

**Political Science 107: Spring 2009**  
**U.S. Diversity: Contemporary American Issues**

Dr. Carl Klarner	Class Times and Locations:
Office #: Holmstedt 322 (second floor, North)	MWF 10:00-10:50, Holmstedt #116
Office Phone: 237-2436, much better to e-mail me	MWF 1:00-1:50, Holmstedt #115
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Office Hours: Monday 11:30-12:30, Tuesday 11:45-1:00, or by appointment. I usually respond to e-mails very quickly.	

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, THE FIRST STEP IS TO CHECK THE SYLLABUS.

**Overview of Class**

This course examines contemporary issues that pertain to the diverse nature of society in the United States. We will examine diversity brought about by differences in social class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. The class will be conducted with a democratic spirit, allowing all sides of issues to be aired and helping students to construct depersonalized, educated, and informed arguments on confusing, controversial, and sensitive issues. The ability to converse with people of different backgrounds and value systems is one goal of the class. Another is for students to learn how to not “short change” ideas or arguments for positions they do not agree with. The ability to collect and assess evidence pertaining to students’ beliefs will also be developed.

**General Education Multicultural Studies Statement**

Goal: Coursework in this area is designed to expose students to cultural diversity and sensitize them to complex power relations among cultural groups, especially those relations that result in prejudice, discrimination and oppression; it also develops their awareness of the aspirations of traditionally underrepresented groups who seek to redefine contemporary social and political realities. The study of cultures, one's own and others, helps students to reflect upon and critically evaluate their own cultural backgrounds.

We will work to achieve a number of General Education learning objectives for the course.

The course critically analyzes societal values and relationships by using multiple lenses to examine race and ethnicity, gender, and social class.

The course leads students to identify and understand major principles and frameworks which define multicultural study.

The course embodies a comparative framework that examines a minimum of two cultural groups—minority cultures in the United States—in addition to their own.

The course critically examines issues of cultural differences and leads students to question narrow thinking and understand the effects of prejudice and discrimination.

The course requires students to reflect upon and critically evaluate their own culture and value systems in comparison and contrast to those of the cultures studied.

The course develops perspectives that will lead students to better understand and interact with individuals from different cultures, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and social classes.

**Course Outline**

An outline of the topics we will cover in the course follows.

**Section 1: Introduction**

Unit 1: Basics of American Ideology

Unit 2: How to write class papers

Unit 3: What is prejudice?

Test #1

**Section 2: Social Class**

Unit 4: Social Class and Poverty: How Unequal is America? Is the United States Classless?

Unit 5: Welfare Policy

Unit 6: Social Class and Politics

Test #2

**Section 3: Race / Ethnicity**

Unit 7: Race/Ethnicity and Society

Unit 8: Covert Racial Prejudice

Unit 9: Race/Ethnicity and Politics

Test #3

**Section 4: Gender**

Unit 10: Gender and Society

Unit 11: Abortion

Test #4

**Section 5: Sexual Orientation**

Unit 12: Sexual Orientation

Unit 13: Same Sex Marriage

Test #5

**Structure of Units**

The class will be organized into units. From Unit 4 on, the first day of a unit will be class lecture. The last day of a unit will be comprised of discussion where students will state their positions on the discussion questions of the day. For students who are signed up to do a paper, papers will be due one day before these discussion classes. The purpose of papers being due on this day is so students will have more to contribute during class discussions. Many units will have extra days in the middle where we will finish unfinished lectures, have a current events day, or have a guest speaker. This class is designed to meet the general education multicultural studies requirement.

**List of Class Dates, Topics and Readings**

All class dates scheduled by the university are listed below. We will meet on listed days unless otherwise noted or if they are merely paper due dates.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Topic &amp; Activity</b>	<b>What to Know About</b>	<b>Reading to do for this day</b>
			All readings are in order on line
January 12 Monday	Class Syllabus and Introduction: How to use Blackboard	Pick what paper you will do	
January 14 Wednesday	Unit 1: Political Ideology	Pick what paper you will do if you haven't already	Erikson & Tedin
January 16 Friday	Unit 1: What political ideology am I?	Pick what paper you will do if you haven't already	
January 19 Monday	MLK Day: University Closed: No Class		
January 21 Wednesday	Unit 2: What is an academic / peer-reviewed publication? How to find information for your paper & how to write class papers.		
January 23 Friday	Unit 2: cont.		
January 26 Monday	Unit 3: What is prejudice?		
January 28 Wednesday	Extra day before exam		
January 30 Friday		Exam #1	

