did you do the reading?” and grade you on this, it seems unrealistic. On Monday of each week we will have a short, graded reading quiz. These quizzes will consist of a few multiple choice or short answer questions, as well as one or two longer (2-3 paragraph) questions that ask you to synthesize the readings.

I understand that sometimes things come up and readings don’t get done. Over the course of the term, there are 7 days when I will administer quizzes. This makes for an odd division of 30% of your grade. Out of these 7 quizzes, I will drop your lowest score. Of the remaining 6 quizzes, each will be worth 5% of your grade. While no one quiz will make or break your final grade, failing to do any of the readings will severely limit your potential in this class.

At the end of the term, I will simply take your highest 6 quiz grades, dropping the lowest grade, and average them. Because you have a quiz that is not counted, you cannot make up quizzes for unexcused absences. However, if you are going to miss a quiz let me know ahead of time, we can make arrangements for you to take the quiz at a different time. If you are sick or have an approved absence, please make sure to send me an email or talk to me before the quiz.

RESPONSE ESSAYS: (20% TOTAL) Each student will complete two response essays on the readings for a specific day. You will have an opportunity to pick the class sessions that you would like to write about. Along with the response essay, each student should turn in at least three discussion questions about the readings for us to talk about that you would like to pose to the class.

Response essays and discussion questions are **due to me by 8:00 AM on the day of class**. Each paper should include a brief summary of the arguments in the reading(s) and a critique of the argument, evidence, and conclusions. Papers should be approximately 4-5 pages long, double spaced (Not including the discussion questions). More information will be provided in class.

LITERATURE REVIEW: (40% TOTAL) Each student will write a literature review that identifies a specific research question surrounding race and ethnicity in U.S. politics. Many classes culminate with a major research paper and you will all be required to do some type of integrative exercise before graduation. However, little attention is given to how to write a comprehensive literature review. Thus, more attention should be given to writing literature reviews, rather than treating them as little more than a formality or a hoop to jump through as part of the research process.

In this class, rather than writing a final paper, we will spend a good deal of the term writing and workshopping literature reviews to perfect the art of review and argumentation. A good literature review is neither a summary of prior research nor an all-inclusive list of everything written on a subject. Instead, a literature review begins with a research question and synthesizes relevant academic literature to make an argument. This may be different than what you have written in the past, but with your dedication to the practice of writing a literature review, the end product will be a concise piece of writing of which you can be very proud.

You will notice a number of components marked “Required for Grade.” These pieces of the literature review can be thought of as low stakes requirements. In order to receive a final grade on your literature review, you must turn in all of these components, even though your performance on these assignments does not factor into your grade. Failing to turn in these assignments will lower your final project

grade by 1/3 of a letter grade for each missing piece. For instance, if your grade for the entire literature review project was a B+, but you failed to turn in your research questions, your final grade for the project would be a B. If you were missing both the research questions and proposal, your B+ would become a B-. More information on each component will be provided in class.

PARTICIPATION: (10% TOTAL) The final portion of your grade is based on your ability and willingness to contribute to our class. What does this require of you? Please prepare for, attend, and participate meaningfully in class weekly. “Meaningful” participation comes in a number of forms: asking questions to clarify course topics, answering questions that I pose in class, drawing connections between course topics and current events, and participating respectfully in class discussions. In other words, good participation is simply being a good member of our class community. Everyone’s experience in this course is enhanced by regular attendance and active participation; conversely, everyone’s experience suffers if individuals do not participate. Remember that a sincere question often adds as much (if not more) to our understanding of the course material as an explanation of the week’s readings. So, don’t be afraid to speak up!

GRADING SCALE. The course will follow a standard grading scale:

- A: Achievement outstanding relative to the basic course requirements
 - A 93 or higher
 - A- 90-92
- B: Achievement significantly above the basic course requirements
 - B+ 87-89
 - B 83-86
 - B- 80-82
- C: Achievement meeting the basic course requirements
 - C+ 77-79
 - C 73-76
 - C- 70-72
- D: Achievement worthy of credit but below the basic course requirements
 - D+ 67-69
 - D 63-66
 - D- 60-62
 - F Below 60

ADDITIONAL GRADING POLICIES:

1. I will not consider grade complaints if more than one week has passed after the assignment has been returned to you. Before I review your grade, you must first:

- Wait 24 hours.
- Schedule a time to meet with me to discuss your grade.
- Submit a formal appeal in writing (email is sufficient—but be clear that it is the appeal in the subject heading) that clearly identifies content in the assignment and the reasons why you think your grade should be changed. These appeals should refer to specific things in the assignment, and not vague reasons like “I worked really hard.” The second grade, whether higher or lower, will become your grade on the assignment.

