
WINTHROP UNIVERSITY

THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE FALL 2018

Course: PLSC 317 Section 001: African American Politics and Policy (3 credit hours)
Time & Location: Monday/Wednesday 12:30pm – 1:45pm ♦ Owens 201
Instructor: [Dr. Adolphus G. Belk, Jr.](#)
Office Location: 332 Bancroft
Office Hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays 2:00pm – 3:30pm, or by appointment
Contact Info: Phone: 803.323.4581 ♦ Fax: 803.323.2568 ♦ E-mail: belka@winthrop.edu

“...most Americans are simply tired and impatient over our most sinister social problem, the problem, the Negro. They do not want to solve it, they do not want to understand it, they want to simply be done with it and hear the last of it. Of all possible attitudes this is the most dangerous...”

– W.E.B. DuBois, “The Color Line Belts the World” (1906)

“Two hundred fifty years of slavery. Ninety years of Jim Crow. Sixty years of separate but equal. Thirty-five years of racist housing policy. Until we reckon with our compounding moral debts, America will never be whole.”

– Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations” (2014)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

Welcome to PLSC 317: African American Politics and Policy. Students enrolled in this class will develop a thorough understanding of the black political experience in the United States. Grounded in political economy, the course considers relevant historical background, the constitutional framework of American government, and the nature of interactions between black Americans and the main institutions of the U.S. government (i.e., Congress, the Executive Branch, and the Courts). Such coverage is essential if one is to make sense of black political behavior as well as the challenges faced by blacks today—particularly those of the so-called “underclass.”

What is more, the goal is that students will learn about the role and participation of African Americans in American government and politics as well as the role of political parties, independent organizations, and social movements. In the process, students will come to understand the long struggle of black Americans to attain freedom, justice, equality, and full inclusion in American life. The role of race, class, gender, and sexuality in African American politics is a concomitant focus of the course.

Prerequisites: PLSC 201 with a grade of C- or better, or AAMS 300, or permission of instructor.

This course contributes to the mastery of the following [university-level competencies](#) (ULCs):

3. **Winthrop graduates understand the interconnected nature of the world and the time in which they live.**

Winthrop University graduates comprehend the historical, social, and global contexts of their disciplines and their lives. They also recognize how their chosen area of study is inextricably linked to other fields. Winthrop graduates collaborate with members of diverse academic, professional, and cultural communities as informed and engaged citizens.

4. **Winthrop graduates communicate effectively.**

Winthrop University graduates communicate in a manner appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience. They create texts – including but not limited to written, oral, and visual presentations – that convey content effectively. Mindful of their voice and the impact of their communication, Winthrop graduates successfully express and exchange ideas.

Finally, this course participates in the [Global Learning Initiative](#), particularly in its discussions of the modern Civil Rights and Black Power movements, the social construction of target groups and public policymaking, policing, mass incarceration, and voting rights.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the close of the semester, students will be able to think analytically about African Americans in the American political system. More specifically, students will be able to identify and analyze:

1. The historical foundations of contemporary issues in black politics.
2. The key determinates of black political behavior.
3. The role and significance of black elected officials and independent organizations.
4. The relationship between the black struggle for political representation and the main institutions of American government.
5. The continued significance of race in American government, politics, and policy.

Lastly, at the conclusion of the term students will have acquired sufficient knowledge to carry out future work in the study of black politics and/or race and ethnic politics in the United States.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

It is my sincere hope that each student will do well in the course. For this to happen, students must live up to the responsibilities and requirements outlined in this syllabus. Therefore, each student must:

1. **Complete the readings** prior to the class in which the material will be discussed.
2. **Attend class, participate, ask questions, and take notes.** Attendance is not required. The lectures and class discussions, however, are designed to build upon the readings—they do not simply regurgitate them. Participation—which requires your presence—will raise or lower grades on the borderline. Moreover, regular attendance and thorough lecture notes will be two of your most valuable resources for the examinations. Ergo, **it will be to your advantage to attend all class meetings.**
3. **Show sensitivity and respect** for your colleagues and the instructor. This includes *turning off all cell phones*. (Note: I will answer your phone if it rings. Also, if you are caught sending a text message, then you will be summarily dismissed. Ask about me.) For more details, please

see [the College of Arts and Science Policy for Appropriate Use of Hand-held and Wireless Technology](#).

