AFRICAN AMERICAN POLITICS
POLS 361 – Fall 2003
Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00 – 3:15

Professor: Dr. Karin L. Stanford
Classroom: SH 282
Office: FOB 207
Office Hours: Tu. & Th. 12:45-1:45, 3:30-4:30 and by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The goal of this course is to give students a pragmatic understanding of the African-American political experience in the United States. This course examines the theoretical foundation and political behavior of African Americans. Additionally, the course is concerned with developing reliable concepts and useful parameters for assessing the direction and continuity of African American political activity. Therefore, the course will explore the relationship between African-Americans and the various actors, institutions and processes of the American political system.

Major developments and periods of increased black political activity are examined. Particular focus will be placed on the slave trade and slave experience; the contradictions between the institution of slavery and American political institutions and principles; barriers to African-American social, political and economic progress; African-American protest and electoral movements, and the subsequent success and failure of these movements; the contemporary social, political and economic status of African-Americans; solutions that have been advanced to facilitate equity within the American political\economic system, and the feasibility of these solutions.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

FORMAT AND ATTENDANCE

The class will be taught in a discussion format with a minimum of lecturing. Please be advised that exams are comprised of both reading assignments and materials presented in course lectures. Students therefore are strongly encouraged to
attend class.

**MISSED QUIZZES AND EXAMS**

If you are absent for a quiz or exam you have the responsibility of contacting me and arranging a make-up. Do not send an email regarding absences. Make-ups must be completed within one week of missing an exam or quiz. Make-up exams will not be given without a valid, written excuse, i.e. notice from physician. Make-up exams will be in essay format.

**POLICY ON TARDINESS**

Class will begin promptly at 2:00 p.m. Tardiness is disruptive and will be frowned upon. After a student has been late two (2) times, they will no longer receive credit for attendance after 2:10 p.m.

**POLICY ON CELLULAR PHONES AND PAGERS**

Cellular phones and pagers are disruptive. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD STUDENTS RECEIVE CALLS OR PAGES DURING CLASS. If a student must bring cellular phones or pagers to class they must be inaudible.

**POLICY ON EATING IN CLASS**

WITHOUT EXCEPTION, STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO EAT IN CLASS. This includes snacks of any kind, donuts, sandwiches, French fries, etc.

**POP QUIZZES**

Although I detest surprise-grading mechanisms (pop quizzes), I reserve the right to institute them in order to encourage you to complete the reading assignments. Pop quizzes will be given only if the class deems it necessary by exhibiting a lack of familiarity with the assigned reading material. If quizzes are necessary, they will constitute a portion of your "class attendance" grade.

**EXAMINATIONS**

Examinations will test your knowledge and comprehension of information from your class lectures and reading assignments. There will be two examinations for this class—a mid-term and a final. Exams comprise of short answer and essay questions. The mid-term will be given in-class on October 16, 2003. The final exam will be given on December 9, 2003.
PAPERS

Two papers are required for this class. One is a short essay 3-5 pages on the approaches to the study of black politics. You are required to respond to the question: Which approach to black politics do you feel provides the best framework for understanding the predicament of African Americans?

In your analysis please state why you chose the approach, give examples of how the approach applies to the current state of black America, then critique the approach by acknowledging its criticisms and deficiencies.

Research Paper: The length of your research paper should range from 7-10 pages. Please refer to your research paper guide for additional information on the format and content of the assignment.

Oral Presentations: Oral Presentations of Research Topics are optional. Student presenters will receive extra-credit of 3 additional points. I must receive notice of your intent to present by October 30, 2003.

FINAL GRADE CALCULATION

Mid-term examination--20%
Short Essay or Op Ed—10%
Research paper—30%
Final examination—30%
Class Participation—10%
Optional Oral Presentation—3%

REQUIRED TEXTS


*Additional Readings are on Reserve at the Oviatt Library*
TOPIC AND READING OUTLINE

Week 1: August 26/ 28
Class Description and Outline. No reading assignment—handout will be provided in-class. Black political organization exercise.

Week 2: September 2/4
Characteristics of the U.S. Population African American Socioeconomic Status. Barker, Jones and Tate, Chapter 2

Week 3: September 9/11
Introduction – Theories of African American Politics
*Barker, Jones and Tate, Chapter 1

Week 4: September 16/18
Theories of African American Politics Con’t./Core Values in Black Politics/Black Ideological Perspectives
*Barker, Jones and Tate, Chapter 1

Week 5: September 23/25
The Politics of Slavery, Civil War and Reconstruction
*Franklin and Moss, Chapters 8 thru 9
Short Essay Due

Week 6: September 30/Oct.2
Politics and Slavery and Reconstruction Continued...
*Franklin and Moss, Chapters 10 Thru 14

Week 7: October 7/9
Civil Rights and Black Power Movements
Aldon Morris, Chapters 1-4
Film: Eyes on the Prize
Week 8: October 14/16
*Civil Rights and Black Power Cont./
Aldon Morris, Chapters 5, 6, 8, 9
**Midterm Exam**

Week 9: October 21/23
*African American Political Behavior: Interests Groups*
Barker, Jones and Tate, Chapter 7
Johnson and Stanford, Black Political Organizations, Chapter 1
***RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC DUE***

Week 10: October 28/30
*African American Political Behavior: Black Voters/Political Parties & Electoral Politics/The Congressional Black Caucus*
*Barker, Jones and Tate, Chapter 8 and 9
*Barker, Jones and Tate, Chapter 10

Week 11: November 4/6
*African American Political Behavior: The Presidency and the Courts*
*Barker, Jones and Tate, Chapters 5, 6 and 11

Week 12: November 11/13
*The Continuing Significance of Race/ Contemporary Challenges*

Week 13: November 18/20
*The Continuing Significance of Race /Contemporary Challenges Cont.* Johnson and Stanford, Chapter 10 (Where Do We Go From Here), Assensoh and Assensoh Chapter 11 (Black Political Leadership in the Post Civil Rights Era).

Week 14: November 25 *Thanksgiving Week*
Week 15: December 2/4
*Oral Presentations*
*Research Papers Due*
*Final Exam Review*

FINAL EXAMINATION: December 9, 2003-3:00 pm