February 2 Monday	Unit 4: Lecture: Social Class and Poverty in America		Malat et al.
February 4 Wednesday	Unit 4: Extra day		
February 5 Thursday	Not a class day	Unit 4 paper due at 3PM, if you are signed up for it.	
February 6 Friday	Unit 4: Discussion		
February 9 Monday	Unit 5: Welfare policy: lecture		Rodgers et al
February 11 Wednesday	Unit 5: Extra day		
February 12 Thursday	Not a class day	Unit 5 paper due at 3PM, if you are signed up for it.	
February 13 Friday	Unit 5: Discussion		
February 16 Monday	Unit 6: Social class and politics: Lecture		
February 18 Wednesday	Unit 6: Extra day		Barreto et al
February 19 Thursday	Not a class day	Unit 6 paper due at 3PM, if you are signed up for it.	
February 20 Friday	Unit 6: Discussion		
February 23 Monday	Extra day before exam		
February 25 Wednesday		Exam #2	
February 27 Friday	Unit 7: Problems faced by racial and ethnic groups: lecture		Sweet et al
March 1 Sunday	Not a class day	Unit 7 paper due at 3PM, if you are signed up for it.	
March 2 Monday	Unit 7: Discussion		
March 4 Wednesday	Unit 8: Race / ethnicity in the media & implicit stereotypes: lecture		Dovidio et al
March 6 Friday	Unit 8: Extra day	Hand in your project implicit paper (one page)	Go to <a href="https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/">https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/</a> Click "demonstration" then "go to the demonstration tests" then "I wish to proceed" at bottom, then do one of the IATs about race / ethnicity
March 9, 11, 13	No class: Spring Break		

March 15 Sunday	Not a class day	Unit 8 paper due at 3PM, if you are signed up for it.	
March 16 Monday	Unit 8: Discussion day		
March 18 Wednesday	Unit 9: Race / ethnicity and political power: lecture		Klarner
March 20 Friday	Unit 9: Extra day		
March 22 Sunday	Not a class day	Unit 9 paper due at 3PM, if you are signed up for it.	
March 23 Monday	Unit 9: Discussion day		
March 25 Wednesday	Extra day before exam		
March 27 Friday		Exam #3	
March 30 Monday	Unit 10: Gender: lecture		Cooke
April 1 Wednesday	Unit 10: Extra day		
April 3 Friday	Class canceled: I'll be at a conference		
April 5 Sunday	Not a class day	Unit 10 paper due at 3PM, if you are signed up for it.	
April 6 Monday	Unit 10: Discussion day		
April 8 Wednesday	Unit 11: Abortion: lecture		Freilich & Pridemore
April 10 Friday	Unit 11: Extra day		
April 12 Sunday	Not a class day	Unit 11 paper due at 3PM, if you are signed up for it.	
April 13 Monday	Unit 11: Discussion day		
April 15 Wednesday	Extra day before exam		
April 17 Friday		Exam #4	
April 20 Monday	Unit 12: Sexual Orientation: lecture		Haider-Markel and Joslyn
April 21 Tuesday	Not a class day	Unit 12 paper due at 3PM, if you are signed up for it.	

April 22 Wednesday	Unit 12: Discussion day		
April 24 Friday	Unit 13: Same-Sex Marriage: lecture		Meezan and Rauch
April 27 Monday	Unit 13: Extra day		
April 28 Tuesday	Not a class day	Unit 13 paper due at 3PM, if you are signed up for it.	
April 29 Wednesday	Unit 13: Discussion day		
May 1 Friday	Extra day before exam		
Final Exams	MWF 10:00, class: Final on Monday May 4 <sup>th</sup> , 10:00 AM  MWF 1:00, class: Final on Wednesday May 6 <sup>th</sup> , 1:00 PM	Exam #5	

### **Bibliography of Readings**

#### **Unit 1**

Erikson, Robert S., and Kent L. Tedin. 2005. *American Public Opinion: Its Origins, Content, and Impact*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Longman.

#### **Unit 4**

Malat, Jennifer, Hyun Joo Oh, and Mary Ann Hamilton. 2005. "Poverty Experience, Race and Child Health." *Public Health Reports* 120(July-August):442-47.

#### **Unit 5**

Rodgers, Harrel R., and Lee Payne. 2007. "Child Poverty in the American States: The Impact of Welfare Reform, Economics, and Demographics." *The Policy Studies Journal* 35(1):1-21.

#### **Unit 6**

Barreto, Matt A., Stephen A. Nuno, and Gabriel R. Sanchez. 2009. "The Disproportionate Impact of Voter-ID Requirements on the Electorate-New Evidence from Indiana." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 42(January):111-16.

#### **Unit 7**

Sweet, Elizabeth, Thomas W. McDade, Catarina I. Kiefe, and Kiang Liu. 2007. "Relationships Between Skin Color, Income and Blood Pressure Among African Americans in the CARDIA Study." *American Journal of Health* 97(12):2253-59.

#### **Unit 8**

Dovidio, John F., Kerry Kawakami, and Samuel L. Gaertner. 2002. "Implicit and Explicit Prejudice and Interracial Interaction." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 82(1):62-68.