4. **Hand in assignments on the date they are due; take examinations on the date they are scheduled.** Please note that a **late assignment** will be penalized *one full letter grade* for each day it is overdue. A student may, however, submit an assignment late in the case of an emergency. In such cases, the student must call or email the instructor on the due date of the assignment and be prepared to provide documentation of the emergency. I will then determine the degree of penalty (if any) that will be assessed on late assignment.

A student who fails to take an exam on the scheduled date—and who also fails to offer proper documentation to explain her or his situation—**will have 25 points deducted** from whatever grade is earned on the make-up exam. In addition, any unauthorized use of personal electronic devices—including but not limited to cell phones—during examinations will be taken as *prima facie* evidence of academic misconduct. I will immediately confiscate the examination of any student caught using such devices. The student will not be permitted to complete the test and the incident will be reported to University authorities.

5. **Upload the writing assignment to [TurnItIn.com](#).**
6. **Inform the instructor of any concerns.**
7. **Make suggestions** on how the course could be improved.
8. **Abide by the Winthrop University [Code of Conduct](#).**

REQUIRED READINGS

Hanes Walton Jr., Robert C. Smith, and Sherri Wallace *American Politics and the African American Quest for Universal Freedom, 8th Edition* (Hereafter referred to as WSW)

Manning Marable, *Race, Reform, and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction in Black America, 1945-2006, 3rd Edition*

You can purchase the textbook at the Winthrop Bookstore or other bookstores or online vendors. Additional readings will be available via [Blackboard](#), the Internet, or placed on reserve at [Dacus Library](#).

STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITIES, EVALUATION, AND GRADING SYSTEM

Students will participate in the following learning activities and will be evaluated and graded based on the criteria described below:

1. **Class Participation (10%):** Participation includes raising *relevant* questions, answering *relevant* questions, and, from time to time, taking part in in-class assignments or exercises.
2. **Quizzes (10%):** Quizzes will be both announced and unannounced. *Be prepared.*
3. **Examinations (55%):** There will be 2 examinations, a midterm (25% of the final grade) and a comprehensive final (30% of the grade). Students must take exams *when they are scheduled* on the syllabus. Tests will begin at the appointed time and will be a combination of essay, short answer, and multiple-choice questions.

4. **Writing Assignments (25%):** Each student will participate in a group paper project. I will create the teams at a later date. The final assignment must be **15 to 20 pages** in length (no more, no less) and should focus on a contemporary issue in black politics at the national, state, or local level of government. Projects that explore issues in comparative politics or international relations are allowed so long as they center African Americans and their political engagement. To jumpstart your work, each team will submit a **2 to 3 page paper proposal on Friday, September 21**. The proposal will include your topic, research question, preliminary [thesis](#) (main argument), outline, and a list of references. The proposal is an **ungraded requirement**. However, a team that fails to submit a proposal will be penalized on its final paper.

The final paper must be well researched, well organized, and eloquently written. What is more, all papers must be typed, double-spaced, stapled, and have standard margins and consecutively numbered pages. Students also must include a work cited or reference page that shall list **no fewer than 20 sources**. (Note: A cover sheet and/or reference page *will not* count toward the allotted number of pages.) Please do not use a font smaller than Times New Roman 12. **The paper must be formatted using the [APSA Style Manual](#).**

Note that the following sources are **inappropriate** for the assignment: Wikipedia, About.com, Infoplease.com, Spark Notes or other dubious online sources not vetted by an editor or peer reviewed (blogs, personal websites, and the like are examples); encyclopedias; textbooks.