2. Late assignments will not be accepted unless official documentation is provided. Your grade will be lowered 10 percentage points for each day it is late. That is if the assignment is due on Monday at 1:50 p.m. and you turn it in sometime between 1:50 p.m. and Tuesday 1:50 p.m., the highest grade you can achieve is 90.

- The only acceptable (not penalized) excuses for not completing an assignment on time are family emergencies or illnesses. However, in these cases, I will arrange to give you extra time only if you communicate with me before the assignment is due and you provide documentation of the circumstance.

VI. Notes

You are expected to read the entire syllabus at the beginning of the term. While you are encouraged to print out a hardcopy to read and reference through the term, you will also want to have an electronic version to easily access all external websites and resources. Depending on the dynamics of the class or campus emergency, the information on this syllabus may be modified by the instructor. Students will be notified promptly of any changes.

VII. Academic Honesty

In writing course papers, students must document all passages, paraphrases and/or ideas that are borrowed from any source, and direct quotations must be placed within quotation marks. Similarly, papers must represent research conducted for the course in which they are assigned and no other; it is not appropriate to submit a paper that has already been or will be submitted to another course. Finally, papers must be the product of students' own work. Papers written by anyone other than the student, including those purchased from commercial research services, are unacceptable.

All work is expected to be your own. Cheating, plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without properly citing them), and all forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated and will be strictly handled according to university policy. If you are uncertain, cite your sources! A discussion of plagiarism can be found at: <https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity/>.

VIII. Electronics in Class

You are responsible for taking notes in class, whether by computer or by pen and paper. Occasionally, we may use laptops (or mobile devices) in class to access the Internet for in-class activities. However, I expect you to be responsible in your use of electronic equipment if you do use a laptop in class: please avoid visiting social networking sites, or otherwise browsing the internet on sites unrelated to the course. This can become distracting to your colleagues around you. I would also recommend you read through the discussion (including comments), “The Distracted Classroom” article from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* posted on Moodle, to think about the possible pros and cons of using computers in a classroom setting. Individuals who abuse this privilege will find their participation grade reduced and/or will be asked to move to the last row in the classroom. Please turn off all cell phones during class.

IX. Course Schedule

Below, you'll find a list of all class meetings and the topics we'll discuss. Days with reading quizzes marked with (RQ). You should bring any questions that you have with you to our class meetings. In the event that deviations from this schedule are necessary, they will be announced in class. Readings should be completed BEFORE class. Please bring readings to class. Reading are listed in *italics*.

WEEK 1 – INTRODUCTION, DEFINITIONS, HISTORY, IMPLICATIONS

01/03 Introductions and Syllabus Review

01/05 *Winant (Moodle)*
Conover (Moodle)
Dalton (Moodle)
Uneven Roads Chapter 1

Optional Reading:

https://www.buzzfeed.com/gabrielaflower/the-privilege-of-white-passing?utm_source=dynamic&utm_campaign=bfsbareemail

Optional Watch: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/your-stories/conversations-on-race>

WEEK 2 – DEFINITIONS, PREJUDICE, AND REPRESENTATION

01/08 *Ferber (Moodle)*
Waters (Moodle)
Smithsonian <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/historical-foundations-race>

Optional:

National Geographic, “No Scientific Basis for Race”

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2018/04/race-genetics-science-africa/>

New York Times, “How Italians became White”

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/10/12/opinion/columbus-day-italian-american-racism.html>

The Atlantic, “Telling the Truth About Slavery Is Not ‘Indoctrination’”

https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/09/real-stakes-fight-over-history/616455/?fbclid=IwAR3aZkWh8y-jmWddZfYFoXKAADVm6ywOpsdgrPfSF6ebWT_TDmVf9YXiGk

01/10 (RQ) *Allport Chapters 1 & 2 (Moodle)*

01/12 *Pettigrew (Moodle)*
 Devos & Banaji (Moodle)

WEEK 3 – POLICY IMPLICATIONS – REPRESENTATION AND SOCIAL SAFETY NET

01/15 *Mansbridge (Moodle)*
 Dovi (Moodle)
 Lucas & Silber Mohamed (Moodle)

01/17 (RQ) *Hawkesworth (Moodle)*
 Strolovitch (Moodle)

