Course Description
This course will examine the African American and Latino experience in the American politico-legal system, with special attention to the civil rights movement and the history of affirmative action.

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
Edna Acosta-Belén and Carlos E. Santiago, Puerto Ricans in the United States
Frédérick Douzet, The Color of Power
David Gutierrez, Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants and the Politics of Ethnicity
Ira Katznelson, When Affirmative Action Was White
Selected Readings available on Blackboard

Course requirements
• Class participation - (30% of course grade). Class participation will be structured so that each student, with notice, is able to formally comment on class readings. Participation is also expected from everyone independently of assigned presentations.

Presentations should be no longer than 10 minutes. Presenters will answer the following 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. These questions must be addressed. Each student will address the class as if he/she was giving a
lecture. Within that basic framework, there is room for creativity but whatever students choose to do differently should be done in consultation with the instructor.

Presenters should speak loudly, projecting their voice so it can reach the far end of the room. They should avoid excessive reliance on reading their presentation, make sure their diction is clear and their voice attuned to the environment (e.g. if someone coughs at the same time you say something, repeat what you said). They should make good eye contact with the audience and speak at a pace that allows the audience to process the information.

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. Small groups will address only questions 3-5 above.

Group discussions will be peer-evaluated and scored on a scale of 0-5. Each student will complete a group discussion peer evaluation form of the student seated to his/her left.

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.

- **Attendance - (10% of course grade).** 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 ten-page papers - (25% of course grade each).** Each paper will be a critical review of one book of your choosing on minority politics. In your review you must incorporate at least three related sources other than book reviews. In other words, you must reference articles or essays that offer a complementary and/or critical perspective on the topic of the book you choose. 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 template for the papers is available on Blackboard.

Feedback for improvement of the papers will be provided. **You will submit your paper electronically by e-mail as a word file. I will return your paper with a preliminary grade and suggestions for improvement. You will**
then re-submit the revised draft as the final paper; make sure you add the word "revised" to the file's name. I will return the final papers with the final grade by email.

Late submissions will incur a 3-point penalty.

- **Proper demeanor and engagement** - *(10% of course grade)*. I notice everything and take everything into account, e.g. if you are routinely absent, absent-minded, late, disruptive, disrespectful, texting, browsing the internet, etc. Texting and browsing the internet will be flagrant violations of the terms set here. 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 only on a discretionary basis.

Rubrics for participation and 10-page papers and a grade scale for attendance are provided below.

**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 between 0-100 according to the scale noted below. As a matter of policy, letter grades will be converted to the top score in the range for each grade. For example, if you receive a grade of B+ on a given requirement, your score will be 89.

**Grading Scale**
- 100-95 A
- 94-90 A-
- 89-85 B+
- 84-80 B
- 79-75 B-
- 74-71 C+
- 70-65 C
- 64-61 C-
- 60-55 D+
- 54-51 D
- 50-45 D-
- 44-0 E

**Policies**
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.

There will be no opportunities for extra credit in this class.

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. Unless authorized, Googling, facebooking, twittering, instagramming, etc. is prohibited. 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.

Office Hours
MWF 9:00-10:00am; MW 4:00-5:00 pm, 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 if possible. E-mails sent after 5pm on Fridays will be answered the following week during business hours. Business hours are 9am-5pm.
Course Outline and Readings

1/23 Introduction/Review of Syllabus/ writing assignments/timelines and rubrics
1/25 Study Abroad Presentation/ "What Do We Talk About When We Talk About Minorities?"
1/30 Background on Slavery
2/1 Racial Orders and Political Development
2/6 Background on Affirmative Action
2/8 Gutierrez, Chs. 1, 2
2/13 Gutierrez, Ch. 3
2/15 Gutierrez, Chs. 4, 5
2/20 Gutierrez, Ch. 6
2/22 Coalition Politics: Cruz on interminority relations in urban and legislative settings. Reading on Blackboard.
2/27 Acosta-Belén & Santiago, Ch. 1
3/1 Acosta-Belén & Santiago, Ch. 2
3/6 Acosta-Belén & Santiago, Chs. 3, 4
3/8 Acosta-Belén & Santiago, Chs. 5, 6

3/13-17 Spring Break

3/20 Acosta-Belén & Santiago, Chs. 7, 8
3/22 Douzet, Chs. 1, 2
3/27 Douzet, Ch. 3
3/29 Douzet, Ch. 4
4/3 Douzet, Ch. 5
4/5 Douzet, Ch. 6
4/10 NO CLASS
4/12 Douzet, Ch. 7
4/17 Book Review Presentations
4/19 Book Review Presentations
4/24 Book Review Presentations
4/26 Katznelson, Chs. 1, 2
5/1 Katznelson, Chs. 3, 4
5/3 Katznelson, Chs. 5, 6
5/10 Recap/Class evaluation. Last day of classes.
5/15 Due date for final paper. Due by email by 11:59 pm. Late submissions will incur a penalty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline for 10-page Papers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selection of two books due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 30, 11:59 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Submission of first paper | February 15, 11:59 pm
---|---
First Essay Returned for Revisions | February 28, 11:59 pm
Revised First Essay due | March 10, 11:59 pm

Submission of second paper | March 31, 11:59 pm
Second Essay Returned for Revisions | April 14, 11:59 pm
Revised Second Essay Due | May 15, 11:59 pm

**Class Participation Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Total possible points</th>
<th>Your score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presented on scheduled date</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressed all questions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoke loud and clear and at appropriate pace</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good eye contact with audience</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group discussion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Review Presentation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Class Participation</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A=12 B=10 C=8 D=7 E=0

| Total | 30 | |

**Attendance Grade Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justified Absences</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6+</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**10-page Paper Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible points for each category: 5</th>
<th>Your score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content/Ideas</td>
<td>Expresses succinctly and clearly the main idea, argument, findings, and conclusion of the book. Formulates probing questions and provides thoughtful and knowledgeable commentary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Ideas are logically related. Clear beginning, middle, and end. Appropriate division of text in paragraphs, clear transitions from one paragraph to the next.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary/Word Choice</td>
<td>Vocabulary and word choices are appropriate and effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Fluency</td>
<td>Sentences are appropriately constructed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventions</td>
<td>Consistent agreement between parts of speech. No typographic or orthographic (spelling, hyphenation, capitalization, word breaks, emphasis, punctuation). No errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late submission</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>