

Black Political Leadership
AAS, PSC 226 and PSC 226W
Fall Semester 2010
Wednesdays 2:00-4:40
504 Morey Hall

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Wednesdays 12-1 and 4:45-5:30 p.m.

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 19th Century to the present. We will attempt to answer the following questions: What is black leadership? Who are black leaders? And, 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 to Barack Obama. This seminar course has considerable reading, writing, and discussion requirements and may best suit experienced juniors and seniors.

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

Five (5) 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*.

Jennings, James. 1992. *The Politics of Black Empowerment: The Transformation of Black Activism in Urban America*.

Johnson III, Ollie A. and Karin L. Stanford (editors). 2002. *Black Political Organizations in the Post-Civil Rights Era*.

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

*Additional required and/or suggested 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%
Discussion Leader	15%
Leader Profile	15%
Local Leader Project	35%
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. Participation will be used to calculate 10% of your final grade. Reading 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; *having three or more unexcused absences is grounds for failing the course.* 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 Academic Support (<http://www.rochester.edu/college/ccas/>).

DISCUSSION LEADERS. Expect to lead class discussion at least once during the semester. Discussion leaders will respond to the prompts listed under DL in the syllabus by either reading an article or researching a person/event related to the core course readings and sharing what they have learned during class discussion. Leading discussion will account for 15% of your final grade. Additional details will be provided in class.

BLACK LEADER PROFILE. Working with one or two other students, 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 September 22nd and 29th. This assignment will account for 15% of your final grade.

LOCAL LEADER PROJECT. This group project is the centerpiece of the course and will comprise 35% 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. In this project, you will address questions of black leadership from the experiences and perspective of the leader chosen by your group. 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 interviewee. Completion of this project will include a 5-7 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. Papers should be uploaded on BB by 11:59 p.m. on December 7th and in-class presentations will take place on December 8th and December 19th. A more detailed description of this assignment will be posted on BB and discussed in class.

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, elected leadership, etc. 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.). For “W” students, the literature review should be 2-4 pages, and the final paper 12-15 pages. Additional details on these assignments will be handed out in class. Literature reviews should be uploaded on BB by 11:59 p.m. on November 23rd and final papers should be uploaded by 11:59 p.m. on December 15th. 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

Sept 1

PERSPECTIVES ON LEADERSHIP

Sept 8

Read:

Assensoh and Assensoh, 2002. "Black Political Leadership in the Post-Civil Rights Era," in *BPO*, pp. 193-201.

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.

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.

Smith, Rogers M. 2004. "The Puzzling Place of Race in American Political Science." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 37 (1): 41-45. [online]

A NEW, "NEW BLACK POLITICS"?

Sept 15

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 "POST-RACIAL" BLACK LEADERSHIP: BREAKING NEW GROUND

Sept 22

Class Presentations

Read:

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

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

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.

DL: Adam Clayton Powell, Harold Washington, Jesse Jackson, Sr., Shirley Franklin

CASES IN "POST-RACIAL" BLACK LEADERSHIP: DERACIALIZED STRATEGIES

Sept 29

Class Presentations

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.

DL: David Dinkins, Thomas Bradley, Douglas Wilder, Denise Majette

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

Oct 6

Read:

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

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]

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

DL: Bayard Rustin, "From Protest to Politics" [online]; Malcolm X, "The Ballot or the Bullet?" [online];

Barker, "Limits of Political Strategy" [online]; Herbert, Bob, "Too Long Ignored" [online]; Price, "The New Old School Blame Game" [BB]

"RACE" IN BLACK POLITICS

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

Oct 13

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.

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]

Obama's Race Speech, "A More Perfect Union," (March 18, 2008). [online]

DL: Jesse Jackson, Jr. and Jesse Jackson, Sr. disagreement over Obama

A BLACK AGENDA?

Oct 20

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]

Ralph, Michael. 2009. "It's Hard Out Here for a Pimp...with...a Whole Lot of Bitches Jumpin' Ship": Navigating Black Politics in the Wake of Katrina." *Public Culture*. 21(2): 343-376. [online]

DL: Rev. Al Sharpton and Tavis Smiley Debate; TBA

BLACK ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Oct 27

Read:

Calhoun-Brown, "Will the Circle Be Unbroken? The Political Involvement of Black Churches since the 1960s," in *BPO*, pp. 14-27.

Smith, Robert C., "The NAACP in the Twenty-first Century," in *BPO*, pp. 28-39.

Wade and Williams, "The National Urban League: Reinventing Service for the Twenty-first Century," in *BPO*, pp. 40-53.

Clegg, "You're not Ready for Farrakhan": The Nation of Islam and the Struggle for Black Political Leadership, 1984-2000," in *BPO*, pp. 99-131.

Stanford, "Reverend Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition: Institutionalizing Economic Opportunity," in *BPO*, pp. 150-169.

URBAN POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

Nov. 3

Read: Jennings, *The Politics of Black Empowerment*, pp. 9-110

Nov 10

Read: Jennings, *The Politics of Black Empowerment*, pp. 111-187

POLITICAL MARGINALIZATION

Nov 17

Read: Cohen, *The Boundaries of Blackness*, pp. 1-118

DL: Dovi, "Preferable Descriptive Representatives: Will Just Any Woman, Black, or Latino Do?" [online]

Nov 24

Thanksgiving Break

NO CLASS

Dec 1

Read: Cohen, *The Boundaries of Blackness*, pp. 250-347

DL: Strolovich, "Do Interest Groups Represent the Disadvantaged?" [online]

Dec 8

Class Presentations on Local Leaders

Dec 19 (University Scheduled Final Exam Date)

Class Presentations on Local Leaders