Course Description
This course will examine the African American and Latino experience in the American politico-legal system, with special attention to the relationship between these groups, the dynamics of minority politics, and the affirmative action debate.

Learning Objectives
The basic goal of the course is to enable students to understand the concept of "minority" and how minorities in the United States have fared politically over time. The course also seeks to test and evaluate the ability of students to write clearly, analytically, and thoughtfully and to provide an opportunity for students to exercise the research skills acquired in either a lower-level writing intensive course or in other courses with writing requirements. Generally, the course seeks to enable students in the acquisition of knowledge about constituent population groups in American society and how public policy and the law interact to produce social, political, and economic outcomes.

Required Texts
Elijah Anderson, The Cosmopolitan Canopy
Arlene Davila, Barrio Dreams
David Gutierrez, Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants and the Politics of Ethnicity
Jane Junn and Kerry L. Haynie, New Race Politics in America
Ira Katznelson, When Affirmative Action Was White
Selected Readings available on Blackboard

Course requirements
• Class participation - 35% of course grade. A thorough and critical reading of the class material is fundamental to meet this requirement.

In class, students should be able to answer the following basic questions: 1. What is the main point of the chapter/reading? 2. What did you learn? 3. What did you find particularly interesting or provocative? 4. Is (are) there any value judgment(s) that you disagree with and/or assumption(s) that is (are) unfounded? 5. Is there anything in the chapter/reading that was not entirely clear.
Some of the material will be discussed in small groups. Each group will select a recorder who will write down and present the analysis and conclusion of the small group discussion to the whole class.

Statements or questions that reveal that a reading or readings have not been done or that do not measure up to standards of reason and civility are not only discouraged but will not be considered meaningful contributions and will have an impact on the final participation grade.

- **Attendance - 10% of course grade.** Three unjustified absences or four justified absences equal failure of this requirement. Seven absences or more, justified or not, will have a negative impact on the participation grade commensurate with the number of absences.

Students who are absent are responsible for the material missed. Lateness will also have a negative impact on your grade. I will not recount missed proceedings with anyone who is absent on a given day. Absences due to work, job interviews, weddings, birth of nieces, nephews, cousins, etc. are not justified. If you have decided to be a student you have to be a student. You cannot expect to be enrolled in this class and be excused from its requirements because the class conflicts with other choices you make.

- **Two five-page papers - 20% of course grade each.** Each paper will be a critical review of one book of your choosing on minority politics. The books you choose must be other than the required readings and must be approved by the instructor. Students will present one of these papers in class as part of the participation requirement. A model paper is available on Blackboard.

You will submit your papers electronically as a word file identified as follows: Jane Doe Paper 1 and 2 Pos 410Z Fall 2017. I will return your first paper with a preliminary grade and suggestions for improvement, unless you receive a grade of A or A-. You will then re-submit the revised draft named as follows: Jane Doe Final Paper 1 Pos 410Z Fall 2017. I will return the final paper with the final grades by email.

- **One ten-page reflective journal - 15% of the course grade.** This journal will be due on December 7 typed, double space, as a word file by 11:59 pm. Make sure you identify your journal as follows: Jane Doe Journal Pos 410Z Fall 2017.

You will structure your reflections around the question: what does being a minority mean to me and others? Anderson's book provides a model for this requirement.
Reflective journaling is based on observation, participation, and then writing. For this journal, your participation and observation will be in class, in your residential hall or neighborhood, and in any other public or private spaces that you frequent. As time goes by, make sure you review past entries as this will help you keep a coherent flow and help you save time when putting the complete journal in shape for submission. The final journal can be in the form of a diary or it can be organized topographically, e.g. observations carried out over the course of the semester at a frequent location or locations, or by issue.

You should jot down your reflections while they are fresh. It is important to write regularly so that you can keep your journal organized and also to make sure you have enough material at the end of the course to meet the minimum page requirement. You can write as many entries a you like but I suggest a minimum of two entries per week.

Remember these steps: 1. keep your journal at close range, whether you use a paper notebook, your smart phone, tablet or laptop computer; 2. make regular entries; 3. participate, observe, and summarize; 4. review regularly.¹

Late submissions will incur a penalty, typically a half grade down but varying according to circumstances.

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<tr>
<th>Timeline for 5-page Papers &amp; Journal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Selection of two books due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission of draft of first paper</td>
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<td>First draft paper returned for revisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final revised first paper due</td>
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<td>Reflective Journal due</td>
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<td>Second paper due</td>
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**Grading**
The course is graded A-E. The course grade will be tabulated according to the weights indicated above for each requirement. Letter grades will be converted into scores according to the grade scale below.

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<th>Grade Scale</th>
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<tr>
<td>A 4.00</td>
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<td>A- 3.70</td>
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<tr>
<td>B- 2.70</td>
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¹ Adapted from *How to Write a Reflective Journal with Tips and Examples* https://penzu.com/how-to-write-a-reflective-journal <Accessed August 8, 2017>
Policies
There will be no opportunities for extra credit in this class. You either meet the requirements specified in the syllabus or you don't.

