

DEPAUW UNIVERSITY

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Introduction the U.S. Political System
POLS *110C

American National Government: Race, Power & Privilege

(W)

Fall 2019

Tuesday & Thursday 2:20 - 3:50

“By nature man is a political animal.” – Aristotle

Professor: Emmitt Y. Riley III, Ph.D.

Office Location: 103 Asbury Hall

Office Hours: T and TH 4-6

Mondays Appointments Only

Phone: (765) 658 – 6353

Class Location: Asbury Hall Room 202

Email: emmittriley@depauw.edu

Website: <http://www.emmittriley.com>

Twitter: @DrRiles06

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course will serve as an introduction to the American political system. In this course we will explore the foundations of American democracy by specifically examining the institutions, electoral processes, public opinions and the political behavior of citizens within the United States. We will focus specifically on the degree to which American democracy is representative. We will also place a significant amount of attention on the struggle for equality and justice among marginalized groups within the United States e.g. (race, gender, convicted felons, immigrants, and other marginalized groups). Because this is the race, power, and privilege version of American Government we will center race as the focus of our analysis.

Central to the notion of American democracy is the idea of popular sovereignty. A running theme in this course will be the extent to which citizens are able to exercise popular control of government. Specifically we will analyze how citizens utilize intermediaries such as political parties, voting, public opinion and the three branches of government to control government. Additionally we will analyze how the structural, institutional, and constitutional system inhibits popular sovereignty within the United States.

Harold Lasswell defined politics as "who gets what, when, and how." Under this definition nothing can be more relevant to all us than the actions and function of governmental activities. Simply put politics is about influence. Many organizations and corporations invest millions into influencing what government does. This influence all too often comes at the expense of racial minorities.

Government and politics have long played a positive/negative role for Americans. Think of what business would be like if the government did not coin money, build roads and highways, protect property rights, guarantee deeds and contracts, prevent infringement of patents, act to open markets for goods and services on a world-wide basis and a host of other activities, without which, business

would be impossible. But, we are not only engaged in business. We are citizens of a larger society in which government, representing all the people, acts to insure quality of life in areas of health, the environment, national security, individual rights, thus "establish(ing) justice" and "promote(ing) the general welfare." Politics occurs when the interests described above come into conflict, and is the way of resolving disputes.

To be engaged in this process - as every one of us is - one must understand the basic structures of government - why our society does things the way it does, what are the ground rules by which the game is played, what changes are taking place in our political structures to modify the rules of the game, and who are our opponents and our allies in the causes we bring to the political arena.

In order to understand fully the process of politics and government, we need to know what are our alternatives. One way to acquire that knowledge is to compare the American system with alternative ways of engaging in politics and government. Protection of individual rights, for example, often sacrifices larger interests of the whole society; democracy is often much less "efficient" than more authoritarian structures.

GENERAL COURSE GOALS/OBJECTIVES: The course has five objectives. The first of these is to acquaint the student with the structures of government and the character of constitutional systems. It is important to know who is served and who is disadvantaged by particular structures of government, whether they represent narrow interests of elites or a more general welfare of citizens. An examination of competing perspectives on democracy and America will enable us to consider these issues while illuminating key concepts such as: democracy, representation, legitimacy, authority, political culture, and federalism.

The second objective of the course is to enable the student to analyze the political process with a view toward illuminating the game of politics and whose interests are served by the particular structures that we have chosen. What is the role of public opinion, political parties, interest groups and how these roles have changed dramatically over time will be a major focus of consideration. Most important will be an analysis of the electoral process in America by comparison with other nations in important areas such as political participation.

A third objective will be to acquaint the student with the basic institutions of government: the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, and the bureaucracy. Here, the focus will be on alternatives that nations use to construct these institutions as well as how the American system has been modified in over two hundred years of experience.

A fourth objective will be to familiarize the student with the issues of human rights and civil liberties as they exist, today. American constitutional democracy has extended rights and privileges virtually unknown in most nations, even in democratic countries. Critics argue that this system of rights produces conditions that threaten the society itself, e.g., by protecting criminals from the legal consequences of their acts. Defenders of the system believe that these rights have preserved essential qualities of personal liberty that characterize American society. The development and interpretation of these "inalienable rights" in American political thought focuses attention to implications of these rights beyond words and phrases.

