

RESEARCH PAPERS/African American Politics

Please note that your paper assignment for the semester is a "research" paper. Therefore, in writing your paper I expect you to utilize your research skills and the library's many resources in obtaining information for your paper. If you have any questions related to accessing sources for your paper you should consult with the reference librarian or the person in charge of government documents.

FRAMEWORK OF RESEARCH PAPER

The length of your paper should range from 7-10 pages. All papers must adhere to and include the following:

- 1) All papers must be typed in Times New Roman 12-point font, and double-spaced with one (1) inch margins.
- 2) A thesis statement, which sets forth the research question;
- 3) A section that provides relevant data to support your thesis statement and a discussion of any alternative views;
- 4) A conclusion that includes your particular ideas regarding your topic;
- 5) Footnotes/endnotes for all of the sources that you consult;
- 6) Bibliographic references for all footnotes/endnotes in your paper;
- 7) All bibliographic references must correspond to a footnote/endnote in your paper;
- 8) A bibliography. Your bibliography should include **at least seven sources in addition to any assigned class readings that you use;**
- 9) Internet citations are **limited to three of the seven (minimum) sources;**
- 10) All tables and charts must be reproduced and cited. Inserting copies of charts, tables, etc. is unacceptable;
- 11) Citing "class handouts" is unacceptable. Therefore, you are required to find the relevant source yourself;
- 12) Your paper must conform to the rules of English grammar;
- 13) Pages in your paper must be numbered in chronological order; and
- 14) Large quotations are limited to three and must be indented and single-spaced.

EXCESSIVE GRAMMATICAL OR SPELLING ERRORS WILL BE PENALIZED - TWO (2) POINTS WILL BE DEDUCTED FOR EACH GRAMMATICAL OR SPELLING ERROR AFTER THE FIRST THREE (3).

Thus, it is essential that you edit your paper carefully!

Please note that **PLAGERISM**—failing to cite all information used in your paper or submitting a paper written by someone other than yourself-- will be subject to University mandated disciplinary action.

LATE PAPERS

Papers must be handed in at the beginning of class on the due date. Any paper handed in afterwards will be considered late. Five points will be subtracted for each day that a paper is late, including weekend days.

RESEARCH PAPER TOPICS

Students will have the choice of writing a paper. Here are suggestions for topics covering four broad issues in Black Politics: 1) Inequality 2) An African American Political Organization or Conference 3) African American Politics in California or the Presidential Elections 2004.

YOU MUST SUBMIT YOUR CHOICE OF THREE PAPER TOPICS (in ranking order) IN WRITING. I will give you your approved paper topic. Only TWO PEOPLE AT MOST WILL BE ALLOWED TO WRITE ON THE SAME TOPIC, Therefore it would be advisable to choose an original topic.

It is important to check out the availability of sources on the topic that you choose because **you will not be allowed to change your topic after it is approved.** I will choose a non-negotiable topic for all students who fail to turn in one.

SOME POSSIBLE PAPER TOPICS:

If writing on the topic of inequality, all papers will examine the status or condition of African Americans in comparison to whites as it relates to a particular policy area. You will have significant latitude in deciding your

research topic; however, some possible topics are listed below. Unless you choose from the list below your topic must be pre-approved.

A: Inequality

- 1) **Education** -- Your paper will examine the status and condition of African Americans in comparison to whites or another racial group in education. This topic includes a discussion and examination of educational attainment, achievement, finances, opportunity and any problems associated with this issue area as it relates to the lives of African Americans in the United States.
- 2) **Health Care** -- Your paper will examine the status and condition of African Americans in comparison to whites or another racial group in the area of health care. This topic includes a discussion and examination of access to adequate and standard health care, particular health problems that plague African Americans and any other problem associated with this issue area as it relates to the lives of African Americans in the United States.
- 3) **Crime and the Criminal Justice System** -- Your paper will examine the status and condition of African Americans in comparison to whites or another racial group in the area of crime and the criminal justice system. This topic includes a discussion and examination of crime rates, rates of victimization, punishment (e.g. incarceration), and any problem associated with this issue area as it relates to the lives of African Americans in the United States.
- 4) **Economic Empowerment** -- Your paper will examine the status and condition of African Americans in comparison to whites or another racial group in the area of economic empowerment. This topic includes a discussion and examination of the number and proportion of businesses, the value and assets of businesses, the proportion and amount of money that both groups spend as consumers, the products and services that both groups spend money on, and any problem associated with this issue area as it relates to the lives of African Americans in the United States.

