

## **Black Political Leadership**

AAS / PSC 226  
Spring Semester 2013  
T/Th 12:30-1:45 p.m.  
Goergen 110

### **Professor Valeria Sinclair-Chapman**

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*Office hours:*

*Tuesdays, 2:30-3:30 p.m. or by appointment*

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Is President Barack Obama a black leader or a leader who happens to be black? This course will help students understand where the nation's first African American president fits in a long stream of black political thinkers, activists, and leaders. Black elected officials such as Barack Obama are among the most recent leaders in the historic black struggle for civil rights and political and economic equality in the United States. Other sources of black leadership include preachers, scholars, and community organizers. In this course, we will systematically examine the strategies, agendas, and styles of black leadership from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. We will attempt to answer the following questions: What is black leadership? Who are black leaders? How are leaders held accountable and to whom? We will consider black leaders from Booker T. Washington to W.E.B. DuBois, Martin L. King, Jr., to Malcolm X, Septima Clark to Ella Baker, and Jesse Jackson, Sr. to Barack Obama.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- To introduce students to black politics through the lens of black political leadership.
- To help students critically evaluate relevant philosophies, issues, goals, strategies, and tactics in black political development.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Four (4) books are required for this course:

Cohen, Cathy. 1999. *The Boundaries of Blackness: Aids and the Breakdown of Black Politics*.

Gillespie, Andra (editor). 2010. *Whose Black Politics? Cases in Post-Racial Black Leadership*.

Harris, Fredrick. 2012. *The Price of the Ticket: Barack Obama and the Rise and Decline of Black Politics*

Marable, Manning and Kristen Clarke (editors). 2010. *Barack Obama and African American Empowerment*.

*\*Additional required readings are designated in the syllabus as being available [online], meaning accessible using a general search engine from university-connected computers or on [BB], which indicates the university Blackboard service.*

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

#### GRADING

Participation	10 %
Quizzes/Short Assignments	20
Black Leader Profile	15
Local Leader Project	30
Research Paper	25

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION. Regular class attendance and participation are required. We will use facilitated discussion rather than a lecture format in this course; therefore, preparation for class and regular participation are essential. Many classes will begin with small groups completing the *Most Interesting Topic* exercise. MITs are not graded, but will contribute to assessments of attendance and participation. Participation will be used to calculate 10% of your final grade.

Readings and any additional assignments should be completed before class on the day assigned. Late assignments will generally not be accepted. Excessive absences will result in grade reductions. Pay careful attention to the syllabus and any adjustments that might occur. Students with special needs or concerns are encouraged to meet with me or with staff in the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (<http://www.rochester.edu/college/cetl/>).

QUIZZES AND SHORT ASSIGNMENTS. Weekly quizzes and short assignments will be used to calculate 20% of your final grade. There will be many opportunities to earn quiz and short assignments; for that reason, late and make-up assignments will not be accepted.

BLACK LEADER PROFILE. Working in pairs, you will deliver a multimedia presentation on an African-American leader examined in the edited volume, *Whose Black Politics?*. In addition to presenting the research from the assigned chapter, your task will be to answer the question, "Where are they now?" Further details on this assignment will be discussed in class and available on BB. Presentations are scheduled for February 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> and should be uploaded before class on the day you present. This assignment will account for 15% of your final grade.

LOCAL LEADER PROJECT. This semester-long group project is the centerpiece of the course and will comprise 30% of your final grade. This project will require that your group (in consultation with the professor) interview a Rochester African-American leader of your choice, write a short paper, and make a presentation in class (details will be posted on BB and discussed in class). For example, your group might interview a local activist minister or a member of the school board or city council. Each group will present a multimedia presentation to the class describing and analyzing the subject.

Completion of this project will include a 6-8 page analysis of the Rochester leader. Each paper will also include an Appendix with the name and contact information of the interviewee, a rationale for the selection of this person, a transcript or general description of the interview methodology, and any relevant materials such as photos, brochures, etc., that add context or background. Each group member is expected to contribute significantly to the project. Groups should identify their leaders by **Feb 28<sup>th</sup>**. Papers should be submitted in class or uploaded on BB by 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> and in-class presentations will take place on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. Presentations should be uploaded to BB prior to in-class presentation.