Finally, each team must upload its paper to [TurnItIn.com](#). Our class ID number is **18552614** and the password is **PLSC317**. **I will penalize assignments that fail to adhere to these basic guidelines.**

Grading:

- A** 93-100 = A **Designates work of superior quality**
90-92 = A- Class participation is voluntary, frequent, relevant, and reflects you have both read and thought about the material. Performance on exams is consistently strong; demonstrates complete mastery of facts and concepts. Written work is clear, well-organized and thought-provoking, and free of grammatical or mechanical errors.
- B** 87-89 = B+ **Designates work of high quality**
83-86 = B Class participation is voluntary, frequent, and reflects you are keeping up with the assigned materials. Performance on exams is strong; demonstrates mastery of facts and concepts. Written work reflects a good understanding of the issues and concepts. Writing is clear with minimal errors.
- C** 77-79 = C+ **Designates work that minimally meets the course requirements**
73-76 = C Class participation is occasional and/or rarely voluntary, with comments that reveal only a superficial grasp of issues and concepts. Performance on exams demonstrates acceptable degree of mastery of facts and concepts. Written work may contain arguments that are confusing, with minimal evidence of organization. Writing is marred by errors.
- D** 67-69 = D+ **Reflects minimal clarity and comprehension**
63-66 = D Class participation is minimal, never voluntary, and reveals you have either not read the assigned materials or did not understand the readings. Performance on exams demonstrates minimal mastery of facts and concepts. Written work is confusing, contradictory, repetitive, and/or not supported by either your own ideas or your sources. Writing is marred by errors.

F 0-59 = F **Unsatisfactory performance** along most (or all) measures.

The “N” Grade Issue

This semester, the deadline to withdraw from a course with an automatic grade of “N” is **Friday, October 19**. **Students may not withdraw from the course after this date without documenting extenuating circumstances to the Registrar.**

ASSIGNMENT AND EXAMINATION SCHEDULE

Paper proposal	Week 5	Friday	September 21, 12pm
Midterm examination	Week 7	Wednesday	October 3
Research paper	Week 15	Friday	November 30, 12pm
Final examination		Tuesday	December 11, 11:30am

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY AND COURSE CALENDAR

Note: The syllabus and/or course calendar will be adjusted to accommodate events that provide significant learning opportunities for students, weather conditions, etc. Additionally, a more detailed syllabus and/or course calendar may be issued at the instructor’s discretion.

PART I: INTRODUCTION, THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS, AND BACKGROUND

Week 1	Wed.	August 22	Introduction Rastogi et al. Video: The Splintering of Black America
Week 2	Mon.	August 27	Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Black Politics Barker, Jones, and Tate Ch. 1, 1-13, 20-26 (Blackboard)
	Wed.	August 29	The Nature of the System: African Americans and the American Political System Barker, Jones, and Tate Ch. 3 (Blackboard)
Week 3	Mon.	September 3	LABOR DAY – NO CLASS
	Wed.	September 5	The Nature of the Problem: The U.S. Political Economy and the Black Community Oliver and Shapiro Ch. 1 and 2 (Blackboard) Video: Economic Opportunities for Youth, Minorities
Week 4	Mon.	September 10	Background: Emancipation and Reconstruction WSW Chapter 1 and Appendix; Hine, Hine, and Harrold Ch. 12 and 13 (Dacus)
	Wed.	September 12	Background: Deconstruction and the Rise of Jim Crow Hine, Hine, and Harrold Ch. 14 (Dacus); Marable Ch. 1

PART II: THE JIM CROW REGIME AND RESISTANCE

Week 5	Mon.	September 17	The Civil Rights Movement: 1954-1960 Marable Ch. 3 Video: The African Americans – Episode Five
	Wed.	September 19	The Civil Rights Movement: 1960-1965 Marable Ch. 4; King
	Fri.	September 21	PAPER PROPOSAL DUE at 12pm at 332 Bancroft
Week 6	Mon.	September 24	The Black Power Movement: 1965-1976 Marable Ch. 5 and 6 Videos: The Black Panthers ; Murder of Fred Hampton
	Wed.	September 26	Black Power, White Backlash: 1976-1990 Marable Ch. 7 and 8 Videos: School Desegregation in Boston ; The Bakke Case and Affirmative Action
Week 7	Mon.	October 1	Review for Midterm Examination
	Wed.	October 3	MIDTERM EXAMINATION

