**Race, Ethnicity and Politics**PLSC 300

Loyola University Chicago

Fall 2023

MWF 11:30 AM – 12:20 PM

Mundelein Center - Room 304

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| **Instructor**  | Professor G. Agustin Markarian |
| **Email** | gmarkarian@luc.edu |
| **Office Location** | 327 Coffey Hall |
| **Office Hours** | 10:20 AM – 11:20 AM MWF  |

**Course Description**

This course focuses on how attributions of racial differences shape American political institutions and our civil and public life more broadly. The course is structured around different modules, each lasting about a week, which provide a brief overview of a different aspect of race relations in America. We will begin by surveying the historical issues of racial and ethnic minority politics in the United States. In so doing, we will consider why race and ethnicity is political. From this foundation, we will explore how race and ethnicity affect political attitudes, participation, and representation. We will conclude this course by understanding how race and ethnic inequities have systemic roots – i.e., how they are caused by policies with disparate impacts. You will be a huge part of this final step. Students will present how policy outcomes have different impacts on racial groups in a policy sector of their choice.

This course is designed to develop (1) a strong substantive understanding of how race and ethnicity are connected to the American political system, (2) critical thinking skills about contemporary political issues, and (3) written and oral communication skills. We will focus on finding and using evidence to support your arguments to improve communication about sensitive topics.

**Course Requirements**

Class participation (10%)

Students are expected to participate in activities and in-class discussions of the course material. Students are expected to complete assigned readings before class and come prepared with notes and ideas. I will assess students based on the frequency of contributions, the relevance and insightfulness of the contributions in discussions, and active contributions to group work. Quality of participation can make up for lack of frequency. Please note that attendance is an integral part of discussions. Though there is no formal attendance requirement, you can’t join the conversation if you don’t show up. Participation in group discussions during class counts towards your participation grade. I will actively keep a class participation record to calculate the final grade.

Five core reading reflections (10% | 2% each)

You are required to write five reading reflections to be uploaded to Sakai in the appropriate discussion board before the class that reading is assigned for. Each memo should be about 200-300 words. The purpose of these memos is not to summarize the texts or answer all the questions in the reading guide, but to become more comfortable in articulating your own thoughts, critiques, contradictions, or original arguments that stem from the readings. The reflections can critique the theory or methods used in a reading, compare and contrast arguments or findings made in the reading to prior readings, apply the readings to a current event, or otherwise **critically engage** with the reading. The goal is to develop a consistent practice of writing that improves our substantive, methodological, theoretical, or practical understanding of the readings covered each week.

Core readings are indicated in the “Class Schedule and Reading Assignments” section at the end of the syllabus. At least two reflections should be done before the first midterm on Friday, October 13th.

Two midterm quizzes (30% | 15% each)

There will be two midterm quizzes. One on Friday, October 13th and one on Friday, November 17th. Quizzes will be a combination of multiple choice, key terms, and short answer questions. You can bring a one-page, hand-written “cheat sheet” to the midterms.

Race and policy paper (40%)

You will have to write a 6-page paper in lieu of a final exam. The paper should discuss how a policy leads to unequal outcomes for racial/ethnic groups (broadly defined) in one of the following topics:

* Crime / policing policy (specific policy issue must be approved before)
* Education policy
* Environmental policy
* Foreign policy
* Health policy
* Housing / development policy
* Immigration / asylum policy (specific policy issue must be approved before)
* Labor / employment policy
* Military policy
* Voting / election policy
* Welfare / social safety net policy

Students will be asked to pick their top three topics on September 20th, in order of preference. No more than five students will be allowed to write on any one policy area listed above (exceptions to this rule might be made if paper ideas appear diverse enough). Students who discuss their paper idea(s) with the instructor (through email or during office hours) before September 20th will be given priority on their topics. *If you want to write about a separate policy area not listed above, contact me for approval but it is probably fine*.

The final paper (25%) should:

1. Show how the policy leads to racial/ethnic inequities.
2. Present data (quantitative and/or qualitative) that supports the main argument.
3. Connect class material to the policy to explain its implementation and/or impact.
4. Provide solutions to resolve the disparities.

You should use articles, reports, and other sources to support your analysis of the issue and proposed solution. You should tie class material to your paper but also use outside (i.e., not in the syllabus) sources.

Papers can focus on national, state, or local policies. It can focus on broader sets of rules or a specific policy. However, the paper should have a central argument, be well organized, and be coherent. Specific policies are often easier to write about than broader policies (i.e., writing about a “zero-tolerance” K-12 policy in a specific school district is easier than writing about “K-12 education policy”). Make your life easier!