RESEARCH PAPER. A research paper on black leadership will be used to calculate 25% of your grade. Papers should follow proper writing, spelling, and grammar rules and be 6-8 pages in length with 1- inch margins and a 12-point font. Papers will be submitted in two stages: First you will turn in a 1-2 page literature review that addresses the question, "What is African-American leadership," in a particular context. For example, you might examine black women's leadership, southern leadership or elected leadership. Second, building on your literature review, your final paper will examine a black political leader, organization, or movement (e.g., black arts movement) in terms of leadership style, goals, strategies, tactics, constituencies, and effectiveness. You may use materials from the course in addition to outside scholarly sources (journal articles, books, etc.).

Additional details on these assignments will be handed out in class. Literature reviews should be uploaded on BB by 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> and final papers should be uploaded by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. The Writing Center is an excellent resource for help in planning, executing, and revising your papers: <http://writing.rochester.edu/help/index.html>.

ACADEMIC HONESTY. You are expected to turn in material that you have completed yourself. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without proper citation) will be tolerated.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OVERVIEW

Jan 17

\* Annual MLK, Jr. Address tonight, 6-7 p.m. in Strong Auditorium. This year's speaker is Melissa Harris-Perry. Harris-Perry is a noted political scientist, scholar, and host of a national news show. Write a 1-2 page response paper as an optional short assignment.

### PERSPECTIVES ON LEADERSHIP

Jan 22

Read:

Covin, David. 2008. "The Praxis of Black Leadership in the Twenty-First Century." *Souls*. 10(1): 59-67. [online]

Cunnigen, Donald. 2006. "Black Leadership in the Twenty-First Century." *Society*. 43(5): 25-29. [online]

Harris, Fredrick. 2006. "Black Leadership and the Second Redemption." *Society*. 43(5): 22-24. [online]

\* *Watch the U.S. presidential inauguration*, Monday, January 21, 11:30 a.m. then write a 1-2 page response paper as an optional short assignment. We will discuss the presidential inauguration and implications for black political leadership in class.

Jan 24

Read:

Sawyer, "On Black Leadership, Black Politics, and the U.S. Immigration Debate," in *AAE*, pp. 73-79.

Smith, "System Values and African American Leadership," in *AAE*, pp. 15-24.

### A NEW, "NEW BLACK POLITICS"?

Jan 29

Read:

Bai, Matt. "Is Obama the End of Black Politics?" *New York Times* (August 10, 2008). [online]

Gillespie, "Meet the New Class," and "Where Do We Go From Here?" in *WBP?*, pp. 9-42 and 309-318.

## **CASES IN BLACK LEADERSHIP: BREAKING NEW GROUND**

Jan 31

Read:

Gillespie and Tolbert, "Racial Authenticity and Redistricting: A Comparison of Artur Davis's 2000 and 2002 Congressional Campaigns," in *WPB?*, pp. 45-66.

Gillespie, "Losing and Winning: Cory Booker's Ascent to Newark's Mayoralty," in *WPB?*, pp. 67-84.

Feb 5

Read:

King, Shaw, and Spence, "Hype, Hip-Hop, and Heartbreak: The Rise and Fall of Kwame Kilpatrick," in *WPB?*, pp. 105-129.

Gillespie, "Race, Religion, and Post-9/11 America: The Election of Keith Ellison," in *WPB?*, pp. 273-292.

Feb 7

View and Discuss: Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. (Documentary Film)

## **CASES IN BLACK LEADERSHIP: DERACIALIZED STRATEGIES**

Feb 12

Read:

Lewis, "Between Generations: Deval Patrick's Election as Massachusetts' First Black Governor," in *WPB?*, pp. 177-194.

Franklin, "Situational Deracialization, Harold Ford, and the 2006 Senate Race in Tennessee," in *WPB?*, pp. 214-240.

King-Meadows, "The 'Steele Problem' and the New Republican Battle for Black Votes: Legacy, Loyalty, and Lexicon in Maryland's 2006 Senate Contest," in *WPB?*, pp. 241-270.