PART III: AFRICAN AMERICAN POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

Week 8	Mon.	October 8	Political Culture and Socialization WSW Ch. 3; Clark and Clark Video: The Doll Study – Revisited
	Wed.	October 10	Public Opinion WSW Ch. 4; Harris-Perry
Week 9	Mon.	October 15	FALL BREAK – NO CLASS
	Wed.	October 17	African Americans and the Media WSW Ch. 5 Video: Media Coverage, Race, and Elections
Week 10	Mon.	October 22	Interest Groups and Political Organizations WSW Ch. 6 and 7
	Wed.	October 24	Political Parties WSW Ch. 8
Week 11	Mon.	October 29	Campaigns, Elections, and Black Voting Behavior WSW Ch. 9; File ; Frey

PART IV: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND AMERICAN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

	Wed.	October 31	The Legislative Branch WSW Ch. 10; Stephanopoulos ; Bouie Videos: Race and Redistricting ; High Court Weighs in on...Alabama Redistricting
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Week 12	Mon.	November 5	The Executive Branch WSW Ch. 11; Harris (Blackboard) Video: Dreams of Obama
	Wed.	November 7	The Judicial Branch WSW Ch. 12; Spann (Blackboard)

PART V: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND PUBLIC POLICY

Week 13	Mon.	November 12	African Americans, the “Underclass,” and Public Policy Wilson (Blackboard); Jones 167-179 (Blackboard); Shaw et al. (Blackboard)
	Wed.	November 14	Intersectionality and Black LGBTQ Politics Cohen (Blackboard); Perry and McCormick (Blackboard) Video: The New Black (PBS ; Democracy Now!)
Week 14	Mon.	November 19	Unequal America: Failing to Keep Up with the Joneses Kochhar et al. ; Harris ; Coates ; Frum Videos: Race and Inequality ; Will this Supreme Court ruling lead to greater fair housing enforcement?
	Wed.	November 21	THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO CLASS
Week 15	Mon.	November 26	Losing <i>Brown</i> : Resegregation in American Education Jost and Clark (Blackboard) Video: 60 Years after Brown v. Board...
	Wed.	November 28	Policing and the Black Community Katel (Blackboard); Holland ; Somashkehkar et al. ; Epstein (Recommended: The Ferguson Report) Videos: CBC on Ferguson ; Accountability and trust? ; Change broken police relations?
	Fri.	November 30	GROUP PAPER DUE at 12pm at 332 Bancroft
Week 16	Mon.	December 3	The Politics of Race, Crime, and Punishment Alexander ; Fagan Recommended: Carson ; Childress and Mizner Video: Locked up in America
	Tue.	Dec. 11, 11:30am	FINAL EXAMINATION

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Academic Success Center (ASC)

Winthrop’s Academic Success Center is a free resource for all undergraduate students seeking to perform their best academically. The ASC offers a variety of personalized and structured resources that help students achieve academic excellence, such as tutoring, academic skill development (test taking strategies, time management counseling, and study techniques), and group/individual study spaces. The ASC is located on the first floor of Dinkins, Suite 106. Please contact the ASC at [803-323-3929](tel:803-323-3929) or success@winthrop.edu if you have any questions. For more information on ASC services, please visit www.winthrop.edu/success.

[Dacus Library](#)

Not everything can be found online. Dacus Library is the primary on-campus provider of scholarly information in all forms from print to electronic. To fulfill its mission, the library provides information quickly, efficiently, and in sufficient depth to promote excellence in all academic programs offered by the university. Additionally, the library maintains depository status for federal and state publications. For information on library hours call (803) 323-2362.

[The Writing Center](#)

Students who wish to improve their writing skills should seek assistance from the Writing Center, located at 242 Bancroft. Tutors works with students on an individual basis in all phases of the writing process and on academic and writing projects in any discipline. Call (803) 323-2138 for information regarding hours of operation and services.

