Course Description

In this course, students will learn to explore, discuss, and better understand the relationship between perceptions of racial identity, attributions of racial difference, and politics, broadly defined. Our focus is on the US today, but with an appreciation of how the racial politics of the here and now is rooted in history. There is both a specificity to the African American experience in the US and a multi-chromatic diversity to today's America, both of which matter. "Race" broadly include concepts of identity, immigration, citizenship, class, ethnicity, gender, and the like. "Politics" broadly includes elections and the decisions of elites in government, but also civic engagement, protests, political talk, organizational behavior, and the like.

Course Requirements

The course centers on intensive readings, research, reflective writings and discussion. You are expected at all classes, prepared to participate in discussions of all readings and topics. The responsibility for any missed materials during an absence is yours. More than a couple of unexcused absences will adversely affect your course grade. Your grade is based on the following components of the class:

- **Class participation:** Your participation grade includes both lecture and discussion; contributing to the class by actively and respectfully talking and listening. 10% of your course grade is based on participation in sections; 5% in lecture class.

- **Policy issue papers:** You will write several short papers that reflect your analysis of a central and topical question about racial/ethnic politics. There will be a total of eight short paper prompts during the semester; you will be responsible for responding to and writing about four of them (see below on "outside of class participation"). These papers should demonstrate your engagement with the relevant readings for the paper topic; specifically your ability to synthesize and critically evaluate materials, understand their analytic frameworks, and develop your own viewpoint based on this synthesis, critical evaluation, and analytic acumen. You are welcome to conduct additional research on these topics and incorporate this research (appropriately cited) into your paper. These papers should be roughly 5-7 pages in length. Each completed paper is worth 10% of your course grade.

- **Outside of class briefs:** You will also submit two short papers describing your participation beyond the course material outside of class and its readings—that is, by attending campus lectures, presentations, conferences, films, or other activities. Your paper should do more than just describe the event and your participation in it. It
should offer a serious reflection on the content of event; also as possible, you should
look for and examine connections to class material and readings and explore
additional outside readings. These papers should be a couple of pages in length; each
reflection is worth 5% of your course grade. We will regularly make announcements
on potentially relevant events as we hear about them. If you are unsure whether a talk
or activity is fit for these papers, just check with Kris or me.

- Final exam: There is also a three-hour final exam for the remaining 35% of your
course grade. You will be given, in advance, a list of key terms and possible essay
questions to study and prepare. These key terms and essay questions cover broad
themes that are central to the class. All of the exam will be chosen from these key
terms and list of essay questions.

Course Readings
There is also one required text: Ta-Nehisi Coates’ Between the World and Me. The rest of
the course readings will either be available via bCourses or, for a few short pieces, be
distributed in class.

Rights and Responsibilities
Learning and participation is communal and collaborative. Like any other kind of
community, PS167 will flourish only if its formal rules and informal rights and
responsibilities are transparent, understood, respected, and accepted as a tacit social
contract between students and instructors. This means you can expect your instructors
to be prepared for class, professional in our attitude, productive about feedback, and
accessible and responsive to course-related issues. As students, you are expected in turn
to be prompt and prepared for class, professional in your attitude, attentive to course
requirements and deadlines, willing to share their views with others, open to being
challenged, and active and serious about your own learning. Students should not tolerate
any harassment or an environment otherwise hostile to learning.

More generally, you are expected to adhere to the Honor Code that you and your fellow
students have agreed to: “As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with
honesty, integrity, and respect for others.” In addition, students should also abide by
these "house rules" that are critical to an equitable and effective learning environment:

- Deadlines: Incomplete grades, changes in exam dates, and extensions on written
  assignments will be approved only by your professor or GSI and only under serious
  medical or other extenuating circumstances. The best way to avoid scheduling
  conflicts, heavy workloads, and last minute deadlines is to plan ahead!

- Plagiarism and cheating: Copying someone else’s work without proper citation, using
  someone’s else insights and arguments without proper citation, having your work
done by someone else, improperly using notes in exams, and other cases of
plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Avoid an automatic “F” for the class
and further disciplinary action. The work that bears your name should be your own;
take pride in it. The work that bears someone else's name should be properly
respected and acknowledged. All written work for the class must be done.
independently and not in collaboration with others. For additional information on cheating and plagiarism see, for example:

http://sa.berkeley.edu/conduct/integrity/definition
http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/citations.html#Plagiarism
http://gsi.berkeley.edu/teachingguide/misconduct/prevent-plag.html

• **Technology:** Avoid multi-tasking in lecture or section. When in class, turn off all electronics except what you need to take notes or record a class session. Close your browsers, disable your apps, put away all visual or textual material unrelated to class. The simple precept of “being in the moment” benefits you and your classmates.

• **Disability:** All reasonable efforts to accommodate students with disabilities will be made, in accordance with university policy. For more information about specific resources see http://www.dsp.berkeley.edu/services or call (510) 642-0518 or (510) 642-6376 (teletype). If you require accommodations, please notify me or Kris as soon as possible and no later than the third week of class.
LECTURE TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

CLASS 1. TH 8/27. Introduction
No readings.

CLASS 2. TU 9/1. "E Pluribus Unum?"

Watch http://video.pbs.org/video/2289501021/

CLASS 4. TU 9/8 Citizenship and Race-Making
Malcolm X. 1964. “The Bullet or the Ballot.”
Michael Walzer. 1974. "What Does It Mean to be an American?"

CLASS 5. TH 9/10. Counting and Categorizing Race

Paper #1. "Census 2020"

CLASS 6. TU 9/15. The Slow March of Progress?
Ta-Nehisi Coates. 2015. Between the World and Me. Chapter 1.

CLASS 7. TH 9/17. Inequality and Racism
CLASS 8. TU 9/22. Racial Discrimination, Individual-Level


Paper #2. "The Obama Presidency"

CLASS 10. TU 9/29. Racial Discrimination, Institutional-Level

Daria Roithmayer. 2014. Reproducing Racism. NYU Press, Chapter. 5.

CLASS 11. TH 10/1. Crime and Punishment


Paper #3. "Racial Profiling"

CLASS 12. TU 10/6. Boundaries of Blackness


CLASS 13. TH 10/8. An Epistolary Race

Ta-Nehisi Coates. 2015. Between the World and Me. Read the rest.
See also review essays by Melvin Rogers ("Between Pain and Despair" and "Coates Isn't Hopeful") and Lester Spence ("Coates is a Realist, Not a Pessimist") in Dissent.

CLASS 14. TU 10/13. For or Against Reparations?


Paper #4. "Reparations for African Americans"
CLASS 15. TH 10/15. 10/27. Brown Tide Rising

CLASS 16. TU 10/20. Illegal, Undocumented, and Pathways to Citizenship

CLASS 17. TH 10/22. Of Honorary Whites and Perpetual Foreigners

CLASS 18. TU Model Minority: Success or Stereotype?

Paper #5. "Affirmative Action and Asian Americans"


CLASS 20. TU 11/3. The Absence of Presence?

CLASS 21. TH 11/5. Identity: Multiracialism
CLASS 22. TU 11/10. Identity and Political Representation


Paper #6. "Latino Representation"

CLASS 23. TH 11/12. Racial Redistricting


CLASS 24. TU 11/17. Race and Political Parties


Paper #7. "2016 Voter Outreach"


CLASS 26. TU 12/1. Representing Race in the Mass Media


Paper #8. "Media and the 2016 Election"

CLASS 27. TH 12/3. Review and Discussion