#### **Unit 9**

Klarner, Carl. 2008. "The Racial Threat Hypothesis in the 2008 Presidential Election." Unpublished manuscript under review.

#### **Unit 10**

Cooke, Lynn Prince. 2007. "Policy Pathways to Gender Power: State-Level Effects on the Division of Housework." *Journal of Social Policy* 36(2):239-60.

#### **Unit 11**

Freilich, Joshua D., and William Alex Pridemore. 2007. "Politics, Culture, and Political Crime: Covariates of Abortion Clinic Attacks in the United States." *Journal of Criminal Justice* 35:323-36.

#### **Unit 12**

Haider-Markel, Donald P., and Mark R. Joslyn. 2008. "Beliefs About the Origins of Homosexuality and Support for Gay Rights." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 72(Summer):291-310.

#### **Unit 13**

Meezan, William, and Jonathan Rauch. 2005. "Gay Marriage, Same-Sex Parenting, and America's Children." *The Future of Children* 15(2):97-115.

### **Grading**

Your final grade will be determined by the following work.

1. Exams: 50% of grade: There will be five tests, and I will drop your lowest score. These will be short answer and essay in format. You can only make up a missed midterm or final with an excused absence. You must contact me as soon as possible if you miss the final and wish to make it up. Makeup tests will be all long essay and extremely hard.

2. Two Papers: 25% of grade (12.5% each). These will be a minimum of 600 words in length (about two pages) and can be as long as you want. These are to be handed in using Blackboard's Digital Dropbox feature (this is under "tools" in Blackboard). No hardcopy is to be turned in. They are to be in Microsoft Word 2003 format. Papers will be discussed on the last day of a unit (see list of dates above) and are due at 3:00 PM the day before the discussion day in question. Late papers will lose 5% of the percentage grade of the paper per day. Papers will be returned with your grade using the Digital Dropbox feature of Blackboard, and it is your responsibility to get them there. Wait three days after the due date of a paper before asking me if I've received it.

It is your responsibility to make sure that I have received and graded your papers. If you don't get a graded paper back, e-mail me about it and ask. No paper will be accepted after the last class day (i.e., this does not mean the final exam day).

If you are absent from class and you did a paper for that day, you lose 10% from your paper grade, unless you have a university excused absence.

You may pick a paper topic on the lists that come around (see calendar above for dates). No more than a certain number of students (to be determined in class) can pick one paper topic. You will write one paper on one of the units between 4 and 8, and another paper on one of the units between 9 and 13. Students not picking papers on these days will have their paper due dates assigned to them by me.

**IF YOU FORGET WHAT PAPER UNIT YOU ARE SIGNED UP FOR, DO NOT CONTACT ME. LOOK AT THE EXCEL SHEET POSTED ON BLACKBOARD THAT HAS THIS INFORMATION.** It is titled "PaperUnitsAssignedToStudents."

3. Participation / In-Class Writing: 25% total. Your participation grade will be determined by how much you speak during class discussion. **NOTE: YOU CAN'T GET THE PARTICIPATION PORTION OF YOUR GRADE IF YOU DON'T COME TO CLASS, NO EXCUSES.** In class writing assignments will also be a component of this part of your grade.

**NO LAPTOPS OR CELL PHONE USE / TEXTING IN CLASS AT ANY TIME.** You may be asked to leave class if I see that you are doing so. I will also deduct participation points from students who are texting, using laptops for purposes that don't relate to the class, or engaged in other activities that disrupt class or their ability to learn in class. I reserve the right to not announce this in class (this would disrupt class), but to merely note it in my records.

4. Class Attendance: If you miss six or more days of class, you will automatically receive a failing grade. I will take attendance three minutes after the hour. If you miss the first four days of class, you cannot take the class, no exceptions. I will not deal with excused absences. It doesn't matter why you miss class, you can't pass if you have six or more absences. The only excused absences are for university activities.

If you come in after I take attendance, you will only receive a "half attendance" score. If you get to class after 25 minutes of class, you will receive an "absence."

If you have three or more absences by the time midterm grades are due, I will notify you by e-mail the number of absences I have for you.

**DO NOT CONTACT ME ABOUT MISSING CLASS AND DO NOT TRY AND EXCUSE YOUR ABSENCES. DO NOT ASK ME WHAT YOU MISSED WHEN YOU WERE ABSENT FROM CLASS.**

**IF YOU WANT SPECIAL CONSIDERATION ABOUT SOMETHING, E-MAIL ME YOUR REQUEST OR TALK TO ME IN PRIVATE. THIS IS NOT TO BE DISCUSSED DURING CLASS.**

I use standard break points for determining grades.

Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade
90-100	A	80-85	B	70-75	C	60-65	D
85-90	B+	75-80	C+	65-70	D+	0-60	F

Requests for a grade change must be submitted in writing. No discussion of changing a grade will be allowed before a full description in writing of the student's concern has been submitted. This request for a re-grade must be submitted in the body of an e-mail. In addition, you must give me any materials pertaining to the re-grade before I will start to reconsider your grade. All materials pertaining to the re-grade (i.e. your written statement and the material to be re-graded) must be received by me within one day of my handing the material back to the class. The more specific your description of your concerns, the higher the chance your grade will be changed. A simple statement that you do not think your grade is fair will not result in a higher grade.

The assigned work you are to complete will assist you in meeting the four common goals of general education.

- 1) Your capacity for critical thinking (independent thinking, critical analysis, reasoned inquiry) will be developed through writing assignments, reactions to class lectures, through the discussion portion of the class and by discussions of how to analyze news during the current events portions of the class.
- 2) Your communication skills will be developed through writing papers, speaking and listening to others during class discussion periods, listening to lectures, reading materials for paper assignments, and being held accountable for the assigned readings in the class.

- 3) Issues of value and belief: your capacities for making informed and reasonable choices will be enhanced by being exposed to numerous value systems that pertain to social arrangements and public policy. You will also be aided in this by privately answering questions about your personal beliefs, constructing a score of your personal beliefs based on these questions, and then being able to compare your score with the nation as a whole.
- 4) Lifelong learning: your ability to participate fully as a citizen will be developed through learning about the political system, how to influence it, and how public policy influences social outcomes. The value of learning is encouraged through discussion of the inadequacy of everyday experience as a guide for belief.

### **Readings**

All readings are posted on Blackboard, and you can print them off from there, or just read them from your computer. I did not always include the citation sections of your readings on the Web site, because I wanted to save you money with printing and trouble downloading. If you need a citation from an assigned reading, e-mail me.

### **Maximizing Learning**

It is important for students to come to class. Important announcements are made in class. It is students' responsibility to get this information from their classmates when they miss class.

It is very important for students to take notes over lectures. It saves you time when studying for the midterm and final, and is an essential life skill.

I expect students to do all the readings due for a class and to read them carefully.

Please feel free to talk to me about the content of the class whenever you see me outside of class. E-mail is an excellent way to communicate with me. If you feel shy about asking questions in class or making suggestions, feel free to e-mail me or talk with me after class.

### **Respect for Other People**

Respect for other people, by not interrupting them, listening carefully to them, and acknowledging their ideas by responding to them is expected. Under no circumstances are students to belittle the ideas of other people although you are encouraged to disagree.

### **Asking Questions about Grades / Notifications of Class Absences**

It is your responsibility to be in class everyday. If minor changes are made to the syllabus, for example, these changes will be announced in class. You are responsible for knowing this information by coming to class.

If you wish to ask me questions about your grade or attendance, send me an e-mail. I don't bring my grade records to class.

### **Cheating and Plagiarism**

Cheating on tests includes (but may not be limited to) copying answers from another student, supplying answers to another student, obtaining unauthorized copies of the exam, and so forth. Plagiarism is the representation of someone else's work as your own. One should use quotation marks and citations when quoting from another source. One should also use citations when using another's ideas, even if you do not use their words. Cheating and plagiarism in this class will be punished to the maximum extent possible, which will entail, at a minimum, receiving a "0" on the assignment where plagiarism was evident, and may also result in a failing grade for the course. I electronically archive all papers students turn in, and use the software "TurnItIn" to detect plagiarism.

Students are encouraged to review the University's Academic Dishonesty Policy found in the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Disability Accommodations**

Go to the link [http://www.indstate.edu/humres/affactdiversity/ADA\\_Final\\_Policy.htm](http://www.indstate.edu/humres/affactdiversity/ADA_Final_Policy.htm) for the University's disability policy.

### **Academic Freedom**

According to the American Association of University Professors 1940 statement on academic freedom "teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject." What academic freedom entails is further clarified in the following passages.

It is not appropriate for professors to indoctrinate: to dogmatically assert that propositions that are uncertain are fact. But, as stated by the AAUP "indoctrination occurs only when instructors dogmatically insist on the truth of propositions by refusing to accord their students the opportunity to contest them." It is appropriate for a professor to assert that a proposition is true if this is based on the professor's study and research. Professors should note when there is controversy about a topic within their discipline, but are not required to do so. It is also a fundamental error to assume that materials assigned by a teacher are endorsed by a teacher.

Professors are free to select material and ideas in class that in her or his professional opinion is most relevant to understanding the phenomena under study. They may not omit the teaching of major ideas in their discipline that are generally perceived as absolutely essential, but such ideas are rare in the social sciences. An instructor has the freedom to introduce a broad and diverse number of subjects to a class if they deem that they are relevant to the subject matter at hand.

