

Tues & Thurs 11:30am – 12:50pm  
SCCE E110

Professor Tess Wise

twise@amherst.edu  
Office Hours: Thursdays 1-3pm  
Or by appointment  
Clark 202

## **RACE AND US POLITICS (POSC 257) Fall 2019**

### **DESCRIPTION**

This course is one part theoretical, presenting race as a multifaceted concept that is both a social construct and a social fact and considering the theory of social movements; One part historical, exploring how race in the United States has been constructed over time through institutions like the Census and in response to different waves of immigration; And one part political, surveying the politics of race in the United States from slavery to civil rights to the politics of race under Donald Trump. Throughout the course, we will toggle between the course material and current events with students contributing weekly media to a class discussion board.

The class meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:30am-12:50pm. Before class on Tuesdays students will each post a link to a piece of media they have consumed that week that they feel relates to the course on the class discussion board along with a paragraph stating the connection to the course. Before the beginning of class on Tuesdays, students will also submit one-page discussion papers responding to the readings. These papers will be graded on a ✓/✓+/✓- scale. On Tuesdays the class format will be a lecture followed by a five minute break. After the break, we will spend the second half of class either doing engaged learning activities or hearing from guest speakers. On Thursdays the class format will be a shorter lecture followed by a structured discussion then a 5 minute break. After the break, there will be a discussion of both the week's reading and the media submitted by members of the class (students should look at the media submitted by their peers before Thursday's class).

The class has an in-class midterm exam on Thursday, October 17. Students may opt to write a final exam on Thursday, December 19 or may write a final paper on a topic of their choice chosen in consultation with the instructor. Please note, if you want to write a final paper, you **must** indicate this to the instructor by Tuesday, October 29. Final papers will be due on Friday, December 20. Any extensions beyond this date must be taken up with your Dean.

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## OVERVIEW OF MEETINGS

### \*\*\*\*\*Theory\*\*\*\*\*

Week 1 – *What is Race?*

**Tuesday September 3, 2019** – Introduction to the course; “Why is a white lady teaching this class?”; *Race and Political Science*

**Thursday September 5, 2019** – *Race: Social Construct, Social Fact*

Chu, Vivian. “How Science and Genetics are Reshaping the Race Debate of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” *Science in The News*. April 17, 2017.

<http://sitn.hms.harvard.edu/flash/2017/science-genetics-reshaping-race-debate-21st-century/>

Reich, David. “How Genetics Is Changing Our Understanding of ‘Race,’” *The New York Times*. March 23, 2018.

“Race, Genetics and a Controversy,” *The New York Times*. Letters to the editor. April 2, 2018.

Week 2 – *Race and Democracy in the United States*

**Tuesday September 10, 2019**

Allen, Danielle. *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education*. University of Chicago Press, 2009. Chapters 1-7, 9, 10.

**Thursday September 12, 2019**

Read the class media blog and be prepared to engage with at least two pieces of media other than your own.

Week 3 – *Critical Race Theory*

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***Tuesday September 17, 2019***

Mills, Charles W. *The Racial Contract*. Cornell University Press, 2014. 1-91  
(Introduction, Overview, Details)

Nguyen, Mimi Thi. "The Hoodie as Sign, Screen, Expectation, and Force."  
*Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 40, no. 4 (2015). 791-816.

***Thursday September 19, 2019***

Read the class media blog and be prepared to engage with at least two  
pieces of media other than your own.

**\*\*\*\*\*History\*\*\*\*\***

Week 4 – *Race Before and at the Founding; Amherst College and Race*

***Tuesday September 24, 2019***

Read the Feature Essays and Short Articles written by Amherst student,  
Christine Miranda, class of 2015 in her online exhibition *Beyond Lord Jeff*.  
<https://beyonlordjeff.wordpress.com/essay-index/>

Read "Skeletons In Our Closet: Heavy Small Collections," by Jen Bolmarcich,  
written on November 8, 2018 for the blog *The Consecrated Eminence*.  
<https://consecratedeminence.wordpress.com/2018/11/08/skeletons-in-our-closet/>

***Thursday September 26, 2019***

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Week 5 – *The Living Legacy of Slavery*

***Tuesday October 1, 2019***

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Acharya, Avidit, Matthew Blackwell, and Maya Sen. *Deep Roots: How Slavery Still Shapes Southern Politics*. Princeton University Press, 2018. Chapters 1-3

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me*. Random House, 2015.

**Thursday October 3, 2019**

Read the class media blog and be prepared to engage with at least two pieces of media other than your own.

Week 6 – *Civil Rights*

**Tuesday October 8, 2019**

Watch Part 5 of *Eyes on the Prize*.

Hampton, Henry, and Steve Fayer. *Voices of freedom: An oral history of the civil rights movement from the 1950s through the 1980s*. Bantam, 2011, Project Notes, Prologue, Chapters 9 and 12.

