

African-American Politics

AAS, PSC 224

Spring Semester 2007

Mondays/Wednesdays 12:30-1:45 p.m.

525 Morey Hall

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Office hours:

Wednesdays, 2-3:30 or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine the relationship between African Americans and the American political system in order to provide students with a broader perspective on the American political process. We will address issues of organizational resources and approaches, political leadership, representation, integrationist and separatist ideologies, and various strategies for African-American political empowerment. No single course could adequately explore the many actors, organizations, theories, and strategies that have shaped African American politics over time. In this course, we will devote particular attention to the modes and methods of black political leadership overtime.

OBJECTIVES

1. To introduce students to black politics through the lens of black political leadership during the 19th and 20th centuries.
2. To help students critically evaluate relevant philosophies, issues, goals, strategies, and tactics in black political development.
3. To familiarize students with perspectives on African-American politics which are informed by research on gender and class.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Four (4) books are required for this course. All additional readings are available online through the Rush Rhees Library Course Reserve System.

Jennings, James. 1992. *The Politics of Black Empowerment: The Transformation of Black Activism in Urban America*.

Smith, Robert C. 1996. *We Have No Leaders: African Americans in the Post-Civil Rights Era*.

Harris, Fredrick, Valeria Sinclair-Chapman, and Brian Mc Kenzie. 2006. *Countervailing Forces in African-American Activism, 1973-1994*.

Ture, Kwame and Charles V. Hamilton. 1992. *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation*.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

GRADING

Participation	10%
Quizzes/Short Assignments	20%
Research Papers	50%
Group Project	20%

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION. Regular class attendance and participation are required. We will use facilitated discussion rather than a lecture format in this course, therefore individual preparation for class and regular participation are essential. Attendance and participation will be used to calculate 10% of your final grade. Reading and any additional assignments should be completed before class on the day assigned. Late assignments will generally not be accepted except in cases of unforeseen emergency. Excessive absences will result in grade reductions. Pay careful attention to the syllabus and any adjustments that might occur. Students with special needs or concerns are encouraged to meet with me or with a staff member in the Center for Academic Studies to facilitate accessibility of course materials.

QUIZZES AND SHORT ASSIGNMENTS. Quizzes and short assignments will be used to calculate 20% of your final grade. Quizzes and short assignments will take place periodically and may be unannounced. Short assignments may be either class work or homework. Make up quizzes and short assignments will only be allowed for excused absences and with my prior approval.

RESEARCH PAPERS. Two (2) medium-length research papers will be used to calculate 50% of your grade. Papers should follow proper writing, spelling, and grammar rules, and be 5-7 pages in length with 1 1/2 inch margins and a 12-point font. Your first paper will be a literature review that addresses the question, “What is African-American leadership?” Your second paper will examine a black political leader or organization in terms of leadership style, goals, strategies, tactics, constituencies, and effectiveness. “W” students will extend the length of each assignment to at least 12- and not more than 20- pages each. Additional details on these assignments will be handed out in class. Your first research paper is due at the start of class on March 7th; and your second paper is due in my mailbox on the 3rd floor of Harkness Hall no later than 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 9th. The Writing Center is an excellent resource for help in planning, executing, and revising your papers.

GROUP PROJECT. A group project will be used to calculate 20% of your grade. This project will require that your group (in consultation with the professor) interview a Rochester African-American leader of your choice. This project will address the question of black leadership from the experiences and perspective of the leader chosen by your group. For example, your group might interview a local activist minister or a member of the school board or city council. Each group will present a multimedia presentation to the class describing and analyzing the interviewee. The final group project will include a 5-7 page written analysis of the Rochester leader. Each project will also include an Appendix with the name and contact information of the interviewee, a rationale for the selection of this person, a transcript of the interview, and any relevant materials such as photos, brochures, etc that add context or background. Additional details on this assignment will be handed out in class. Group presentations will take place in

class on April 2 and April 4. Group papers are due at the start of class on April 2. All group members are expected to contribute significantly to the project. Each member will earn the same grade, no exceptions.

ACADEMIC HONESTY. You are expected to turn in material that you have completed yourself. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without proper citation) will be tolerated. Both cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses that will be reported for disciplinary action. Please refer to the University Handbook and/or speak with me if you have any questions in this area.

COURSE OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OVERVIEW

Jan 17

PERSPECTIVES ON LEADERSHIP

Jan 22

Marable, Manning. 1998. "Leadership in Black America," in *Black Leadership*, pp. xi-xvii
West, Cornell. 2001. "Introduction," and "The Crisis of Black Leadership," in *Race Matters*,
pp. 3-13 and pp. 53-70.
Cunnigen, Donald. 2006. "Black Leadership in the Twenty-First Century." *Society*. 43:5:25-
29
Ture, Kwame and Charles V. Hamilton. 1992. "Afterword, 1992 by Charles V. Hamilton," in
Black Power, pp. 201-218.

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION

Jan 24

Washington, Booker T., "The Atlanta Exposition Address," reprinted in *Walkin' the Talk*,
Vernon D. Johnson and Bill Lyne, eds. (2002) pp. 281-289.
View: Documentary on Booker T. Washington

Jan 29

DuBois, W.E.B. "Of Mr. Washington and Others," reprinted in *Walkin' the Talk*, Vernon D.
Johnson and Bill Lyne, eds. (2002) pp. 301-310.
Marable, Manning. 1998. "Booker T. Washington and the Political Economy of Black
Accommodation," in *Black Leadership*, pp.23-40.