These passages were adapted from the AAUP's statements about academic freedom <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/issues/AF/>

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### Brief Writing Assignment Instructions

Look at the paper topics for your unit and pick ONE of them. You are free to make up your own topic as long as it pertains to the unit you are writing about, and as long as I give you permission on your new topic. Answer the question that you choose in your paper. Write the question you are addressing at the top of your paper (does not count toward your word minimum).

Find three articles or books that are related to your topic to help you answer it. These must all be academic/peer-reviewed articles. Utilize the library search engines that you were informed about in class to find these. Your sources should be from 2000 or after. Read these articles/books, and write about the information in them that pertains to your question. Most of your words should talk about what are in these articles.

Your paper should be at least 600 words, and have a bibliography within the same document (the bibliography and title do not count towards your word limit). A document is posted on Blackboard (called "02APSASStyleManual") that shows you exactly how to cite things in your bibliography and text.

Try and write as concisely as possible, and not take up your paper with "filler" intended to reach the word minimum. Do not plagiarize, but also DO NOT QUOTE other's words. I want you to speak with your own voice. Paraphrase what the article or books says and attribute ideas to the source you obtained them from. Check your grammar and spelling.

Write your paper in Microsoft word. Title your paper's file name with your last name first, then your first name, then the date you turned your paper in (year, number of month (always two digits), number of day (always two digits)). For example, if you look at your paper in its folder on your computer it should look like "KlarnerCarl2007\_08\_23.doc." (Do not type in ".doc," that might just appear there if you were looking at it.) Be sure and capitalize the first letters of your last and first names.

Papers for a particular unit are to be discussed on the last day of a unit (see list of dates on syllabus) and are due at 3:00 PM the day before the class the paper will be discussed in. You are to address one of the questions that were provided in the list of paper assignment topics for each unit.

Papers are due through the Digital Dropbox on Blackboard. Do not hand in a hardcopy.

How to use the Digital Dropbox: log into the course, and click on "tools." Then click on "DigitalDropbox." Then upload your file. Then click "send file." DO NOT click "upload file." The paper will not get to me in that case.

### Writing Assignments / Discussion Questions for Units 4 to 13

#### Unit 4

1. How much of succeeding in life is through effort, and how much is through where you start in life?
2. Does everyone get the same result for the work they put into getting ahead? Do some people get more for their effort?
3. What are some of the drawbacks of the system of social class that exists in the United States?
4. What are some of the advantages of the system of social class that exists in the United States?

#### Unit 5

1. Do you think TANF should be reformed by making it harder for individuals to cheat the system?
2. Do you think TANF should be reformed by giving more resources to individuals with children?
3. Do you think PRWORA had a good or bad impact?
4. Data was represented in class that it would be fairly cheap to end poverty. State whether you agree or disagree with the reasoning behind those data. Then explain whether you think we should end poverty in the United States in that way.
5. What examples are there of welfare that go to upper income people?
6. Should the health care system in this country be reformed to allow more people to get health insurance coverage?
7. How to people who receive assistance from the government spend it? Find rigorous studies that assess how these individuals spend their money, and whether they waste it.
8. What myths are there about the welfare system in the United States? The following are potential myths you can write about, but you can think of your own. You can use as many of the following as you want (some are interrelated). A) Everyone on "welfare" stays on it for a long time, especially before the welfare reform of 1996. B) People on welfare have more children so that they can receive more welfare. C) Most people on welfare are lazy. D) People on welfare waste much of their money and buy inappropriate things with it. E) Most people on welfare receive housing assistance. F) People on welfare have large numbers of children.
9. Some argue that programs that equalize incomes hurt the overall health of the economy. Find studies that address this question and assess them.

#### Unit 6

1. What changes can be made that would give poor people more political power? (Hint: you could either talk about A) campaign finance reform, B) reforms to encourage voter turnout or C) some other type of reform. You could talk about all three, but it would be better to focus on one.)
2. Assess whether you think people of lower income (say, below the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile) have significantly less political power than their numbers warrant. Why is this the case?

3. Should we make it easier for people to vote in elections, or is it up to individuals to get to the polls? What are the implications of your answer to the political power of lower income people?

#### Unit 7

1. How much of the gap between the earnings of blacks and whites is caused by discrimination, and how much is caused by other factors?
2. How much of the differences between blacks and whites in sentencing for criminal activity is caused by discrimination, and how much is caused by other factors?
3. Is it a problem for blacks and whites to consistently live in different neighborhoods from each other? How extensive is neighborhood segregation today? Why is this bad or good?
4. Is it a problem for blacks and whites to consistently go to different schools from each other? How extensive is educational segregation today? Why is this bad or good?
5. What policies should be used to address racism in our society?
6. Should affirmative action policies be expanded, reduced, or kept the same?
7. What myths are there about affirmative action?
8. Should hate crime legislation be passed that gives a more severe penalty to people who commit a crime against someone on the basis of their race or ethnicity?

