

POLS 230-01, Black Political Thought, Fall 2008

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POLITICAL SCIENCE 230: BLACK POLITICAL THOUGHT

Marcus D. Pohlmann, Professor of Political Science
Office Hours: TuTh 2:00-5:00
or by appointment

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

In recent years, there has been a development of distinctive focus of study upon the historical experience, cultural values, and political/social behavior of the African-American population. This course is part of that development. It represents an effort to bring the rigors of social scientific analysis to bear on important political theories and strategies. Within this general approach, there are two primary objectives:

- (1) To improve understanding of the political/social/economic circumstances of African Americans;
- (2) To stimulate the student's creative thought, clarity of expression and interest in political/social phenomena; but in particular, to help the student further the development of his/her own political philosophy.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

READINGS: Most of the course will involve discussing the political philosophies of prominent African Americans. In the interim between discussions, students will be required to read from important books written by a number of these writers. Toward the end of the term we will read from a contemporary analytical text as we attempt to synthesize a political strategy appropriate for the present day.

CLASS CONTRIBUTION: Attend all classes and come prepared. Performance will be evaluated according to attendance and the preparation/insight demonstrated by students' unsolicited contributions and answers when called on.

QUIZZES: There will be a short objective quiz at the outset of each class, allowing students to show their understanding of the primary chapters for that day's discussion.

BOOK CRITIQUE: Alternately, different students will be assigned to read and critique the entire book (or set of readings) under discussion for a particular day.

MIDTERM EXAM: An essay exam (open books and open notes).

FINAL EXAM: A comprehensive essay question which will require the student to synthesize, analyze, and propose (open books and open notes).

GRADING

Best 12 (of 14) Quizzes*	40%
Class Participation	10%
Book Critique	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	<u>20%</u>
	100%

*absences for any reason other than representing the college in an extracurricular involvement will be recorded as a "0."

Course Rule #1: Looking at **previous years' quizzes, papers or essays** is not allowed and will be viewed as a serious violation of the Honor Code. When you pledge your exams, you will be pledging in part that you have not seen any such materials. The one exception are the samples I have placed on closed reserve.

Course Rule #2: Carelessness in documenting **sources**, even if not technically plagiarism, will be penalized as the instructor deems appropriate. In addition, *Wikipedia*, blogs and other non-refereed sources should be cited if used, but they are not considered to be authoritative references sources.

Course Rule #3: You may take exams early but not late. Call me ahead of the exam if you will miss it due to illness (or any other emergency)! Otherwise, **NO MAKE-UP EXAMS!** Also, there are **NO MAKE-UP QUIZZES** under any circumstances.

REQUIRED READING:

"Diversity" readings (Moodle)

Booker T. Washington, Up From Slavery

W.E.B. DuBois, The Souls of Black Folks

Amy Jacques-Garvey, Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey

Martin Luther King, Jr. readings (Moodle)

Black Muslims readings (Moodle)

George Breitman, ed., Malcolm X Speaks

Kwame Ture and Charles V. Hamilton, Black Power

Eldridge Cleaver, Soul on Ice

Angela Davis, An Autobiography

Thomas Sowell, Black Rednecks and White Liberals

Manning Marable, How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America

Marcus Pohlmann, Black Politics in Conservative America

COURSE OUTLINE

Reading Assignment Due

Aug. 27	Course Introduction	
Sept. 3	Race Relations	“Diversity” readings (Moodle); Pohlmann, <u>Black Politics in Conservative Am.</u> , chaps. 1-5
Sept. 10	Booker T. Washington	<u>Up From Slavery</u> , esp. chaps. 5, 14, and 17
Sept. 17	W.E.B. DuBois	<u>Souls of Black Folks</u> , esp. chaps. 1, 3, 6, 8-10
Sept. 24	Marcus Garvey	<u>Phil. and Opinions</u> , esp. vol. I and vol. II – pt. I
Oct. 1	Martin Luther King, Jr.	King READINGS (Moodle)
Oct. 8	The Black Muslims	Muslims readings (Moodle)
Oct. 15	MIDTERM EXAM	
Oct. 22	Malcolm X	<u>Malcolm X Speaks</u> , esp. chs. 1-6, 10-11, 14-15
Oct. 29	Ture & Hamilton	<u>Black Power</u> , esp. chaps. 1-3, 7-8
Nov. 5	Eldridge Cleaver	<u>Soul on Ice</u> , esp. parts 1, 2, and 4
Nov. 12	Angela Davis	<u>Autobiography</u> , esp. parts 2-5
Nov. 19	Thomas Sowell	<u>Black Rednecks and White Liberals</u> , esp. chaps. 1, 3, and 6
Nov. 26	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Dec. 3	Manning Marable	<u>How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America</u> , esp. chaps. 1-2, 5, 9-10
Dec. 10	Marcus Pohlmann	<u>Black Politics in Conservative America</u> , chaps. 6-10

Friday, Dec. 12 (5:30 pm) FINAL EXAM

BOOK CRITIQUE

Your critique should be roughly 3-5 typewritten pages, including:

- (a) Does he/she advocate violent and/or nonviolent forms of political participation? Cite evidence.
- (b) Does he/she prefer the development of an integrated or segregated social milieu? Cite evidence.
- (c) Does he/she prefer a capitalistic or socialistic economic form? Cite evidence.
- (d) What is one important argument the author makes that you find particularly convincing? Explain why, e.g., add additional evidence and/or defend it against obvious counter-arguments.
- (e) What is one important argument the author makes that you disagree with? Explain and defend your counter-position.

This should be done in 5 separate sections, using properly cited quotes from the text to support your points where appropriate.

[Late papers will be down-graded severely. No excuses!]

DUE DATES (2-3 students per book)

Booker T. Washington, Up From Slavery (September 10)
W.E.B. DuBois, The Souls of Black Folks (September 17)
Amy Jacques-Garvey, Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey (September 24)
Martin Luther King, Jr. readings (October 1)
Black Muslims readings (October 8)
George Breitman, ed., Malcolm X Speaks (October 22)
Kwame Ture and Charles V. Hamilton, Black Power (October 29)
Eldridge Cleaver, Soul on Ice (November 5)
Angela Davis, An Autobiography (November 12)
Thomas Sowell, Black Rednecks and White Liberals (November 19)
Manning Marable, How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America (December 3)