THE TALENTED-TENTH

Jan 31

DuBois, W.E.B. "Talented-Tenth," reprinted in *Walkin' the Talk*, Vernon D. Johnson and Bill
Lyne, eds. (2002) pp. 301-310.
Gaines, Kenneth K. "From Freedom to Slavery: Uplift and the Decline of Black Politics" in
Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century.
(1996) pp. 19-46

NATIONALISM

FEB 5

“‘The Future as I See It,’ A speech by Marcus Garvey (1923),” in *Walkin’ the Talk*, Vernon D. Johnson and Bill Lyne, editors, pp. 322-325.

View: Documentary on Marcus Garvey

Feb 7

Marable, Manning. 1988. “Black Fundamentalism: Louis Farrakhan and the Politics of Conservative Black Nationalism,” in *Black Leadership*, pp. 161-182.

THE POLITICS OF SELF-DETERMINATION

THE MONTGOMERY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Feb 12

Bloom, Jack. 1987. “The Defeat of White Power and the Emergence of the ‘New Negro’ in the South,” in *Class, Race, and the Civil Rights Movement*, pp. 120-154.

Parks, Rosa. 2001. “‘Tired of Giving In’: The Launching of the Montgomery Bus Boycott,” in *Sisters in the Struggle*, Bettye Collier-Thomas and V.P. Franklin, editors, pp. 61-74.

“Speech by Martin Luther King, Jr. at Holt Street Baptist Church,” in *The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader*, pp. 48-51.

“Resolution of the Citizens’ Mass Meeting, December 5, 1955,” in *The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader*, pp. 54-56.

THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT

Feb 14

Ransby, Barbara. 2003. “The Preacher and the Organizer,” in *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, pp. 170-195.

“Desegregation at Last,” in *The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader*, pp. 57-60.

Feb 19

No Class

Feb 21

Documentary from Eyes on the Prize Series

Chapell, Marisa, Jenny Hutchinson, and Brian Ward. 1999. “Dress modestly, neatly...as if you were going to church”: Respectability, Class, and Gender in the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Early Civil Rights Movement,” in *Gender in the Civil Rights Movement*, Peter J. Ling and Sharon Monteith, editors, pp. 69-100.

THE STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Feb 26

“‘Bigger Than a Hamburger’ by Ella Baker,” in *The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader*, pp. 120-122.

“Interview with Robert Zellner” in *The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader*, pp. 127-130.

Ransby, Barbara. 2003. “Mentoring a New Generation of Activists,” in *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, pp. 239-272.

Bloom, Jack. 1987. "The Second Wave," in *Class, Race, and the Civil Rights Movement*, pp. 155-185.

THE NONVIOLENT MOVEMENT IN DECLINE

Feb 28

"SNCC-SCLC Relations by James Forman," in *The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader*, pp. 217-220.

Robnett, Belinda. 1999. "Women in the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee: Ideology, Organizational Structure, and Leadership," in *Gender in the Civil Rights Movement*, Peter J. Ling and Sharon Monteith, editors, pp. 131-168.

Fleming, Cynthia Griggs. 2001. "Black women and Black Power: The Case of Ruby Doris Smith Robinson and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee," in *Sisters in the Struggle*, Bettye Collier-Thomas and V.P. Franklin, editors, pp. 197-213.

BLACK POWER

Mar 5

Ture' and Hamilton, *Black Power*, pp. 2-56 and pp. 98-120.

Mar 7

Ture' and Hamilton, *Black Power*, pp. 164-185.

SPRING BREAK

Mar 12-16

BALLOTS OR BULLETS?

Mar 19

"'To Mississippi Youth,' a speech by Malcolm X.," in *Malcolm X. Speaks*, George Breitman, editor, pp. 137-146.

"'Message to the Grassroots' a speech by Malcolm X.," in *Malcolm X. Speaks*, George Breitman, editor, pp. 3-17.

Malcolm X. "The Ballot or the Bullet" <http://www.inidana.edu/~rhetid/s302mx.html>

POST-CIVIL RIGHTS ERA ACTIVISM

URBAN POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

Mar 21

Jennings, *The Politics of Black Empowerment*, pp. 15-83

Mar 26

Jennings, *The Politics of Black Empowerment*, pp. 84-133

Mar 28

Jennings, *The Politics of Black Empowerment*, pp. 134-188

GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Apr 2

GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Apr 4

POLITICAL INCORPORATION

Apr 9

Smith, *We Have No Leaders*, pp. 3-124.

PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS

Apr 11

Smith, *We Have No Leaders*, pp. 127-163, 255-274.

CHISHOLM, JACKSON, MOSELEY-BRAUN, AND OBAMA?

Apr 16

Smith, *We Have No Leaders*, pp. 229-253.

Foster, Lorn S. 1990. "Avenues for Black Political Mobilization: The Presidential Campaign of Reverend Jesse Jackson," in *The Social and Political Implications of the 1984 Jesse Jackson Campaign*, Lorenzo Morris, editor.

Readings on Obama and Moseley-Braun, TBA

Apr 18

View: Documentary on Shirley Chisholm's presidential campaign

Reading on Chisholm, TBA

CONGRESSIONAL POLITICS

Apr 23

Smith, Robert C. 1996. *We Have No Leaders*, Chapters 6-8, pp. 165-225

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Apr 25

Harris, Sinclair-Chapman, and Mc Kenzie, *Countervailing Forces in African-American Civic Activism*, pp.1-52.

Apr 28

Harris, Sinclair-Chapman, and Mc Kenzie, *Countervailing Forces in African-American Civic Activism*, pp.81-147.

COALITION POLITICS

Apr 30

Ture' and Hamilton, *Black Power*, pp. 58-87.

Vaca, Niolas C. 2004. "Somewhere Over the Rainbow Coalition," in *The Presumed Alliance*, pp. 48-61

COURSE WRAP-UP

May 2

Smith, *We Have No Leaders*, pp. 277-281.