#### Unit 8

1. Find a study about racial bias in the media and describe it. Explain whether you agree with it or not. Use two additional pieces of evidence to support or argue against the study you describe. Note: you can use a study about either 1) race and poverty in the media, 2) race and crime in the media, 3) race and sports in the media, or some other area of study to do this. If you find three articles in one of these areas of study, you could then fulfill the objectives of this paper topic.
2. Find an article about the impact of racial bias in the media on peoples' attitudes toward race and describe it. Explain whether you agree with it or not. Use two additional pieces of evidence to support or argue against the study you describe.
3. Find a study about subconscious racism (aka covert or implicit racism or stereotypes) that either finds evidence for or against its existence. Explain whether you agree with the findings of the study or not. Use two additional pieces of evidence to support or argue against the study you describe.

#### Unit 9

1. Do blacks have less political power than their numbers warrant (i.e., does the average blacks have less political power than the average non-Latino white)? Why or why not? Present arguments and evidence to support your position.
2. Give an example of a reform to the election system that you think would increase the political power of blacks. Present arguments and evidence for why such a reform would have positive consequences.
3. Give an example of a reform to the election system that has been proposed as a way to increase the political power of blacks that you think would be bad. Present arguments and evidence for why such a reform would have negative consequences.
4. Do you think laws that disenfranchise former felons should be eliminated? Present arguments and evidence for your position.
5. Recently the famous Voting Rights Act was extended by Congress. Should more have been done in the extension? Or less?

#### Unit 10

1. How much of the gap between the earnings of men and women is caused by discrimination, and how much is caused by other factors?
2. Why are poverty rates among men and women so different? What implications does this have for how we view poverty in America in general?
3. What policies should be used to address sexism in our society?
4. Identify one stereotype that pertains to gender. How widespread is this gender stereotype in our society, and how serious of a problem is it?
5. Should women be allowed to fight in combat?
6. What can be done to prevent sexual assault on campus?
7. Should affirmative action policies apply to women? Should such laws be strengthened or weakened?
8. Has the progress of women in society stalled?
9. Is it a problem that there is a smaller percent of women in state and national legislatures than their percent of the population? Why or why not? Back your assertions up with evidence.
10. How can we increase the percent of women in (state and national) office? Suggest a change in the election system that would do this. Should we make this change? Provide evidence to back up your argument.
11. Does the average women have less power than the average man? Provide evidence to back up your argument.

#### Unit 11

1. Should Roe v Wade be overturned? Why or why not?
2. What changes in the law should be made pertaining to abortion?
3. Should the morning after pill be available over the counter?
4. What steps can be taken to reduce abortion without illegalizing it?
5. How should the content of sex education be changed? (You can talk about abstinence only, or other changes in sex education curriculum.)
6. Should the availability of birth control be reduced or expanded?
7. Should the Casey decision be overturned? Why or why not?

#### Unit 12

1. What is the role of genetics in determining whether people are attracted to the same or the opposite sex? What is the role of other events that occurred before birth in determining this?
2. What laws should be passed, if any, to protect homosexuals from discrimination?
3. Should hate crime legislation that pertains to homosexuals and transgendered people be passed?
4. Has "Don't Ask/Don't Tell" worked? Is it an "honorable compromise" that allows homosexuals to serve in the military?
5. Should one's sexual orientation be used as a means to exclude them from certain careers, such as the military, police or fire departments?
6. Find studies on the impact of family structure and environment on people's sexual orientation. Are children with "absent fathers" more likely to be gay? Are children with more "overbearing mothers" more likely to be gay?
7. How many people are born transgender?
8. What type of discrimination do transgender people experience? (In this question, you can address whether transgender people are discriminated against more than gays or lesbians.)
9. How much homosexual sex goes on in prisons, and what does this imply about human sexuality?

#### Unit 13

1. Should an amendment to the U.S. Constitution banning same-sex marriage be passed?
2. Should same-sex marriage be made legal?
3. Should gays be allowed to adopt children?
4. Should gays be allowed to look after foster children?
5. Find research on people who are born transgender. What implications does this have for same-sex marriage?

### Grading Rubric for Paper

Students should read the following so you understand exactly how I grade papers, or if you want to improve your paper writing in this and other classes in general.

A grading rubric is a formal statement by a teacher about what he or she expects from a paper. It says exactly how grades will be computed from your paper.

Papers will start off with a 100% grade. If your paper has one of the problems listed below, the percentage listed by it will be deducted from your paper grade.