The course aims to make students aware of the challenge and promise of American Democracy. At the end of the course students should be more aware of the both the structure and function of the political institutions within the United States. Students should also have a more in depth understanding of the process of voting and the political behavior of citizens, politicians, and political parties.

COURSE CONTENT: The content of this course requires us to think critically about government, citizenship, and equality. We all approach the study of politics from a certain perspective. That perspective is usually informed by our life experiences, our privilege and other sociological factors. For purposes of studying American politics you will be asked to think critically and scientifically. It is imperative that class discussions remain civil and grounded in academic and empirically sound research.

I am not asking you to change your views or adopt my views. I am simply asking that you begin to question many of the assumptions that hide in plain sight that usually go unchallenged. “Unfortunately, similar to the Monday morning (Sunday morning for college football fans) quarterback, politics is a field whereby many citizens have self-proclaimed themselves as experts, depending on which beauty salon/barbershop or bar they frequent. Hence, this course seeks to reduce the number of "doorstep" opinions by teaching students how to systematically search for the truth (i.e., carve away as much residual to get as close to the truth as possible) as it relates to the field of politics. The course will also place strong emphasis on positivist questions, which address "what is?" as opposed to questions based on the normative approach, which address "what ought to be?" (Orey 2006, 236).

We will read and analyze a variety of different academic works that will require us to engage in serious intellectual conversations that will some time challenge long standing assumptions. Understanding American politics requires us to think about some basic issues. What is democracy? What is representation? How do we know when we are being represented? Who is represented? What is justice? What are the political and social consequences when all citizens do not experience the realization of justice, equality, and freedom? Why do citizens vote the way they do? What do citizens think about government? Does it matter what citizens think about government?

We will explore these issues by discussing two primary books and a number of scholarly works that offer variety of perspectives on American Politics.

Writing Requirement:

POLS 110 C is offered as a writing intensive course as it fulfills the university's writing requirements. In order to demonstrate mastery of the W you must earn a minimum of a grade of C on the combined average of the writing assignments.

By the end of the W-course students should have continued to improve their understanding of:

- the uses of writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating;
- flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading;
- how readers perceive and respond to different forms of writing;
- writing assignments as a series of tasks, including finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing, and acknowledging appropriate primary and secondary sources;
- collaborative and social aspects of writing processes.

You are required to meet with me following the return of your first paper.

REQUIRED TEXT (S):

Walton, Smith, and Wallace. *African American Politics and the African American Quest for Universal Freedom.*

Anderson, Carol. *White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide.*

Writing Resources:

1. A Guide to Writing Reserach Projects in Political Science
<http://davinci.cascss.unt.edu/users/aje0004/projectguidev4b.pdf>

Administrative Issues

Work Submission:

All assignments must be submitted on moodle.

Makeup Work

I do not assign makeup work and I do not accept late assignments. You need to make every effort to submit all assignments in a timely fashion. There will be absolutely no make-up exams or quizzes.

Electronics

Cell Phones, Apple Watches, and Laptops are not to be used in the classroom unless you are instructed to use these items by the Professor. If you are using electronics that are unauthorized I will deduct points from your class participation grade.

Attendance

Class attendance is required. If you are absent three or more days, I will automatically lower your final grade by one letter grade.

Grade Grievance /Rescoring Work

If you believe that your work has not been scored appropriately you must submit in writing a letter justifying your reasons. This must be done within two days after the graded assignment has been returned. The professional judgment of the professor will be used to determine the merits of your claims. Please understand that if your work is rescored you might end up with a lower grade.

Help Outside of Class

I want each of you to know that I am fully available to provide you with assistance outside of the classroom. I will devote two workshops outside of class that will be designed to assist you with your research proposals. The dates of these workshops will be announced in class.

