

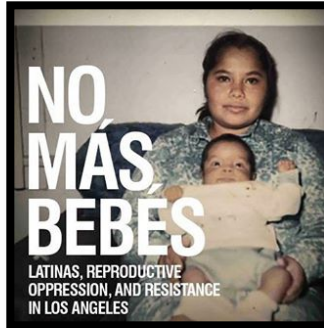
# PS 375 RACE, POLITICS AND THE LAW

Tues/Thursday, 12-1:20 PM, MCK 125  
CRN: 36191 University of Oregon, Dept of Political Science

# SPRING 2016 SYLLABUS

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*Important Note: This syllabus is subject to change as the course progresses. These periodic changes will be announced in class and a current copy of the syllabus will always be posted on the course Canvas website.*

## A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the development, transformation and inheritance of structures of racial domination and resistance in the United States. The readings, lectures and exercises are designed to both familiarize students with the history and contemporary impact of these structures and to explore the complex relationship between race, political action, and democracy. The wide range of reading material we will draw upon includes forced sterilization practices against Mexican-origin women, debates over the use of animals in the cultural practices of nonwhite peoples, and the racial impact of the criminal justice system.

*The goals of this course are:*

- To familiarize students with some of the important themes, debates and arguments central to understanding racial politics in the United States during the last 100 years.
- To think critically and engage with a series of important concepts within Ethnic Studies and Political Science, especially racism, gender, reproduction, nationalism, ideology, identity, and power.
- To improve critical writing and analysis skills through regular practice and feedback.
- To provide extensive opportunities for students to reflect upon their own experiences and perspectives in light of the course themes.

Our course will incorporate guest lectures by several scholars whose work we will read this term, including political scientist Claire Jean Kim and film producer and historian Virginia Espino.

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## B. REQUIRED TEXTS

The following required texts are available for purchase at the UO Duck Store:

- **Elena Gutierrez.** [\*Fertile Mothers: The Politics of Mexican Origin Women's Reproduction\*](#). U of Texas, 2008
- **Michelle Alexander.** [\*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Era of Colorblindness\*](#). New Press, 2012
- **Claire Jean Kim,** [\*Dangerous Crossings: Race, Species, and Age in a Multicultural Age\*](#). Oxford, 2015

## C. ASSIGNMENTS

- 1. SEVEN IN CLASS QUIZES.** These quizzes will assess your comprehension of the assigned reading, lectures and class discussions. Some questions will be given in advance and you will prepare your answer to bring to class; others may be completed on Canvas. The remaining questions will be given in class. Your lowest score will be dropped. No make-up quizzes are possible. **(50% of final grade)**
- 2. MIDTERM EXAM.** The midterm exam, given in class on **Tuesday May 3**, will be based on materials from the first half of the course and will include a set of short identification and essay questions. **(20% of final grade)**
- 3. FINAL TAKE HOME EXAM.** The final exam will be based on materials from throughout the course and will be submitted via Canvas no later than Tuesday, June 7 at 5 PM. Late exams are deducted one full grade for each day late. **(30% of final grade)**
- 4. PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE.** Attendance is taken every class; advanced reading and participation are critical.

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## D. OTHER COURSE POLICIES

- 1. CLASSROOM CONDUCT.** We are all accountable to create a climate of mutual respect in the classroom. While differences of opinion and perspective are vital and will be encouraged, common courtesy as well as University policy prohibit personal attacks and discriminatory conduct.
- 2. ATTENDANCE.** You are expected to arrive on time and stay for the entire class. Regular tardiness, early departures or absences can result in your final grade being lowered by up to a full letter grade. You must see the instructor during the first week if you have any university-approved absences.
- 3. EMAIL CORRESPONDANCE.** Please identify yourself and the name of our course in all correspondence with the professor and GTF. Do not expect an immediate response to your email—it is not appropriate to ask a question about an assignment or exam on the night before it is due.
- 4. ELECTRONIC DEVICES.** Wireless devices and cell phones must be turned off prior to class. I strongly prefer that laptops not be used during class. Please see the instructor if you need to use your laptop in class.
- 5. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGARISM.** All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. If you are in doubt regarding the requirements, please consult with the instructor before you complete any requirement of the course.
- 6. ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION.** The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability related barriers to your participation, please notify me as soon as possible. You may also wish to contact the [Accessible Education Center](#) at 346-1155 or [uaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uaec@uoregon.edu)

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## E. READINGS SCHEDULE (SEE COURSE CANVAS SITE FOR READINGS AS LISTED BELOW)

WK & DATE	THEMES	TUESDAY READING	THURSDAY READING
1. 3/29	Setting the stage		Colorblindness readings (Canvas)
2. 4/5	The Prison Crisis	Alexander. <i>Jim Crow</i> Intro, Ch 1	Alexander. <i>Jim Crow</i> , Ch 2, Ch 3
3. 4/12	Prison Abolition?	Alexander. <i>Jim Crow</i> Ch 4, Ch 5	Alexander. <i>Jim Crow</i> Ch 6
4. 4/19	Race and power	Kim. <i>Crossings</i> , Ch 1, Ch 2	Kim. <i>Crossings</i> , Ch 3, Ch 4
5. 4/26	Race and species	Kim. <i>Crossings</i> , Ch 7, Ch 8	Kim. <i>Crossings</i> , Ch 9
6. 5/3	Black Lives Matter	In class midterm exam	Black Lives Matter readings (Canvas)
7. 5/10	The case of Ferguson	Ferguson readings I (Canvas)	Ferguson readings II (Canvas)
8. 5/17	What is Eugenics?	Ewen & Ewen (Canvas)	Eugenics in Oregon (Canvas)
9. 5/24	Sterilizing history	Gutierrez, <i>Fertile Matters</i> , Ch 1	Gutierrez, <i>Fertile Matters</i> , Ch 3
10. 5/31	Reproductive justice	Gutierrez, <i>Fertile Matters</i> , Ch 6 & 7	