

**San José State University**  
**Department of Political Science**  
**POLS 110: Race and Politics (Spring 2019)**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Sara M. Benson
<b>Office Location:</b>	Clark Hall 406G
<b>Email:</b>	sara.benson@sjsu.edu
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Monday/Wednesday 10:15 – 11:45
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	Monday/Wednesday 1:30 – 2:45
<b>Classroom:</b>	HGH116

**Course Catalogue Description**

This course examines race and politics in America by focusing on political participation and social movement strategies among minoritized groups. The course explores theories of equality, diversity, and justice, and the changing legal relationship between states and citizens.

**Course Overview**

This course is about the history of race as an idea. It examines the idea of race in American politics in historical context. It focuses on political participation among minoritized groups, on the social movement strategies of working across racialized differences, on the emergence of multiculturalism and diversity as competing frameworks for justice, and on the changing legal and social relationship between racialized citizens and the state. Drawing on a range of interdisciplinary texts (from film to legal documents to secondary literature), the course reconsiders American political development through the lens of critical race theory. It examines the contradictory political reality of race as both an illusion and a powerful ordering principle in U.S. society, and asks students to engage critical questions of democracy, citizenship, power, and belonging.

**Course Goals and Learning Outcomes**

*This course is designed for political science majors. Student success in this course is dependent on an active engagement with course materials. Students will learn methods for reading race alongside law and legal thinking through course assignments designed to situate race as the background of conventional ideas about democracy and civic membership.*

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO1: Discuss and critically evaluate in written work the history and historiography of “race” as a social category that changes over time (as measured by assignments one and two).

CLO2: Compare and contrast theoretical approaches in both verbal and written work, including theories of racial formation, whiteness as property, racial science, and racialized citizenship (as measured by assignments two and three).

CLO3: Describe and analyze the history and future political participation in different communities, including, but not limited to, Native American, Black/African-American, Chicana/Latina/o, Asian-American, Irish, Italian, Pacific Islander, and European-American peoples (as measured by assignments two and four).

CLO4: Distinguish and work with primary and secondary source materials by studying movements for social justice that work across differences, as well as the contradictory legacies of inclusion, exclusion, disfranchisement, and citizenship (as measured by assignment four).

CLO5: Write at the upper-division level about difference and equality, diversity and multiculturalism, and justice and difference (as measured by assignments four and five).

### **Political Science Program Learning Outcomes**

The Department of Political Science has the following goals in mind for this course:

**Breadth** Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.

**Application and Disciplinary Methods** Students should be able to formulate research questions, engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources, evaluate research studies, and critically analyze and interpret influential political texts. Students should be able to apply these techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.

**Communication Skills** Students should master basic competencies in oral and written communication skills and be able to apply these skills in the context of political science. This means communicating effectively about politics and/or public administration, public policy, and law.

**Citizenship** Students should acquire an understanding of the role of the citizen in local, state, national, and global contexts and appreciate the importance of lifelong participation in political processes.

### **Required Texts/Readings**

#### **Required Textbooks**

Paul Frymer, *Uneasy Alliances*

W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*

Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation*

**\*Additional articles available on Canvas**

#### **Course Workload Expectations: Succeeding in a Four-Unit Course**

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. Because this is a **four-unit course**, you can expect to spend a minimum of nine hours per week, in addition to time spent in class, on scheduled tutorials, assignments, or activities. This additional unit will allow for more in-depth investigation and engagement with course topics. Careful time management will help you keep up with readings and assignments and enable you to be successful in all of your courses. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

#### **Course Requirements, Assignments, Grading Policy**

Assignment One: Midterm Exam

25% of course grade

Assignment Two: Book Review	25% of course grade
(first draft and final draft, each worth 10 and 15% respectively, of the overall grade)	
Assignment Three: Group Presentation	25% of course grade
Assignment Four: Final Exam	25% of course grade

Assignment One: Midterm Exam

The midterm exam will be comprised of multiple choice and short essay questions that require students to identify authors, legal cases, critical concepts, and theoretical frameworks. Students should explain, referring to key texts where appropriate, the significance of major debates, theoretical approaches, and critical interventions in the study of race.

Assignment Two: Book Review

Students will select one book **from the course** and develop a book review of publishable quality that should be *no less than 7-10 double-spaced pages*. The essay should be a polished account of the book major’s themes, one that is both descriptive *and* analytical. Students will receive feedback from the course instructor on the selection of themes, the arrangement of the narrative, and the overarching argument of the review by submitting a draft. Students with excellent grades on this assignment are encouraged to submit their work to *Themis*, an undergraduate journal at SJSU.

Assignment Three: Group Presentation

This assignment requires that students offer a practiced presentation on selected chapters of W.E.B. Du Bois’s *Black Reconstruction* by *moving thematically through the required pages*. Students will not simply summarize the readings from note cards or restate Du Bois’s ideas in order. Instead, students should synthesize the ideas by presenting a set of themes and showing how certain quotes and arguments illustrate the broader themes that connect the chapters; the purpose of this assignment is to deeply engage *Black Reconstruction*’s idea about histories, alliances and strategies. Students will be graded on their individual contributions to the collective project.

Assignment Four: Final Exam

The take-home final exam (distributed one week before the due date) will consist of three short essays (2-3 pages each), but will be cumulative and comprehensive. Students should cite a minimum of three sources in each of the three essays.

**Grading Information and Policies**

No late papers will be accepted.  
No extra credit is available.