01/19 *Newkirk (Moodle)*
 Fiscella et al. (Moodle)
 Rosenthal et al. (Moodle)
 Rosenthal Chapter 4

WEEK 4 – POLICY IMPLICATIONS – CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM, PART I

01/22 *Schram et al. (Moodle)*
 Callaghan & Olson (Moodle)
 Gilens 1995 & 1996 (Moodle)

01/24 (RQ) *Alexander Introduction and Chapter 1 (Gould Library EBSCOhost)*
 Uneven Roads Chapter 10
 Rosenthal Chapter 1

01/26 *Alexander Chapters 2&3*
 Page, Piehowski, & Soss (Moodle)
 DUE: RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC

WEEK 5 – POLICY IMPLICATIONS – CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM, PART II

01/29 *Alexander Jigsaw Session*
 Chapter 4 (Group A)
 Chapter 5 (Group B)
 Chapter 6 (Group C)

01/31 *Manza and Uggen Chapter (Moodle)*
 Nichols et al. 2018 (Moodle)
 Butz and Fording (Moodle)

02/02 *Section Wrap-Up on Policing*
 Vitale Chapters 1, 10 (Moodle)

<https://www.minnpost.com/community-voices/2020/06/dismantling-the-police-reimagining-public-safety/>

Section Wrap-Up; Broken window policing and police reform

Weisburd et al. (Moodle)

<https://time.com/6180605/minneapolis-police-reform-george-floyd-murder/>

<https://www.minneapolismn.gov/government/programs-initiatives/community-safety/focus-areas/police-policy-reform/>

WEEK 6 – POLICY IMPLICATIONS – IMMIGRATION & INDIGENITY

02/05 NO CLASS – MIDTERM BREAK

02/07 (RQ) *Andersen & Cohen (Politics of Democratic Inclusion) (Moodle)*

Jones-Correa (Politics of Democratic Inclusion) (Moodle)

Lowe (Moodle)

Uneven Roads Chapter 11

Optional:

Lesniewski (Moodle)

CQ Native American Sovereignty (Moodle)

02/09 *Huntington (Moodle)*

Citrin et al. 1997 & 2007 (Moodle)

Brader et al. (Moodle)

DUE: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

WEEK 7 – INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

(REMINDER OF GENERAL ADVISING DAYS 02/12-/20 & 02/16 S/CR/NC DEADLINE)

02/12 (RQ) *Key Chapter 26 (Moodle)*

Browne-Marshall Chapter 1 (Moodle)

02/14 *Hershey (Moodle)*

Atkeson (Moodle)

Barreto (Moodle)

02/16 *Overby & Cosgrove (Moodle)*

Soffen (Moodle)

WEEK 8 – ISSUES IN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

02/19 (RQ) *Mendelberg Chapters 1 and 2 (Gould Library JSTOR)*

Optional: *Haney Lopez (Moodle) and Winters (Moodle)*

02/21 *Mendelberg Chapters 3 and 4*

02/23 *Mendelberg Chapters 5 and 6*

WEEK 9 – THE CHALLENGES OF SPACE

ANYTIME THIS WEEK: PAPER CONFERENCES, MEET WITH PROFESSOR

02/26 *Jigsaw Class Session*
 Mendelberg Ch. 7 (Group A)
 Mendelberg Ch. 8 (Group B)
 Mendelberg Ch. 9 (Group C)
 Mendelberg Ch. 10 (Group D)

02/28 (RQ) *Oliver Introduction, Chapter 1*
 Enos (Moodle)
 [*FiveThirtyEight Article*](#)
 [*Redlining Article*](#)

03/01 DUE: FIRST DRAFT
 Oliver & Wong (Moodle)

WEEK 10 – INTERSECTIONALITY AND ADDITIONAL TOPICS

ANYTIME THIS WEEK: PAPER CONFERENCES, MEET WITH PROFESSOR

03/04 (RQ) *Jigsaw Class Session*
 Ostfeld & Yadon Chapters (Gould Library)

03/06 *Jigsaw Class Session*
 Anoll Chapters (Moodle)

03/08 Open Topic & Final Paper Workshop
 Uneven Roads Chapter 13
 DUE: PEER REVIEW

03/09-10 READING DAYS

WEEK 11 – FINALS WEEK

03/12 DUE: FINAL LITERATURE REVIEW BY 6:00PM

X. Additional Carleton Policies and Student Support

COURSE MATERIALS ASSISTANCE

I recognize the potential financial burden of additional course fees, supply requirements, and travel costs. If you need assistance to cover course expenses, please speak with me by the end of the second week of classes.

