

POLS 4930/5130  
American Race Relations  
Fall 2015

Dr. Chryl Laird  
Office: McGannon 120  
Email: [lairdcn@slu.edu](mailto:lairdcn@slu.edu) (preferred)  
Office Hours: Monday 2:30pm and by appt.

Wed. 4:20PM-6:50PM  
Phone: 314-977-9862  
McGannon 122

Course Description

This course examines the various controversies that surround the role of race and ethnicity in American society. These controversies, or issues, affect public opinion, political institutions, political behavior, and salient public policy debates. This course assesses and evaluate the contemporary influence of race and ethnicity in each of these domains while also exploring their historical antecedents. The course explores the following questions: What are race and ethnicity? What are the best ways to think about the impact of race and ethnicity on American citizens? How do other identities such as gender, class, and sexual orientation impact racial formation? What is the history of racial and ethnic formation in American political life? How do



## Course Structure

This is a seminar course. Critical discussion of the assigned readings is a major component of the course. Students are to come to class prepared to participate in the class dialogue and discussion. Students will also be expected to be discussion leaders at least two sessions.

## Course Objectives

This course is designed to help students broaden their knowledge, skills and values so that they will be able to:

- understand the importance of race and ethnic identity in the shaping of the American political system
- critique and assess scholarly theories and evidence
- discuss and defend ideas orally
- engage in meaningful and productive dialogue with others
- evaluate, critique, and synthesize competing theoretical explanations in race and ethnic politics and produce a comprehensive review of the scholarly literature
- produce original research that investigates empirical processes pertaining to race and ethnic politics in the United States in a methodologically sound and persuasive manner and contribute to ongoing scholarly debates
- present the results of their research in public forums

## Course Requirements

### ***Attendance and Participation: 25%***

This course is reading and discussion intensive. You are expected to be an active participant in our discussions and classroom activities. An emphasis will be put not only on quantity of participation, but the quality of comments. If speaking in class is difficult for you, come see me.



## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

The schedule is subject to change based on the needs of the class

Week 1(8/26): Introduction

Week 2(9/2): NO CLASS-APSA Annual Meeting

Week 3(9/9)





Week 10



