Race, Immigration and American Political Development
Visiting Assistant Professor: Girma Parris
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Course Description
American Political Development involves employing history as an active and independent variable (through the use of concepts such as timing and sequence, path dependence, critical junctures, political orders, and intercurrence) to address fundamental questions of political science and political institutional development. Its primary aim is the revelation of factors behind periods of continuity and moments of institutional change through focusing on political phenomena over long stretches of time as opposed to momentary snapshots of history.

Race and immigration policy have been intrinsic aspects of American political development. Building on the contributions of Rogers Smith and Desmond King's 2008 article *Racial Orders in American Political Development* and Daniel Tichenor's 2002 book *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America*, this class will show the central role played by race and immigration in American Political Development. Although scholars from the race and immigration camps have eluded to the overlap in the politics of each, this class will aim to make those interconnections more explicit. Specifically, the class will show how historical trajectories in immigration politics and racial politics have — at times — reinforced each other and/or interacted, and how the presence or timing of particular events has had direct and indirect influence on the historical trajectories of the other. Ultimately, both have manifested in particular moments in American political development.

Course Goals
The course will use open-ended class discussion (the Socrates Method) to treat these moments of continuity and change in immigration and racial politics and to discuss how the two historical trajectories of race and immigration interacted, reinforced or were intrinsic to the other. Students will acquire the skills necessary to assess political history and isolate the factors involved in periods of continuity and periods of change.

Course Requirements: In order to attain a passing grade for the class, all students must attend class regularly participate in class discussion and make a 5-
10 minute presentation during the course of the semester and complete three take home examinations covering a third of the course each.

Attendance: All students are permitted 2 unexcused absences. Unexcused absences in excess of the two allotted will result in failure of the course. The course is a seminar course and thus will focus around class discussion. Attendance subsequently in crucial to the functioning of the class.

Class Participation: Students are expected to come to class prepared and ready to discuss the assigned readings. Students will not be docked for their lack of participation but will be rewarded for their thoughtful and active contributions to class discussion. Class participation will make up 10% of your grade.

Presentation: All students are expected to make a presentation of 5-10 minutes during the course of the semester. Details concerning requirements for the presentation will be forthcoming.

Course Schedule

Week 1: What is American Political Development?

Monday, August 28 –
Introduction

Definition and Methodological Foundations of American Political Development

Wednesday, August 30 –
Orren, Karen and Steven Skowronek. The Search for American Political Development (2004): 1-32 (Chapter 1)

Recommended:


Friday, September 1 – Class Canceled – Attending Conference
Week 2: Methodological Foundations (continued)

Monday, September 4 - No Class – Labor Day

Wednesday, September 6

How to Study American Political Development – Sustained Shifts in Authority, Institutional Structure and Coalition Building (viewed historically)

Friday, September 8 –

Week 3:

Race and Ethnicity – Definitions and Historical Origins

Monday, September 11 –

Wednesday, September 13 –

Friday, September 15 –

Week 4:

Monday, September 18 –

Wednesday, September 20

**Immigration Racial Hiérarchies, and Assimilation**

**Friday, September 22**
Valelly, Richard. The Two Reconstructions: The Struggle of Black Enfranchisement- Chapter 2 and 3

**Week 5:**

**Monday, September 25 –**

**Wednesday, September 27**

**Recommended:**

**Immigration and American Political Development**

**Friday, September 29 –**

**Week 6:**

**Monday, October 2 –**
Wednesday, October 4 -

Friday, October 6 –

Week 7: The GI Bill, Race and the American Dream

Monday, October 9 –

Wednesday, October 11 –

Friday, October 13 –

Week 8: The Great Migration and Problematic Assimilation in the North

Monday, October 16 -

Wednesday, October 18
Syllabus for Race, Immigration and American Political Development


Civil Rights and the Second Reconstruction

Friday, October 20 –

Week: 9

Monday, October 23 – No Class – Fall Break

Wednesday, October 25 –

Friday, October 27 –

Week 10:

Monday, October 30 –

Civil Rights and Immigration Reform

Wednesday, November 1 –

Friday, November 3 -

Week 11:
Monday, November 6 -

Wednesday, November 8 –

Race and Immigration in the Post-Civil Rights Era

Friday, November 10 -

Week 12:
Monday, November 13-  

Wednesday, November 15 –

Friday, November 17 –


Week 13: The Institutionalized Poverty of Blacks and the Browns

Monday, November 20 –


Wednesday, November 22 –


Friday, November 24 – No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday Observed

Week 14:

Monday, November 27 –

Recommended (counter-arguments to the anti-black racist theory of mass incarceration):


Race, Immigration Politics in Scarce Economic Times

Wednesday, November 29 –


Friday, December 1 –


The Politics of Immigration in the Post 9/11 Era

Week 15:

Monday, December 4 –


Syllabus for Race, Immigration and American Political Development

Race and Immigration in the Obama Era

**Wednesday, December 6 –**

**Friday, December 8 –**


**Recommended:**

Evolving Concepts of Race and Ethnicity:

Jansen, Robert. The Heart of Whiteness: Confronting Race, Racism, and White Privilege (2005): Chapters 1 and Conclusion