- 5) **Political Empowerment** -- Your paper will examine the status and condition of African Americans in comparison to whites or another racial group in the area of political empowerment. This topic includes a discussion and examination of the number and proportion of elected officials, political and voter participation, political ideology and party identification, and any problem associated with this issue area as it relates to the lives of African Americans in the United States.
- 6) **Housing** -- Your paper will examine the status and condition of African Americans in comparison to whites or another racial group in the area of housing. This topic includes a discussion and examination relating to access to decent and affordable housing, the proportion and number of both groups that occupy public, rental and privately owned property, the median or average monthly payment for rental and owner occupied housing for both groups, the value of owner occupied housing for both groups, and any problem associated with this issue area as it relates to the lives of African Americans in the United States.
- 7) **Employment** -- Your paper will examine the status and condition of African Americans in comparison to whites or another racial group in the area of employment. This topic includes a discussion and examination of unemployment rates, the number and proportion of both groups in the workforce, the occupations of groups, the number and proportion of both groups located in particular industries, and any problem associated with this issue area as it relates to the lives of African Americans in the United States.
- 8) **Poverty and Wealth** -- Your paper will examine the status and condition of African Americans in comparison to whites or another racial group as it relates to poverty and wealth. This topic includes a discussion and examination of poverty and income for groups, the average worth and asset accumulation for both groups, and any problem associated with this issue area as it relates to the lives of African Americans in the United States.
- 9) **A public policy issue of your choice**

B: Black Political Organizations

If writing on the topic of Black Political Organizations all papers will examine the work of at least one black political organization. The paper should discuss the 1) principles upon which the organization was founded 2) the contemporary issue focus of the organization and 3) its leadership 4) at least one contemporary public policy issue that the organization is involved 5) strategy/tactics used by the organization to accomplish its objective 6) success or failure of the organization's efforts on the public policy issue.

I strongly urge you to consider the format of the articles in Johnson and Stanford, Black Political Organizations in the Post Civil Rights Era.

In this topic area, you may also focus on a conference, summit, or march convened by a black political organizations, i.e. the Hip Hop Summit, Million Man/Woman March or the Redeem the Dream March.

Examples of paper topics are:

- 1) NAACP fight for more inclusion in Hollywood
- 2) Rainbow Push Coalition attempt to derail passage of new regulations by the Federal Communications Commission
- 3) National Action Network's work on issues of police brutality and unfair sentencing
- 4) National Leadership Conference on Civil Rights work on Affirmation Action
- 5) SCLC's contemporary work activism on a public policy issue.
- 6) National Political Congress of Black Women fight against misogyny in the lyrics of rap music and in hip hops culture.
- 7) African American Youth and the Politics of Hip Hop Summits.

C. African American politics in California. You have wide latitude in this area. Some suggested topics are:

- 1) African American participation in the electoral process, including political parties, turn-out etc.

- 2) A public policy issue of interest to the African American community and the success or failure of African American politicians to represent black interest. For instance, three strikes law or affirmative action.
- 3) Inequality and African Americans in California. See the aforementioned section on inequality and apply it to California.
- 4) African Americans and the Dilemma of Immigration in California

D. The 2004 Presidential Election Campaign and African Americans. Again, you have wide latitude in this area. Some suggested topics are:

- 1) African American voter registration turnout in the primaries
- 2) Which candidate or political party can best serve the interest of African Americans?
- 3) African American candidates in the 2004 race: their impact
- 4) Compare African American candidates in 2004 to past presidential bids.

GUIDELINES FOR REFERENCES

Use the following format for references/citations in your paper:

1. When you quote or refer to portions of someone's work in the body of your paper, put the author and page number(s) in parentheses immediately following the passage. Be absolutely sure you give credit any time you use another's work. Use quotation marks or indent the passage if using direct quotations, and cite the work when referring to major ideas or passages in a particular work. Indented passages must be single-spaced.

Examples:

For Books:

The only way to keep government from becoming tyrannical is to limit and divide power (Stanford, 12-14).

In the case of a newspaper article:

There is a clear correlation between poverty and crime (Stanford D1).

In the case of a journal article:

"One thing for certain, the time is now (Stanford 6:456)."

For Internet Citations:

The African American population has increased dramatically over the past 10 years, from 12% of the population to 58% (Williams 4).

Citing lectures and television programs is prohibited -- you must have a source for everything you cite. If you have questions regarding where I received particular information that I have used in a lecture, see me.

Bibliography

At the end of your paper give me the **entire** citation in a list of all the sources you used on a separate page. Title it "Bibliography" **and list the works in alphabetical order**. Here are some examples using the correct form.

For Books:

Stanford, Karin. *All you Have Ever Wanted to Know About American Government*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

For an Article in a Newspaper:

Stanford, Karin. "Education Politics in the United States." *The Chicago Tribune*, September 24, 1991, 1-10.

For Chapters in an Edited Book:

Stanford, Karin. "Why People Rebel." *In Rebellion in the United States*. Ed. Kevin Lyles. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

For Chapters or Articles in a Journal:

Stanford, Karin. "Why People Rebel." *The American Political Science Review* 2 (1994), 45-76.

For Articles in a Magazine:

Williams, James. "Coming of Age." *Newsweek* Jan. 1991: 55-57.

For Unsigned Articles in Magazines:

Staff. "Coming of Age." *Newsweek* Jan. 1991: 55-57.

For Internet Citations:

Williams, James. "The African American Population Today." Office of Population Research, May, 2000, <http://popindex.princeton.edu>.