Flemming, Cynthia Griggs. "Black Women and Black Power: The Case of Ruby Doris Smith Robinson and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee," in Bettye Collier-Thomas and Vincent P. Franklin, eds. *Sisters in the Struggle: African American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movement*. NYU Press, 2001.

Ford, Tanisha C. "SNCC Women, Denim, and the Politics of Dress." *The Journal of Southern History* 79, no. 3 (2013): 625-658.

**Thursday October 10, 2019**

Read the class media blog and be prepared to engage with at least two pieces of media other than your own.

Week 7 – *Midterm Exam*

**Tuesday October 15, 2019 – NO CLASS – MID-SEMESTER BREAK**  
**Thursday October 17, 2019 – MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS**

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## Week 8 – Immigration and the Census

### **Tuesday October 22, 2019**

Hochschild, Jennifer L., Vesla M. Weaver, and Traci R. Burch. *Creating a new racial order: How Immigration, Multiracialism, Genomics, and the Young Can Remake Race in America*. Princeton University Press, 2012. Chapter 2.

Goodman, Adam. "Nation of Migrants, Historians of Migration." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 34, no. 4 (2015): 7-16.

Ngai, Mae M. "Braceros, 'Wetbacks,' and the National Boundaries of Class," in *Repositioning North American Migration History*, Marc S. Rodriguez ed. University of Rochester Press, 2004.

Kayyali, Randa. "US Census classifications and Arab Americans: contestations and definitions of identity markers." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39, no. 8 (2013): 1299-1318.

Chan, Jason. "'Being Asian American Is a Lot Different Here': Influences of Geography on Racial Identity." *Journal of College Student Development* 58, no. 7 (2017): 1001-1017.

Explore the online interactive feature, "What Census Calls Us: A Historical Timeline." <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/interactives/multiracial-timeline/>

### **Thursday October 24, 2019**

Read the class media blog and be prepared to engage with at least two pieces of media other than your own.

## \*\*\*\*\*Politics\*\*\*\*\*

## Week 9 – Dog Whistle Politics

### **Tuesday October 29, 2019 – Last day to decide to write a final paper**

López, Ian Haney. *Dog Whistle Politics*. Oxford University Press, 2014. Preface, Introduction, Chapters 1-3, 5, 8.

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***Thursday October 31, 2019***

Read the class media blog and be prepared to engage with at least two pieces of media other than your own.

Week 10 – *Race and Congress*

***Tuesday November 5, 2019***

Mansbridge, Jane. "Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent 'Yes'." *The Journal of Politics* 61, no. 3 (1999): 628-657.

Netflix Documentary. *Knock Down This House*.

Eckhouse, Laurel. "Race, Party, and Representation in Criminal Justice Politics." *The Journal of Politics* 81, no. 3 (2019).

***Thursday November 7, 2019***

Week 11 – *Race and the Courts*

***Tuesday November 12, 2019***

Barnes, Mario L., Erwin Chemerinsky, and Trina Jones. "A Post-Race Equal Protection?" *Geo. LJ* 98 (2009): 967.

Lain, Corinna Barrett. "Three Supreme Court Failures and a Story of Supreme Court Success." *Vand. L. Rev.* 69 (2016): 1019.

Another article TBD focusing on the outcome/continuation of *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*

***Thursday November 14, 2019***

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Week 12 – *Criminal Justice*

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Soss, Joe, and Vesla Weaver. "Learning from Ferguson: Policing, Race, and Class in American Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20, no. 1 (2017): 565-91.

Alexander, Michelle. "The Newest Jim Crow," *The New York Times*. November 8, 2018.

Campbell, Andrea L., Gali Katznelson, Carmel Shachar, and Tess Wise. "Criminal Justice or Public Health: A Comparison of the Representation of the Crack Cocaine and Opioid Epidemics in the Media," *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*. Forthcoming.

**Thursday November 21, 2019**

Read the class media blog and be prepared to engage with at least two pieces of media other than your own.

**Tuesday November 26, 2019 – NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK**  
**Thursday November 28, 2019 – NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

Week 13 – *Topic TBD (options: Welfare, Education, Housing or something related to current events etc...)*

**Tuesday December 3, 2019**

**Thursday December 5, 2019**

Week 14 – *Final Day, Recap*

**Tuesday December 10, 2019 – Last day of classes**

**GRADING SCHEME**

Weekly Response Papers.....	25%
Midterm.....	25%
Final Exam or Final Paper.....	35%
Participation.....	15%

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A  $\geq$  93%  
90%  $\leq$  A- < 93%  
87%  $\leq$  B+ < 90%  
83%  $\leq$  B < 87%  
80%  $\leq$  B- < 83%  
77%  $\leq$  C+ < 80%  
73%  $\leq$  C < 77%  
70%  $\leq$  C- < 73%  
D < 70%