INCLUSION

I strive to create an inclusive and respectful classroom that values diversity. Our individual differences enrich and enhance our understanding of one another and of the world around us. This class welcomes the perspectives of all ethnicities, genders, religions, ages, sexual orientations, disabilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, and nationalities.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES - HELPDESK

The ITS helpdesk is a centralized support center for all students, staff and faculty on campus. For students, we support their personally-owned devices including a drop-off repair service for software and some minor hardware issues. The helpdesk also supports and maintains 13 [public computer labs](#) and their associated printers across campus. To contact the ITS helpdesk, go to:

<https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/its/services/helpdesk/> or you can call, email, or contact the helpdesk directly by phone at 507-222-5999 (x5999 from on campus). Phone is best for time-sensitive requests. You can also email helpdesk@carleton.edu (Any email sent here automatically opens a support ticket) or contact the Web Help Desk: <https://helpdesk.carleton.edu/>.

QUANTITATIVE SKILLS & REASONING

The [Quantitative Resource Center](#) (QRC) offers remote and in-person help for students working with numbers in their non-Math/Stats classes. Chat, drop in, or make an appointment with a trained peer tutor for help with: graphs, charts, writing with numbers; Excel, R, and statistical analysis; and math through Pre-Calculus.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Carleton College is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Office of Accessibility Resources (Henry House, 107 Union Street) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, autism spectrum disorders, chronic health, traumatic brain injury and concussions, vision, hearing, mobility, or speech impairments), please contact OAR@carleton.edu to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES: TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

The Assistive Technologies program brings together academic and technological resources to complement student classroom and computing needs, particularly in support of students with physical or learning disabilities. Accessibility features include text-to-speech (Kurzweil), speech-to-text (Dragon) software, and audio recording Smartpens. If you would like to know more, contact aztechs@carleton.edu or visit go.carleton.edu/aztech.

LEARNING STRATEGIES AND TIME MANAGEMENT

Steve Schauz, Academic Skills Coach, is eager to help you develop learning strategies that work in the Carleton context. His goals are to heighten your awareness of your personal strengths and to offer different ways you can approach your academic work so you're more efficient and effective. For details and resources: [Learning Strategies & Time Management](#). If you prefer to learn these skills and strategies on your own, visit "[Helpful DIY Resources](#)."

LIBRARY RESOURCES

Your librarian for this course and for Political Science is [Sean Leahy](#). You may also email reference@carleton.edu. Librarians are excellent sources of assistance with your research in this class. Library staff can help you find and evaluate articles, books, websites, statistics, data, government documents, and more. [You can make an appointment with a librarian](#), get help via chat 24/7 from any page on the library's website, [email, or call](#). The Library building has lots of great study spaces, and we'd love for you to visit! For more information and our hours, visit the Gould Library website at carleton.edu/library.

WRITING SUPPORT

The Writing Center a space with peer writing consultants who can work with you during any stage of the writing process (brainstorming to final proofreading). Hours and more information can be found on the [writing center website](#). You can reserve specific times for conferences by using their [online appointment system](#).

TERM-LONG PROGRAM FOR MULTILINGUAL WRITERS

If English is not your first language and you believe you might benefit from working regularly with a writing consultant this term, email Melanie Cashin, [Multilingual Writing Coordinator](#), at mcashin@carleton.edu. She can arrange once- or twice-a-week meetings between you and a specific writing consultant throughout the term.

STUDENT WELL-BEING

Your health and well-being should always be your first priority. At Carleton, we have a wide-array of health and wellness resources to support students. It is important to recognize stressors you may be facing, which can be personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. Sleep, exercise, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you flourish at Carleton. For more information, check out [Student Health and Counseling](#) (SHAC) or the [Office of Health Promotion](#).

If you are looking for additional support for mental health care, the [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\) Minnesota](#) also has a Minnesota chapter that provides general and specific support and resources.

TITLE IX

Carleton is committed to fostering an environment free of sexual misconduct. Please be aware all Carleton faculty and staff members, with the exception of Chaplains and SHAC staff, are “responsible employees.” Responsible employees are required to share any information they have regarding incidents of sexual misconduct with the Title IX Coordinator. Carleton’s goal is to ensure campus community members are aware of all the options available and have access to the resources they need. If you have questions, please contact Laura Riehle-Merrill, Carleton’s Title IX Coordinator, or visit the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response website: <https://www.carleton.edu/sexual-misconduct/>.