The final paper should be about 5-6 pages long (not including the reference page), double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins (**minimum 800 words, not including the reference page**). I will deduct points from papers longer than 7-pages (not including the reference page). Graphs and charts are acceptable as evidence, but they may not take up more than 1/3 of a page, and the paper must still meet the minimum word count. Remember, quality over quantity. Avoid fluff!

You should read at least six newspaper articles, reports, or academic articles (not included in this syllabus) on your topic to ensure a solid understanding of the issue you are writing about. Please provide clear citations for your references at the end of the paper on a separate page in either APA, MLA, or Chicago format. I don’t care which reference style you choose; just make sure it is consistent.

Please submit your paper via Sakai (under Assignments). Note that all papers will be automatically submitted to Turnitin.com—a remarkably effective service detecting plagiarism.

**Final papers less than 24 hours late will be marked down 10 percentage points. Final papers more than 24 hours late will not be accepted.** Grades are due 72 hours after the final exam time. Therefore, it is extremely difficult to grade late submitted papers. If an emergency occurs late in the semester, students may inquire about an incomplete grade in the course.

There will be several deliverables before the final paper is due, constituting the remaining portion of the grade.

* Topic preferences due **September 20th, 2023** before class
* 2-page annotated bibliography (5%) due on **October 6th, 2023,** before class
	+ Must include at least 6 outside sources (not included in the syllabus)
	+ If you are unsure what an annotated bibliography is, please look at this link: https://guides.library.cornell.edu/annotatedbibliography
* First draft paper (5%) is due on **November 13th, 2023**
	+ Graded pass / no pass
	+ Must be a complete, readable, and coherent draft of the paper
* Peer review (5%) is due on **November 27th, 2023**
	+ Students will be asked to anonymously read, review, and provide feedback on another student’s first draft paper. Grades will be based on the quality of feedback.

5-minute paper presentation (10%)

You will present a summary of your paper and answer at least two questions from the audience (class).

Your presentation should:

* Discuss the policy, explain how it creates racial and ethnic inequities, and what potential solutions are (50%)
* Be well organized - slides should support what you are saying, slides should have minimal amounts of text, and there should be a reasonable progression of ideas (25%)
* Be well-practiced and well-delivered (25%) \*

**\*** I understand some people are more comfortable speaking in public than others. Please come talk to me if this is a concern.

**Grade Policies**

Final grades for the course will be based on the following scale.

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| **Letter Grade** | **Percentage Score** |
| A | 93-100 |
| A- | 90-92.99 |
| B+ | 87-89.99 |
| B | 83-86.99 |
| B- | 80-82.99 |
| C+ | 77-79.99 |
| C | 73-76.99 |
| C- | 70-72.99 |
| D+ | 67-69.99 |
| D | 60-66.99 |
| F | 59.99 and below |

The scoring rubric above and the thresholds for various letter grades are non-negotiable. I will not change your numeric grade to “bump you up” to the next letter grade. For example, if your final score in the class is 86.9, your letter grade for the class will be a B, not a B+ just because you are so close. I do this to ensure transparency and fairness in my grading. I view it as problematic to “bump up” or offer special extra credit opportunities to students who ask but not those who do not. Your best bet to ensure you maximize your grade is to show up to class, do the reading, and participate frequently and thoughtfully.

If you have a question or concern about your grade on an assignment or exam, you must contact me within 7 days of receiving the grade. For example, if an exam is returned to you at the end of a Monday class, you have until the end of the following Monday class to contact me. The end of the semester (perhaps when you’re so close to the next letter grade up?) is not an appropriate time to revisit your score on a midterm.

All requests for grade revisions must be reasonable, well-mannered, and focused. Rude requests for revisions and grade-grubbing are not acceptable nor are external excuses for a better grade accepted (i.e. “I need at least a B in this class to graduate on time.”).

**Additional Policies and Notes**

Missing exams/quizzes: If you are not feeling well on the day of an exam, let me know right away. If you are dealing with illness or a family emergency, I will be happy to make accommodations. However, *you must notify me of your situation in a timely manner and provide appropriate documentation*. Given the wide availability of internet access, in virtually all cases, I expect you to contact me before the exam starts if there is an issue.

Office Hours/Getting Help: My regularly scheduled office hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:20-11:20 AM. You can join me (without an appointment!) in person. If you need to schedule another meeting time or would like to chat via Zoom, email me.