[The Office of Accessibility – Students with Disabilities/Need of Accommodations for Access:](#)

Winthrop University is committed to providing access to education. If you have a condition which may adversely impact your ability to access academics and/or campus life, and you require specific accommodations to complete this course, contact the Office of Accessibility (OA) at (803) 323-3290, or, accessibility@winthrop.edu as early as possible to discuss your concerns.

[The Office of Nationally Competitive Awards \(ONCA\)](#)

The Office of Nationally Competitive Awards is here to help you find and apply for scholarships, fellowships, and awards for everything from study abroad to graduate school tuition. Please check out the ONCA website at www.winthrop.edu/onca and fill out a Student Information Form, then email Dr. Leslie Bickford at onca@winthrop.edu to make an appointment. The right nationally competitive award is out there for YOU! Let's get started.

[The Office of Victims Assistance](#)

The Office of Victims Assistance (OVA) provides services to survivors of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking as well as educational programming to prevent these crimes from occurring. The staff assists all survivors, regardless of when they were victimized in obtaining counseling, medical care, housing options, legal prosecution, and more. In addition, the OVA helps students access support services for academic problems resulting from victimization. The OVA is located in 204 Crawford and can be reached at (803) 323-2206. In the case of an after-hours emergency, please call Campus Police at (803) 323-3333, or the local rape crisis center, Safe Passage, at their 24-hour hotline, (803) 329-2800.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

The [Student Conduct Code](#) notes, “A fundamental tenet of all institutions of higher learning is academic honesty. Academic work must depend upon respect for an acknowledgement of the research and ideas of others. Misrepresentation of someone else’s work as one’s own is a most serious offense in any academic setting.” Winthrop University is no exception. In short, academic integrity is very important and misconduct, in any form, will not be condoned. If you have any questions regarding academic honesty and student conduct, please review **Section V** of the Student Conduct Code.

Political Science Department Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

The Winthrop University Political Science department abhors all forms of academic misconduct, and faculty members aggressively investigate all incidents of suspected cheating. This includes, but is not limited to, using turnitin.com.

Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, is by far the most common form of academic misconduct in the Political Science department. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- Using the words or ideas of others as one's own;
- Reproducing, in whole or in part, principal ideas from a fellow student's work;
- Granting a fellow student permission to copy one's paper, or to reproduce some or all of its principal ideas;
- Quoting or paraphrasing material from sources without any citation;
- Quoting or paraphrasing material without sufficient and/or proper citation;
- Omitting some or all sources used in a paper; and
- Submitting a paper written for one course – whether in Political Science or another discipline – to meet a course requirement in a second course, *without the express permission of all instructors involved*. This is the case even though many paper topics may be relevant to several different courses.

All incidents of suspected academic misconduct are investigated with equal vigor.

When a faculty member suspects that a student engaged in academic misconduct, the faculty member will follow the appropriate procedures outlined in the *Student Handbook*. The faculty member will apply whatever sanctions s/he deems appropriate. Possible sanctions include, but are not limited to:

- Failing the assignment;
- Requiring a student to repeat an assignment for reduced credit;
- Requiring a student to repeat an assignment for no credit; or
- Failing the course.

Academic misconduct applies equally to required assignments and extra credit assignments.

Human Subjects Research and IRB Approval: Consistent with University Level Competency #2, Personal and Social Responsibility, all students engaging in research on human subjects will undergo [CITI training](#), and apply for approval by the [Winthrop University Institutional Review Board](#), even if their projects are exempt under 45CFR46. The applications must be complete and include all necessary signatures.

Any student seeking IRB approval may not begin to collect data for her/his research until s/he has received IRB approval or been informed that the research is exempt. Collecting data prior to receiving IRB approval is grounds for an academic misconduct charge.

All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Department Chair, the Dean of Students, the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the student's academic advisor. The University may impose its own sanctions in addition to sanctions imposed by the faculty member or the department. The University may impose sanctions even after a student has graduated, and may include revoking a student's diploma.

In addition, students who engage in more than one incident of academic misconduct may be declared ineligible for departmental awards, ineligible for employment in the department or its affiliated programs, and ineligible to volunteer as a peer advisor.