Please note that, as indicated in the University’s Undergraduate Bulletin: “Each instructor retains the right to modify the syllabus and give notice in class of any modifications in a timely fashion. Students are responsible to apprise themselves of such notices.”

Concerning standards of academic integrity, freedom of expression, and attendance and timely completion of course requirements please refer to: http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html

Concerning medical excuses please refer to: http://www.albany.edu/health_center/medicalexcuse.shtml

There will be no posting of lecture or discussion notes on Blackboard. Students must come to class, be attentive, take notes, and raise questions if in need of clarification or to present a differing interpretation.

I will alert students to especially significant facts and statements through emphasis and repetition but the burden of proof is on the student to understand the main points, facts, arguments, issues, debates, and interpretations.

If you miss a class, do not ask me whether “you missed anything important.” Come see me during office hours and we can have a conversation about the material that was covered in the class you missed but make sure you have read the material before coming to see me. This is not an online course. Therefore, I will not discuss class material by e-mail.

I notice everything and take everything into account, e.g. if you are routinely absent-minded, disruptive, disrespectful, texting, browsing the internet, etc. Texting and browsing the internet will be flagrant violations of proper demeanor and engagement. I assume that everyone knows how to behave appropriately during class and unless a student's disregard for the basic norms of classroom behavior is flagrant, I will try not to put anyone on the spot. I may call your attention privately but I will do so on a discretionary basis.

Use of laptop computers, tablets or any other hand held devices in the classroom will be limited to taking notes or to reference class readings. Cellphones must be silent and stowed away during class.

If you must eat, be discreet.
If you are late, sit in the back of the room close to the door to avoid disruption. Also, if you must leave class early, let me know in advance, preferably in person rather than by e-mail, and sit in the back close to the door.

I retain the power to judge and/or decide on any situations, terms, conditions, and stipulations not specified herein, nor prohibited by reasonable academic and administrative standards.

Office Hours
TTH 12:30-2:00, HU-B16. If you are unable to meet during scheduled office hours, we can meet at a mutually convenient day and time by appointment. Contact information: jcruz@albany.edu E-mails sent after business hours will be answered the following day or Monday, if possible. Business hours are 9am-5pm.

Course Schedule

August
29 Review of Syllabus
31 Study Abroad Presentation; Lecture and discussion: "What Do We Talk About When We Talk About Minorities?" Discussion: KKK Threatens to Burn Latina-Reading on Blackboard

September
5 Background lecture on Slavery; June and Haynie, Chs. 1-3. Book choices due by 11:59 pm.
7 Lecture on Racial Orders and Political Development; June and Haynie, Chs. 4-6
12 Background on Affirmative Action; June and Haynie, Chs. 7-9
14 Discussion of The Originalist Perspective and The Incoherence of Antonin Scalia. Readings available on Blackboard; Gutierrez, Ch. 1-2
19 Gutierrez, Chs. 3-4
21 NO CLASS

26 Gutierrez, Ch. 5-6
28 Coalition Politics: Discussion of Cruz on interminority relations in urban and legislative settings. Readings available on Blackboard.

29 Draft of first 5-page paper due by 11:59 pm.

October
3 Puerto Ricans and liberal democracy: Discussion of Cruz, chapters 1,2,9 of Puerto Rican Identity, Political Development, and Democracy in New York, 1960-
1990. Chapters available on Blackboard; Book available on reserve; Cruz, Ethnicity and Pluralism and Cruz, Barriers to Political Participation, available on Blackboard
5 Discussion of Cruz, chapters 1,2,9 and Ethnicity and Pluralism, Barriers continued

10 Dávila, Introduction
12 Dávila, Chs. 1-2

13 Draft of first 5-page paper returned for revisions by 11:59pm.

17 Dávila, Chs. 3-4
19 Dávila, Chs. 5-6

20 Final revised first 5-page paper due by 11:59pm.

24 Anderson, Chs. 1-2
26 Anderson, Chs. 3-4

31 Anderson, Chs. 5-6 First 5-page paper with final grade returned to students by 11:59pm.

November
2 Anderson, Chs. 7-8

7 Anderson, Ch. 9; Book Review Presentations
9 Book Review Presentations

14 Book Review Presentations
16 Book Review Presentations

21 NO CLASS - Blackboard exercise: Watch NYT OpDoc on Blackboard, post a comment.

28 Katzenelson, Preface, Chs. 1-3
30 Katzenelson, Chs. 4-6

December
7 Recap/Class evaluation. Last day of classes. Reflective journal due by 11:59 pm. The journal will be returned after it is graded.

14 Second 5-page paper due by 12:30 pm. This paper will be returned after it is graded.