Technology in the classroom: A rapidly growing body of research shows that laptop and table use during class time substantially interfere with learning for both [the user](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0956797616677314) and [peers](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360131512002254). In the past, I did not allow for the use of these technologies. However, some students have claimed that computers and tables support their learning because it facilities note taking. Therefore, I have decided to:

1. *Temporarily* allow computers and tables in class under the condition that they are exclusively used for class-related purposes. This means that electronic devices may not be used to check email, scroll Twitter, buy movie tickets, etc. while in class.
2. If I suspect you are using your electronic device for non-class purposes, I will give you one warning (either in class or over email).
3. If I suspect a second violation of the policy after the initial warning, you will lose the privilege of using your electronic device in class for the rest of the semester.

There may be some days when I will specifically ask you to bring a computer (if there is an online activity, for example). However, most of the class time will involve lectures or discussions of articles and concepts related to the course—this can be accomplished without computers if you wish to (I encourage it).

**The use of cell phones or other mobile communication devices is strictly prohibited during class, except in the event of an emergency or if needed to take a reading quiz.** Cell phones should be kept on silent but preferably should be turned off. Students discovered using their phones during class time will be asked to turn off their phones and place them out of reach.

Students with disabilities: If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please have the [Student Accessibility Center](https://www.luc.edu/sac/) contact me as soon as possible.

Academic integrity: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Incidents of plagiarism or cheating on an exam (by copying from another student or other means) will result in a zero on the assignment or exam in question. Severe or repeated incidents may result in failing the course. Please refer to this useful guide if you are unsure when and how to cite your sources. Further details regarding what constitutes academic dishonesty are available here:

https://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\_academicintegrity.shtml.

Academic dishonesty will be reported to the chair of your major department and to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Academic misconduct records may be transmitted to medical schools, law schools, and other organizations with a legitimate reason to inquire.

AI software / ChatGPT Policy: we are living in a new world, and we (professors) are doomed to fail if we wage a cold war on AI software without the right tools and education. AI / ChatGPT can be helpful in some cases and detrimental in many others. We are all still learning how to adapt these tools while making sure students are learning and engaging with the material. So here is what I hope is a realistic AI / ChatGPT policy, which I expect you will all respect:

* Use of AI / ChatGPT on quizzes and exams is strictly prohibited.
* AI / ChatGPT may be used to polish writing for other assignments, but not originate it. If students use AI / ChatGPT to polish their writing, they must:
	+ Provide an original transcript of the text they fed to the AI software with their submitted assignment. The AI-polished assignment will be graded, but I need to be sure the ideas in the assignment originate in your brain and where not hallucinated by the AI.
	+ Note how and where AI was used at the end of your assignment.

Failure to comply with this policy is considered a violation of academic integrity and will be treated as such. You do not have to use these tools, and you will learn more if you don’t.

**Class Schedule and Reading Assignments**

\* “X” Indicates a core reading that you may draft a reading reflection for.

\*\* When readings are spread over two days, you should start the reading before the first day they are assigned but you do not need to complete until the second day. Reflections are due before the start of the second day that they are assigned.

