Scope and Purpose:

This course combines lectures with seminar-form discussion to explore the complex ways that race impacts political behavior and attitudes in (primarily) American politics. We will specifically focus on the 2016 Presidential election – both the lead up and the aftermath. The course takes a sociological approach that stresses the constructed nature of both race and politics. As a group, we will explore the mechanisms through which race informs political behavior, while also paying close attention to the ways that politics also informs our understanding of race. The course treats “race” as multifaceted construct, with multiple (and often times conflicting) influences on political behavior. The course will be split into 3 parts. In the first part we will explore the relationship between racial identity and political behavior at the individual level. The second part of the course will examine how ideas about racial groups shape political attitudes and behaviors, as well as policy outcomes. The third part of the course will explore how race is used to mobilize political and economic actors.

Requirements and Grading:

Your grade will be based on three components: 5 response papers to the readings, in-class participation, and a final paper/presentation.

The reading response papers are short essays that give you an opportunity to engage with the week’s reading. Essays are to be no more than 2 pages, and should be double-spaced. Essays are to be handed in during class, unless otherwise noted. Response papers should provide a summary of the readings (central arguments, assessment of empirical data, limitations, etc.), while also detailing your reaction to the reading for the week. Reactions can include points of agreement, disagreement, questions the readings raised, or related lines of thought that were triggered by the readings. You should choose 5 weeks to turn in responses to the readings. Response papers are due by 5pm on the Friday after the readings are discussed. NO LATE RESPONSE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Students are expected to participate in class discussions. Each week, a small group of students will be responsible for organizing and leading class discussion. As part of your class participation, each student is required to email 3 discussion questions (prompted by the reading) to the discussion leaders 24 hours before class. You should copy me, so I
have a copy of your questions. The discussion leaders should use these questions to help structure the class session.

Discussion leaders will also be responsible for gathering and disseminating supplemental reading material (newspaper articles, magazine articles, blog posting, reports, etc) that are related to the assigned reading. Discussion leaders will submit supplemental material in advance of class. The class will have read and thought about the pieces before meeting, and be ready to discuss. To give everyone time to read everything, supplemental materials should be submitted by Monday at 5pm.

Finally, in small groups, you will write a final research paper (about 25 pages) that explores that applies the concepts and readings from class to a contemporary political issue. You will draw on the readings and discussion from the course for these papers, but you will also need to analyze data (secondary or primary) sources of data. As part of the final paper, you will make a presentation to the class about your project. In advance of your presentation, you should send the class a 2-page summary of your final paper that gives us all some background on the topic and sets the stage for your in-class presentation. More details about the specifics of the paper will be given as the due date approaches.

Weekly Papers 30%
Research Paper/Presentation 35%
In-Class Participation 35%

Readings:

The following books are available at University Book Store.


Readings should be completed by the class session for which they are assigned.

Office Hours:

My office hours are listed above and I can be available at other times by appointment. I generally maintain an open-door policy with students, but let’s respect each other’s time
and schedule our visits in advance whenever possible. Please see me when problems develop rather than wait until they become serious or intractable.

Incompletes:

I think it is in everyone’s best interests to avoid incompletes. So, as a general rule, do not give them. In the event that a serious problem emerges that you feel necessitates an incomplete, you must speak with me regarding this request. Assignments not completed in the absence of an approved request for an “I” are graded as zeroes.

Students with Documented Disabilities:

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Disability Support Services via the Academic Resource Center. The staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current semester in which the request is being made. Students should contact the Disability Support Services as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations (https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/disability).

Academic Integrity and Courtesy

As a Jesuit, Catholic university, committed to the education of the whole person, Georgetown expects all members of the academic community, students and faculty, to strive for excellence in scholarship and in character. The University spells out the specific minimum standards for academic integrity in its Honor Code, as well as the procedures to be followed if academic dishonesty is suspected. Over and above the honor code, in this course we will seek to create an engaged and passionate learning environment, characterized by respect and courtesy in both our discourse and our ways of paying attention to one another.

Title IX Sexual Misconduct Statement

Georgetown University and its faculty are committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, including relationship violence and sexual assault. University policy requires faculty members to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role is to coordinate the University’s response to sexual misconduct. More information about campus resources and reporting sexual misconduct can be found at http://sexualassault.georgetown.edu.

Spring Quarter Class Schedule

Week 1
Introduction
Syllabus Distribution, Course Goals
Conceptualizing Race and Politics: Identity, Ideas, and Resource Perspectives
Week 2
Part I: Race as Identity

America’s Electoral Future: How Changing Demographics Could Impact Presidential Elections from 2016 to 2032 (PDF on Canvas)

Week 3
Part II: Race as Identity

Hispanic Voter Registration Is Climbing in Some States:

In an Arizona County Anger at Trump Spurs Latinos to Vote:

Castro Brothers on How Donald Trump Has Motivated U.S. Latinos:
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/castro-brothers-donald-trump-motivated-u-s-latinos/

Week 4
Part III: Race as Identity
Race drives politics
Barreto, Matt and Gary Segura. Latino America. Chapter 1

Week 5
Part I: Race as Ideas

Week 6
Part II: Race as Ideas

**Week 7**
Part III: Race as Ideas

**Week 8**
Part I: Race as Performance

**Week 9**
Part II: Race as Performance

**Week 10**
Part III: Race as Performance

**Week 11**
Pulling It All Together
- “Street Fight” (Movie)

**Week 12**
Pulling It All Together
- Group Presentations