#### I. Administrative Instructions

1. Did the student follow instructions on how to title the file name of their paper? (2%)

Title your paper's file name with your last name first, then your first name, then the date you turned your paper in (year, number of month, number of day). For example, if you look at your paper in its folder on your computer it should look like "KlarnerCarl2007\_08\_23.doc." (Do not type in ".doc" yourself, that would just appear there if you were looking at it.) Be sure and capitalize the first letters of your last and first names.

2. Did the student write their paper in 2003 Microsoft Word, or did I have to ask for another copy? (2%)

3. Did the student use the Digital Dropbox on Blackboard for getting the paper to me? (5%)

Papers are due through the Digital Dropbox on Blackboard.

Wait three days after the due date of the paper before asking me if I've received your paper.

4. Did the student send me a bibliography as part of their paper or as a separate file (i.e., I want you to send your paper and your bibliography to me as one word document). (2%) If you send me your bibliography in a separate file I take no responsibility for it getting accidentally deleted.

5. Did the student hand in the paper late? (5% for every day late)

If you're absent from class and you did a paper for that day, you lose 10% from your paper grade, unless you have a university excused absence.

6. Paper too short? The body of text for this paper should be at least 600 words in length (this comes to about two pages). Your title and bibliography do not count toward your word total. (% deduction equals the % of words your paper is too low by)

## II. Form of Paper

### II. A. Grammar

12. Are there spelling errors? (1% each)
13. Are there grammatical errors? (1% each)
14. Has the student written as concisely as possible? Is the student trying to create “filler”? Are there unnecessary statements? (1% per sentence or  $((\# \text{ unnecessary words} / 600) * 100) = \% \text{ penalty}$ )
15. Has the student used casual language (examples; used the word “I” in a sentence, use of conjugations, such as “don’t”), used the phrase “in my opinion” (Note: you are encouraged to bring your opinion into the paper, but I’m trying to teach you a particular writing style that avoids speaking in the manner just identified. State your opinions in the form of assertions.) (1% each)
16. Are there awkward or poorly formed sentences? (1% each)
17. Are there passages that are vague or have ambiguous/unclear meanings? (1% each)

### II. B. Organization

21. Is it obvious which of the writing questions the student decided to write about? (3%)  
The most efficient way to make clear which question a student is addressing is to copy and paste the question at the top of your paper. I STRONGLY ADVISE YOU TO WRITE THE QUESTION VERBATIM AT THE TOP OF YOUR PAPER.
22. Is it clear what the student’s thesis statement is? Does the student draw attention to their thesis statement to make it as easy as possible for the reader to identify? Your thesis statement should be in the first paragraph. (3%)
23. Does the student say where their argument will go and then walk the reader through it? (3%)
24. Are there passages that don’t fit into the overall organization of the paper? (1% per sentence or  $((\# \text{ words in passage} / 600) * 100) = \% \text{ penalty}$ )
25. Does each paragraph have one main point? (3% each)
26. No quoting is allowed in the paper. Instead of quoting from your sources, paraphrase what they say in your own words. Has the student used quotations in his or her paper?  $((\# \text{ words quoted} / 600) * 100) = \% \text{ penalty}$

## III. Content of Paper

### III. A. Argument

Definition of an argument: a connected series of statements intended to establish a proposition.

You should come up with at least one major argument in support of your position. It can either be an argument you came up with, one from class or one from another source outside of class.

31. Did not address the topic of the paper assignment. (10%)

In general for papers, avoid talking about other countries, unless you are making an explicit comparison between other countries and the United States (this will often be done in class). For example, don’t talk about Canadian studies of race and traffic stops. This is a class about the United States.

Also, do not talk about material in an upcoming unit if it is related to the current unit (i.e., don’t talk about same sex marriage when doing a paper for unit 13).

Don’t do the assignment for the next paper or for an earlier paper.

#### Quality of Argument

What was the quality of their argument? The following considerations contribute to assessing the quality of an argument.

32. Did student explain his or her argument fully? Was it clear? (3%)
33. Are there contradictions in the argument? (3% each)
34. Are there unstated links in the argument / unconnected clauses in the argument? (3% each)
35. Are there assertions that are not backed up by evidence or argument? (3% each)
36. Are there statements that don’t make sense because they contradict well known facts? (3% each)

### III. B. Evidence

Definition of evidence: “Evidence” in this context means information observed about the world that can be used to support or reject your arguments. Different types of evidence include “facts,” “observations,” “information,” “data,” “documentation,” and “statistics.” You are probably in “argument” or “theory” mode (versus evidence mode) if you say the words “reason,” “this causes,” “one might argue,” or “because.”

Your evidence is extremely important to your paper grade. You should find three sources that pertain to the subject you are writing about, and then explain them in depth. Explain what was found in the article or book, and why the author came to the conclusions they came to. It would be a mistake to simply mention in a sentence a fact, and then cite a source as your source of evidence. The idea of gathering evidence is to find new information not presented in class. If you want to refer to things made in class, be sure that you have spent at least 600 words describing new information from outside of class.