Feb 14

View and Discuss: Dylan's Run (Documentary Film)

*\*Submit Step 1 of Local Leader Project: Identifying the Interview Subject*

Feb 19

Black Leader Profile (Class Presentations)

*Upload presentations to BB prior to the start of class*

Feb 21

Black Leader Profile (Class Presentations)

*Upload presentations to BB prior to the start of class*

## **PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS**

Feb 26

Read:

Gaines, Kenneth K. 1996. "From Freedom to Slavery: Uplift and the Decline of Black Politics" in *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 19-46. [BB]

Marable, Manning. 1998. "Booker T. Washington and the Political Economy of Black Accommodation," in *Black Leadership*, pp.23-40. [BB]

Feb 28

View and Discuss: Booker T. Washington: Life and Legacy

Mar 5

Read:

Ransby, Barbara. 2003. "The Preacher and the Organizer," in *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, pp. 170-195. [BB]

Rustin, Bayard. 1965. "From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement" in *Commentary Magazine*. [BB]

Malcolm X. 1964. "The Ballot or the Bullet?" [BB]

Barker, Lucius. 1994. "Limits of Political Strategy: A Systematic View of the African American Experience" in the *American Political Science Review*, Volume 88 (1), pp. 1-13. [BB]

### **"RACE" IN BLACK POLITICS**

A BLACK AGENDA?

Mar 7

Read:

Harris, "Toward a Pragmatic Black Politics," in *AAE*, pp. 65-72.

Bositis, "The Political Orientations of Young African Americans," in *AAE*, pp. 81-90.

powell, john a. 2009. "Post-Racialism or Targeted Universalism." *Denver University Law Review*. 86: 785-806. [online]

\*Submit Step 2 of Local Leader Project: Interview Schedule and Objectives

### **SPRING BREAK**

Mar 12-14

TRANS-RACIAL, POST-RACIAL, OR RACE-FOCUSED LEADERSHIP?

Mar 19

Read:

Marable, "Introduction: Racializing Obama: The Enigma of Postblack Politics and Leadership," in *AAE*, pp. 1-12.

Hill, "The Race Problematic, the Narrative of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Election of Barack Obama," in *AAE*, pp. 133-147.

Fraser, "Race, Postblack Politics, and the Democratic Presidential Candidacy of Barack Obama," in *AAE*, pp. 163-182.

Mar 21

Read:

Crayton, "You May Not Get There with Me: Obama and the Black Political Establishment," in *AAE*, pp. 195-207.

Sinclair-Chapman and Price. 2008. "Black Politics, the 2008 Election, and the (Im)Possibility of Race Transcendence." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 41(3):739-745 [online]

View and Discuss: Obama's Race Speech, "A More Perfect Union," (March 18, 2008).

LIMITS OF RACE-FOCUSED LEADERSHIP

Mar 26

Read: Harris, *The Price of the Ticket*, pp. 3-34

Mar 28

Read: Harris, *The Price of the Ticket*, pp. 35-69

*Upload Research Paper Literature Review on BB by 11:59 p.m.*

Apr 2

Read: Harris, *The Price of the Ticket*, pp. 100-136

Apr 4

Read: Harris, *The Price of the Ticket*, pp. 137-102

#### RACE-FOCUSED LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL MARGINALIZATION

Apr 9

Read: Cohen, *The Boundaries of Blackness*, pp. 1-32

Apr 11

Read: Cohen, *The Boundaries of Blackness*, pp. 33-77

Apr 16

Read: Cohen, *The Boundaries of Blackness*, pp. 78-118, 250-292

Apr 18

Read: Cohen, *The Boundaries of Blackness*, pp. 293-347

#### UNDERSTANDING LOCAL LEADERSHIP

Apr 23

Class Presentations on Local Leaders

*Upload ALL papers by 11:59 p.m.*

*Upload presentations to BB prior to the start of class*

Apr 25

Class Presentations on Local Leaders

*Upload presentations to BB prior to the start of class*

Apr 30

Class Wrap-Up

Friday, May 10

*Upload Research Papers to BB by 11:59 p.m.*