

Political Science 385: American Politics Summer II [07/05-08/12]

Class: M-F— 12:00-1:15

Instructor: Yeonhee Sophie Kim

Ykim8@hawaii.edu

Website: SYK.squarespace.com

Office: Saunders 625

Office Hours: TBA

Does America have the democracy that it had hoped for? This course will examine multiple counter-politics set forth by Black history, Native American history, and struggles for political recognition and sovereignty that continue to this day. The American political imagination has been and could have been better equipped with inquiries into democratic governance, questions of power and equality, of security and freedom, had it been attuned to the multiplicity of voices and political histories. Throughout the course, we will question who and what decides the criteria for deciding justice and political life for the communities in United States. Our goal as a collective student body is to be able to offer a meaningful and subtle analysis of American Politics through the historical *underdogs* that have been excluded or remained in the periphery of the dominant and hegemonic representation(s) of *United States of America*. Furthermore, through films and texts, the class will be challenged to revisit the many contemporary debates within/connected to America in the news and media.

The course will demand your attention and participation—mostly your care and attention to the other students. In order to think critically and politically, we will also examine together what ethos and attitudes may be important for provoking an informed and sensible discussion amidst ourselves. What does it mean to “do” American politics?

Course Requirements and Grading

1. Students are expected to diligently attend the classes after having read and thought about the assigned materials. Pre-class preparation and class attendance is central to the goals of the class. Any unexcused absences or early departures from class will detract from your overall grade. I will hand out an attendance sheet each class. It is up to you to learn from your classmates what took place in your absence. You should come to class fully prepared to contribute, which may be in various forms—listening, questioning, commenting, facilitating, prompting, etc. I cannot stress class participation enough.

Attendance and Participation: 40% of your grade

2. ***Weekly Journals:*** You are also expected to keep a daily journal that records your responses to reading these texts. Consider them as an intellectual and emotional space to collect your thoughts and ask provocative questions regarding the daily material (not summarization). Your response need not be more than a paragraph or two for every class session. But please take care to diligently note how these texts succeed/fail in provoking you, and what concepts resonated with you. This activity is to prepare you with ideas for the debate/discussion with your peers on the readings. The journal counts for 15% of your grade—I will collect them at the end of every week to see how you progress.

3. Group Presentation: 20% of your grade

There will be two group presentations in this course: the project is to find narratives, news stories, novels, texts, documentary, etc. relevant to the theme of the week/book of the week, and to compile a project into a multi-medium presentation for the other half of your class. The non-presenting group will write a feedback for the presentation group.

4. Final Paper: 25% of your grade

Two short essay prompts will be handed out in class [4-6 pages single-spaced]

Attendance and Participation: 40%

Weekly Journals 15%

Presentation: 20%

Final Paper: 25%

=100%

All assignments should be handed in on the due date. If you need further clarification, do not hesitate to seek me out

5. Required Readings: Reading is absolutely necessary for this course. In order to participate in class, debates and discussions, you must have read the text. Each class will incorporate some form of discussion and participation is absolutely essential. All of the readings will be available online on my website (syk.squarespace.com).

- i. Guantanamo Diary, Mohamedou Ould Slahi (2015)
- ii. The New Jim Crow, Michelle Alexander (2012)
- iii. An Indigenous Peoples' History of United States, Roxanne Dubar-Oritz (2015)
- iv. This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate, Naomi Klein (2014)

7. Academic Integrity: Please refer to the UHM website on Academic dishonesty and related issues (Plagiarism). Matters of this nature will be referred to the Department chair. <http://www.catalog.hawaii.edu/aboutFuh/campusFpolicies1.htm>

8. Services for Students with Disabilities: Please see the instructor and refer to the UH Kokuia Program in Queen Liliuokalani Center for Student Services or contact them directly at (808) 956-7511. Accommodations will gladly be made <http://www.hawaii.edu/kokuia/>

9. Use of Electronics: Writing or checking email, texting, or surfing on the web is prohibited in class. Unless you are expecting an emergency call, please turn off your cell-phones (in that case, notify me before class starts that you are waiting for a call). If I notice you texting in class or using your phone, I will prohibit you from further use of any electronics for the rest of the semester. In order to avoid a misunderstanding, I would strongly advise you to put your phone(s) or music devices away in the period of the class. It is my professional expectation for you to be present (mind and body) in the class, and web-cruising and texting not only distract the instructor but other classmates as well. Please be mindful of others.

Course Schedule

Week 1—U.S. Slavery and Mass Imprisonment

7/5 Introduction

7/6 W.B. Dubois [Chapter from Black Reconstruction in America—Price of Disaster]

Or **Derek Bell's "Racial Realism"**

7/7 *The New Jim Crow* Ch.1

7/8 *The New Jim Crow* Ch. 2

Week 2

7/11-7/14 Continue *The New Jim Crow*

Alicia Garza on Black Lives Matter

<http://www.thefeministwire.com/2014/10/blacklivesmatter-2/>

7/15 Presentation: Uncovering Narratives 1

Week 3—Revisiting the Federalist Papers: National Security, Liberty, and Executive Power

7/18 Alexander Hamilton's Federalist papers [Opening, Ch. 1/2/3/4/24/25]

7/19 Alexander Hamilton Federalist Papers [26/27/28/ 69/70]

7/20 Watch: Fog of War

7/21 *Guantanamo Diary*: Pg. 1-25

7/22 *Guantanamo Diary*: Pg. 25-50

Week 4—U.S. National Security and Incarceration

7/25-7/28 Reading *Guantanamo Diary*

7/29: Presentation: Uncovering Narratives II

Week 5—Re-defining U.S. History and Empire

8/1-8/4 Reading *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*

8/5 Watch: The Insular Empire

http://theinsularempire.com/?page_id=2

Week 6 -U.S. Neo-Liberalism and Climate Change

8/8-8/11 Reading *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. Climate* [Part 1 Bad Timing]

<http://thischangeseverything.org/>

8/12 Wrap-up [Final Day]