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| **Date** | **Topic** | ***Reading\*\**** | ***Core\**** |
| Mon 08/28 | Intro | *The syllabus* |  |
| Wed 09/30 | Background | Racial Reorganization and the United States Census 1850–1930: Mulattoes, Half-Breeds, Mixed Parentage, Hindoos, and the Mexican Race (p. 59-81) | ***X*** |
| Fri 09/01 |  | *No class – Instructor at a conference* |  |
| Mon 09/04 |  | *No class – Labor Day* |  |
| Wed 09/06 | Background | Racial Reorganization and the United States Census 1850–1930: Mulattoes, Half-Breeds, Mixed Parentage, Hindoos, and the Mexican Race (p. 82-90) |  |
| Fri 09/08 | Racial Formation | Omi, M., & Winant, H. (2014). *Racial formation in the United States*. Routledge. p. 3-13 | **X** |
| Mon 09/11 | Racial Formation | Kim, C. J. (1999). The racial triangulation of Asian Americans. *Politics & society*, *27*(1), 105-130 | **X** |
| Wed 09/13 | Racial Formation |
| Fri 09/15 | Implicit Bias | Mendelberg CH 1 | **X** |
| Mon 09/18 | Implicit Bias | \*\*\* IAT Tests – take home assignment; go to https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html Take the Arab-Muslim IAT, Asian IAT and Race IAT. we will discuss results in class. \*\* |  |
| Wed 09/20 | Implicit Bias | Mendelberg CH 2**Paper topic selections due via Sakai** | **X** |
| Fri 09/22 | The Media | Mendelberg CH 3 |  |
| Mon 09/25 | The Media | [Intersections of the Media, Race, and Politics in the United States. Colgate University Podcast.](https://soundcloud.com/user-791646643/13-asimmons) |  |
| Wed 09/27 | Segregation | The Wire – Episode 1 (The Target) – will stream Tuesday at 8PM and 9PM via Zoom |  |
| Fri 09/29 | Segregation | Enos, R. D. (2016). What the demolition of public housing teaches us about the impact of racial threat on political behavior. *American Journal of Political Science*, *60*(1), 123-142.  | **X** |
| Mon 10/02 | Racial Threat |
| Wed 10/04 | Group Identity | Dawson, Michael. 1994. *Behind the Mule: Race and Class in African-American Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. pp 45-68. | **X** |
| Fri 10/06 | Group Identity | [Pulso Podcast.](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/exploring-latino-identity/id1530966488?i=1000535296659) **Annotated Bibliography Due** |  |
| Mon 10/09 |  | *No class – mid-semester break* |  |
| Wed 10/11 | Respectability Politics | [Understanding... Respectability Politics.](https://www.studioatao.org/respectability-politics) |  |
| Fri 10/13 | Midterm Quiz | **Midterm -** *No readings* |  |
| Mon 10/16 | Political Participation | Abrajano, M., Leighley, J., and Markarian, A. 2022. Race, Ethnicity, and Political Participation. Oxford Handbook of Political Participation. | **X** |
| Wed 10/18 | Political Participation | Wasow, O. (2020). Agenda seeding: How 1960s black protests moved elites, public opinion and voting. *American Political Science Review*, *114*(3), 638-659. | **X** |
| Fri 10/20 | Political Participation |
| Mon 10/23 | Voting Rights | [Take the Impossible “Literacy” Test Louisiana Gave Black Voters in the 1960s. Slate.](https://slate.com/human-interest/2013/06/voting-rights-and-the-supreme-court-the-impossible-literacy-test-louisiana-used-to-give-black-voters.html)  |  |
| Wed 10/25 | Representation | [Lopez, G. “When a drug epidemic’s victims are white.” Vox.](https://www.vox.com/identities/2017/4/4/15098746/opioid-heroin-epidemic-race) | **X** |
| Fri 10/27 | Representation | [Black Voters Are So Loyal That Their Issues Get Ignored. Farai Chideya. FiveThirtyEight.](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/black-voters-are-so-loyal-that-their-issues-get-ignored/)  |  |
| Mon 10/30 | Representation | Butler, D. M., & Broockman, D. E. (2011). Do politicians racially discriminate against constituents? A field experiment on state legislators. *American Journal of Political Science*, *55*(3), 463-477. | **X** |
| Wed 11/01 | Immigration | [Massey, D. 2015. The Real Hispanic Challenge.](https://inequality.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Pathways_Spring_2015_Massey.pdf)  |  |
| Fri 11/03 | Immigration | [This American Life Podcast.](https://www.thisamericanlife.org/170/immigration) |  |
| Mon 11/06 | Immigration | Alesina, A. F., Glaeser, E. L., & Sacerdote, B. (2001). Why doesn’t the US have a European-style welfare system?.  | **X** |
| Wed 11/08 | Welfare |
| Fri 11/10 | Labor | Soss, J. (1999). Lessons of welfare: Policy design, political learning, and political action. American political science review, 93(2), 363-380. | **X** |
| Mon 11/13 | Criminal Justice | **Paper First Draft Due**Alexander, Michelle. “The new jim crow.” *Ohio St. J. Crim. L.* 9 (2011): 7. Ch 1 | **X** |
| Wed 11/15 | Criminal Justice | Alexander, Michelle. “The new jim crow.” *Ohio St. J. Crim. L.* 9 (2011): 7. Ch 2 | **X** |
| Fri 11/17 | Midterm Quiz | **Midterm -** *No readings* |  |
| Mon 11/20 |  | ***Presentation and final paper review* -** *No readings* |  |
| Wed 11/22 |  | *No class – Thanksgiving* |  |
| Fri 11/24 |  | *No class – Thanksgiving* |  |
| Mon 11/27 |  | Student presentations **-** *No readings***Draft Feedback Due** |  |
| Wed 11/29 |  | Student presentations **-** *No readings* |  |
| Fri 12/01 |  | Student presentations **-** *No readings* |  |
| Mon 12/04 |  | Student presentations **-** *No readings* |  |
| Wed 12/06 |  | Student presentations **-** *No readings* |  |
| Fri 12/08 |  | Student presentations **-** *No readings* |  |

**Changes to the Syllabus**

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. If changes are made, students will be informed through email and verbally in class, and a new syllabus document will be posted on Sakai