41. Are there three academic / peer-reviewed citations in the paper from sources the student has looked up on their own? Did the student talk about them at all? -12% each

What is an academic source?

The author is an expert in the field, probably employed at a university or research institute. The article has citations of other work and is not short. The article has an academic publisher. If “journal” or “review” is in the title of the publication, that’s a good sign (not always). Remember, not all academic sources have been peer-reviewed

Examples of things that aren't academic articles: any newspaper or newsmagazine (such as the New York Times), and internet sites (such as Wikipedia). There are a few academic Web sites, but don't risk it.

What is Peer-Reviewed?

It means the article has gone through a double blind review process. In this double-blind process, anonymous reviewers (themselves experts in the field), who don't know who the article's author was, decide whether to accept it for publication or not.

If it's from a journal, and you are suspicious, many explanations of the journal will tell you whether it is peer-reviewed or not. You can go to "EbscoHost," then "academic search premier," then check peer-reviewed box. ProQuest has a similar box, but these are not full proof ways of checking. [www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org) is an excellent source for peer-reviewed articles, although they are not allowed (the book reviews in these journals are not peer-reviewed).

42. Was the evidence cited correctly? You have to say right in the text where you're getting the information from; -3% each, can be as much as -12% if it is unclear whether the citation was an academic/peer-reviewed source.

Am I able to find the information from the citation with the citation the student has given me (in the case of an Internet citation, I should be able to find it instantly)? Furthermore, it should be clear what information in the text the citation applies to.

A student must use the American Political Science Association's format for citing. The relevant sections of the *Style Manual for Political Science* have been posted on Blackboard. This manual will tell you how to appropriately use citations for your paper.

43. Were factual assertions made which were incorrect? -3% each if only code is given, can be up to -6%

44. Piece of evidence not explained in depth; -3% each if only code is given, can be up to -6%

Or, did the student not understand the evidence they were using?

45. Is a piece of evidence relevant to the topic at hand; -3% each if only code is given, can be up to -6%

46. Is a piece of evidence of "low quality"? -3% each if only code is given, can be up to -6%

Examples of "low quality" pieces of evidence are as follows.

46a) a mere assertion about a state of affairs the author believes, and not an actual observation about something that exists. A citation of someone's opinion.

46b) Something vague, that isn't observable in the real world. For example, a definition. If a statement reports on something that has been measured, it is a good sign that the statement isn't vague.

46c) You are to use academic journal articles for these papers. An excellent source for academic journals is [www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org).

Something that comes from a source that is not credible is a low quality piece of evidence. Here are some examples of web sites that are not credible: fairly unknown Web sites, Wikipedia, or partisan sites of any type, for example, sites that cater specifically to liberals or conservatives. Credible sources of evidence are things like A) government documents, B) main stream media sources, and C) academic articles in published journals. Even these should be treated with skepticism. These types of credible sources can all be accessed on the Internet, although in general the Internet is not a good source for reliable evidence.

You may use Internet sources (that do not belong to categories A, B or C) as a source of ARGUMENTS but not EVIDENCE.

46d) A source that is too old to be useful. You are to use information from journals from 2000 or later.

46e) Obvious information or information that was covered in class already.

You can use such evidence, but they won't count toward your three pieces of evidence.

46f) Anecdotal evidence.

\*Note: for any one piece of evidence, the student can't lose more than 12%.

### III. C. Plagiarism

Did the student engage in plagiarism?

If a student engages in plagiarism, they will get a large penalty, which will mean receiving 0% on the assignment, at a minimum.

Turnitin is used to identify plagiarism.

If a student uses any portion of a paper another student has written, they will be disciplined to the full extent of "the law."

Aside from taking another student's work, there are other types of plagiarism. These have different levels of seriousness. I list them with more serious types of plagiarism listed first.

Type 1 plagiarism; The worst is to take someone's words, without altering them, and pretend that they are your own.

Type 2 plagiarism; Another serious type is to take someone's words, use them in your paper without using quotations, but cite the author as the source of your ideas. Students often do this because they are unaware of the seriousness of what they are doing.

Type 3 plagiarism; Another serious type is to take someone's words, copy and paste them into your document, and then alter them slightly. Quotations are not used in this type of plagiarism and the original author is not given credit. Students often do this because they are unaware of the seriousness of what they are doing.

Type 4 plagiarism; Another serious type is to take someone's words, copy and paste them into your document, and then alter them slightly. Quotations are not used in this type of plagiarism but the original author is given credit. Students often do this because they are unaware of the seriousness of what they are doing.

Taking the ideas of someone else and pretending that they are your own, without stealing any of their language, is another form of plagiarism, and should be avoided.

### IV. Misc.

51. Are there other problems with paper?

### V. Other Advice

Avoid using the word “proved.”