Grading Scale

97-100	A plus
93-96	A
90-92	A minus
87-89	B plus
83-86	B

80-82	B minus
77-79	C plus
73-76	C
70-72	C minus
63-69	D
60-62	D minus
<60	F

### **University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>. Please review the information about university policies on plagiarism, which may result in a failing grade. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

### **Classroom Protocol**

*Students should attend all class meetings and participate in class exercises, assignments and discussions. During class time, we work collectively to read widely in the field. Your cell phone should not ring. You should not text under the desk. You do not need your computer. Please bring your course materials, a notebook, and a pen to class. Late arrivals are inappropriate. If you absolutely must enter late, please be prepared to enter quietly and without disruption. Please be respectful of your colleagues during class discussions and exams.*

### **Political Science Departmental Writing Policy and SJSU Writing Center**

Students of political science should develop the ability to write in clear, grammatical English. Spelling and grammar count! Students must take care that appropriate citations are used. Direct quotations must be so indicated with quotation marks and a specific reference to the page in the source from which it was taken. Failure to cite your sources constitutes academic misconduct which carries with it serious sanctions. A tutorial on citations is available at the library website at [http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/literacy/info\\_comp/citing.htm](http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/literacy/info_comp/citing.htm). For assistance with writing, please see me or visit the SJSU Writing Center located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment, visit the Writing Center website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>.

### **Political Science 110: Race and Politics**

*The schedule is subject to change with fair notice.*

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
Monday, January 28	Course Opening
Wednesday, January 30	<u>Race, Racialization, and the Study of Power</u> Film Screening: <i>Race: The Power of an Illusion</i> (Episode 2: The Story We Tell)
Monday, February 4	<u>Learning Race: Science, Law, Popular Culture, and the State</u> Angela Y. Davis, “Gender, Class, and Multiculturalism” (Canvas) Audre Lorde, “Age, Race, Class, and Sex” (Canvas)
Wednesday, February 6	<u>Race as a Language</u> Transcript of Stuart Hall, <i>Race: The Floating Signifier</i> (Canvas)
Monday, February 11	<u>Race as a Changing Cultural Construction</u> Matthew Fyre Jacobson, “Whiteness of a Different Color” (Canvas) Cheryl Harris, “Whiteness as Property” (Canvas)
Wednesday, February 13	<u>Critical Race Theory and the Study of Power</u> Foreword & Introduction to <i>Critical Race Theory</i> (Canvas) Derrick Bell, <i>Racial Realism</i>
Monday, February 18	<i>Black Reconstruction</i> group assignments/discussion of presentation
Wednesday, February 20	<u>Race as a Formation: Racialization and Racial Projects</u> Omi and Winant, <i>Racial Formation</i> , pp. vii-5 and Chapters 4 and 5
Monday, February 25	<u>Race as a Formation: Racialization and Racial Projects</u> Omi and Winant, <i>Racial Formation</i> , pp. vii-5 and Chapters 4 and 5
Wednesday, February 27	<i>Black Reconstruction</i> group work
Monday, March 4	<u>Immigration Law and the Two-Party System as Racial Projects</u> Paul Frymer, <i>Uneasy Alliances</i> (Introduction and Chapter 2)
Wednesday, March 6	Film Screening: <i>Alcatraz Is Not an Island</i>
Monday, March 11	<u>Settler Colonialism as a Racial Project</u> Selection from Paul Prucha, <i>Documents of US Indian Policy</i> , pp. 166-178 Discussion of “Cowboy Indian Alliance” ( <a href="http://rejectandprotect.org/">http://rejectandprotect.org/</a> )
Wednesday, March 13	<b>Exam Review</b>
Monday, March 18	<b>Midterm Exam</b>

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
Wednesday, March 20	<u>Discussion of Book Review Assignment and Guidelines</u> Wendy Belcher, “Writing the Academic Book Reiew” (Canvas) Miroslava Chávez-García, “Review of Maylei Blackwell’s <i>Chicana Power!</i> ” (Canvas)
Monday, March 25	<u>‘The House That Race Built’: Race and the Study of Democracy</u> W.E.B. Du Bois, <i>Black Reconstruction</i> (Introduction by David Levering Lewis and Chapter XVII, “The Propaganda of History”) <i>Black Reconstruction</i> meetings
Wednesday, March 27	<u>Social Movements: Coalitions, Alliances, Elections</u> Chela Sandoval, excerpt from <i>Methodology of the Oppressed</i> (Canvas)
Monday, April 1	<b>César Chávez Day. Campus Closed. Start of Spring Recess.</b>
Wednesday, April 3	<b>Spring Recess.</b>
Monday, April 8	<b>Group 1 Presentation on <i>Black Reconstruction</i></b>
Wednesday, April 10	<b>Group 2 Presentation on <i>Black Reconstruction</i></b>
Monday, April 15	<b>Group 3 Presentation on <i>Black Reconstruction</i></b>
Wednesday, April 17	<b>Group 4 Presentation on <i>Black Reconstruction</i></b>
Monday, April 22	<u>Studying Social Movements: Theory and History</u> Film Screening: <i>Mountains That Take Wing</i>
Wednesday, April 24	<b>Book Review Drafts Due (no late papers accepted)</b> Film/Discussion: <i>Mountains That Take Wing</i>
Monday, April 29	<u>Social Movements: Pan-Ethnicity and Electoral Politics</u> Kim Geron et al, “Asian Pacific Americans’ Social Movements and Interest Groups” (Canvas)
Wednesday, May 1	<i>Chicano! Volume 2: Struggle in the Fields</i>
Monday, May 6	<b>Book Review Final Drafts Due</b> <i>Chicano! Volume 3: Taking Back the Schools</i>
Wednesday, May 8	<u>Race and Civil Rights</u> <i>Black Power Mixtape</i>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
Monday, May 13	Course Closing Distribution of Final Exam Questions

**Final Exam due Thursday, May 16 no later than 2:30**