COURSE OUTLINE

The State University at Albany
Rockefeller College of Public Affairs
And Policy
RPOS-204-0003 (8339)
Selected Problems in Political Science
The Black Lives Matter Movement
Fall 2018
Monday 4:15 p.m. – 7:05 p.m.
FA 114

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The Black Lives Matter Movement

The purpose of this course is to trace and investigate the development of the Black Lives Matter movement. The course will explore the historical, political, social, and economic forces that gave rise to the movement. Specifically, the course will focus on racial disparities in law enforcement and institutional racism. Case studies will center on those Black individuals killed by law enforcement officials and the response of the justice system. The course will also compare and contrast the Black Lives Matter movement with the Civil Rights movement from 1954-1968. The effective use of social media and technology as tools to promote racial justice will also be analyzed.

Primary Objectives

1. Study, analyze and critique the role of the law in the Black community.

2. Explore the role of race and the law.

3. Understand methods of legal analysis and reasoning including critical race theory.

4. Understanding why diversity matters.

5. Understanding, analyzing and discussing current events including the impact of America’s first Black president.

6. The course will also explore the political, economic, religious, social, intellectual and artistic changes which led to the evolution of the Black Lives Matter movement.

7. The philosophical underpinnings of the theory of nonviolent direct mass action will be analyzed.
8. The strategies of proponents of racial justice to transform Jim Crow societies into integrated societies will be studied.

9. Major historical figures including Martin Luther King Jr., Bayard Rustin, Lyndon Baines Johnson, Malcolm X, Earl Warren, and Thurgood Marshall will be analyzed.

10. The students will also learn of the growth of black empowerment: from rural Mississippi to Watts and Oakland, California.

**Class Requirements**

1. Examinations: One (1) midterm exam counts as 30% of the student’s final grade and one final examination counts as 30% of the student’s final grade.

2. Class attendance and participation: failure to attend class, defined as more than six (6) absences, will result in the failure of this course. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Students will debate selected topics during the semester. 20% of the student grade will be based upon class participation which includes their debate performance.

3. Group Presentation: One (1) group presentation on an approved topic relating to the Black Lives Matter movement. The presentation must be at least 15 minutes. This presentation will constitute 20% of the student’s final grade.

**Undergraduate Academic Regulations:**

Students are expected to comply with all rules and regulations for student conduct as described in the University’s Undergraduate Bulletin, which can be found at http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html.

Students who are found guilty of plagiarism will at a minimum fail the specific assignment and, according to University guidelines, could fail the course. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another person’s wording without indicating the source using quotation marks and the appropriate citation. Paraphrased or borrowed ideas are to be identified with the appropriate citation.

**Accommodations**

“Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify the Director of Disabled Student Services (Campus Center 137, 442-5490). The office will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations.” For the University’s policy, see:
If you wish to discuss academic accommodations for this class please inform the instructor as soon as possible.

**Required Readings**


**Useful Web Sites**

Supremecourt.gov

www.census.gov.pubinfo

Cornell Law School

Oxford Press

NY Times

**WEEKLY OUTLINE**

**Week 1**  August 27, 2018

Introduction and Overview: Race, Law, and Society

A Short History of the Black Lives Matter Movement

**Week 2**  September 3, 2018

NO CLASS (LABOR DAY)

The Black Lives Matter Platform
The American Legal System
Constitutional Dilemma
Dred Scott v. Sandford

Reading: The New Jim Crow
Week 3  September 10, 2018

NO CLASS (ROSH HASHANAH)

The History of Blacks in America
Reading: Glaude Chapter 1; Bonilla-Silva, Chapter 1
Constitutional Amendments 13, 14, and 15
Debate topic selected
Social Media

Week 4  September 17, 2018

The Civil Rights Movement

Bonilla-Silva, Chapter 2
Glaude, Chapter 2

U.S. Justice Department Reports

Ferguson

Baltimore

Week 5  September 24, 2018

Civil Rights Act 1964

Voting Rights Act 1965

Bonilla-Silva, Chapter 3
Glaude, Chapter 3

Week 6  October 1, 2018

The Use of Social Media
The American Labor Movement
Reading: Bonilla-Silva, Chapter 4
Glaude, Chapter 4

Week 7 October 8, 2018

Debates
Week 8 October 15, 2018

MIDTERM EXAM

Week 9 October 22, 2018

Black Liberation Movement
Black Nationalism

Week 10 October 29, 2018

Leaders of the BLM Movement

Week 11 November 5, 2018

Principles of the Movement

Week 12 November 12, 2018

The Women’s Rights Movement

Presentations

Reading: Bonilla-Silva, Chapter 5
Glaude, Chapter 5

Week 13 November 19, 2018

Presentations

The Criminal Justice System

Assigned Reading: Alexander, Chapters 1-3;
Glaude, Chapter 6

Week 14 November 26, 2018

The LGBT Movement
The Strange Career of Jim Crow revisited

Solutions to current issues in the Black community

Reading: Bonilla-Silva, Chapter 6
Glaude, Chapter 7

Week 15  December 3, 2018

Reforms
Bail/ Legal Representation
Reading: Bonilla-Silva, Chapter 7; Chapter 8

Week 16  December 10, 2018

Reading: Bonilla-Silva, Chapter 9; Chapter 10

Last day of class is December 10, 2018

FINAL EXAM
December 17, 2018, Monday at 5:45 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.

GENERAL POLICIES

Readings should be done before the class for which they are assigned.

Students should attend all classes. Attendance will reflect on your final grade. Students who leave the classroom before the period is over will be considered absent for that day.

The classroom is an open learning environment; therefore, all students’ ideas, suggestions, comments, questions, and viewpoints must be respected.

Students must only talk during discussions or when asking or answering questions.

All cell phones and other electronic devices must be off and out of sight in the classroom unless the student has been granted permission by the instructor.