Returning Graded Work

I will work to return graded work in a timely fashion. There will be an 8 to 14 day turn around on assignments, essays, and papers. I encourage each of you to take advantage of office hours to discuss the substantive feedback on assignments.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: In an academic community, the worst offense that can be committed is to cheat or plagiarize; neither will be accepted or condoned within this classroom. All material that is submitted must be your work or appropriately cited, if you have questions regarding citation procedure or when documentation is necessary — see me. Academic dishonesty, in any form, will be taken seriously. Such work will automatically receive a grade of F (“0”) and DePauw University’s policies will be followed. A second concern in the academic community is the freedom to discover inside and outside the classroom. Because this freedom should be equally available to all, harassment of any kind will not be tolerated

GRADING SCALE

A 100-95, A- 94-90

B+89-87, B 86-83

B- 82-80, C+ 79-77

C 76-73, C- 72-70

D+ 69-67, D 66-63

D- 62-60, F 59-0

WHAT GRADES MEAN:

A= Work that goes beyond the requirements of the assignment by adding insight, creativity and/or particularly thoughtful analysis. Demonstrates a comprehensive command of the course material, and exceptional ability to apply concepts to the real world, and a superior ability to organize and express ideas.

B=Work that adequately meets the requirements of the assignment. Demonstrates a solid command of the course material, an ability to apply concepts to the real world with only minor problems, and good organization and expression of ideas.

C= Work that partially meets the requirements of the assignment. Demonstrates acceptable command of the course material, a basic ability to apply concepts to the real world with some gaps and problems, and moderate skill in the organization and expression of ideas.

D=Work that marginally meets the requirements of the assignment. Demonstrates little command of the course material, minimal attempt to apply concepts to real world, and limited ability to organize and express ideas.

F= Work that does not meet the requirements of the assignment. Demonstrates no command of the course material, unable to appropriately or consistently apply concepts to the real world, and insufficiently organizes and expresses ideas. (Taken from Professor Oware’s Syllabi 08-17-2015)

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Toward the end of the semester students often get concerned about their grades. In an effort to help students keep track of their grades I have included in this syllabi a chart that will **help you calculate your own average**. Please be advised that you should utilize the percentages categories to determine your specific average. All grades will be posted in Moodle.

Three Papers 25%	Research Proposal /Literature Review Final 30%	Class Participation 15%	Research Presentation 10%	Discussion Leader 10%	Quizzes 10 %
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GRADING DISTRIBUTION

PAPERS

Each student will be required to write three short article critiques. Each of these papers must be concise and analytical. Each paper must be two pages single spaced pages with solid argumentation and critiques. A paper without a central thesis will be graded harshly, proper citation, and evidence

will be graded harshly. This assignment requires **critique** not **summary**. Papers that provide summary will be graded harshly. To complete this assignment student will need to select an article from one of the journals listed below. The critique should identify the following items:

- Research Questions
- Theory
- Methodology
- Findings
- Implications

While you will certainly need to identify the items listed above you must also provide your **criticism** of the article in each category. Specifically, did you find the article compelling? If so, why (three reasons why) and if no, why not? Think about if you were writing this article what would you do differently to improve it. Remember that in the header of your paper you should identify the article that you are analyzing. The articles must come from one of the following journals or a closely related journal.

- *NPSR: National political science review*
- *AJSPR*
- *JR&P: Journal of Race and Policy*
- *Journal of Race*

RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND LITERATURE REVIEW:

Each student must complete a research proposal. The proposal must be related to race within the American political context. In composing the proposal the student must develop a research question and use the academic literature to make and support a solid argument. This paper must be between 10-16 pages. The paper should conform to the standards of the Chicago Style Manual. The paper must consult a minimum of 14 academic sources. Students may use topics in the syllabus to help them find a topic.

Components of the proposal:

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Literature Review (Do not summarize)
- Anticipated Findings
- Works Cited

CLASS PARTICIPATION:

Because the format for this class is seminar style we will devote a significant amount of attention to discussing and analyzing the readings during class. I will not lecture in this class. You will be graded on how much and the depth at which your comments demonstrates your understanding of the readings. Simply attending class does not constitute class participation.

DISCUSSION LEADERS:

During the semester students in groups of four will be required to lead one class discussion. While the discussion leaders will facilitate the discussion each student will be required to do his or her part by engaging in class discussions. During the week that you are assigned to lead a class discussion you will need to submit (on Moodle) an outline of your discussion to the professor a day before class. Your questions should not be superficial! They should be questions that require analysis and provoke thoughtful engagement. The professor will from time to time engage in the discussion. Groups should lead the discussion as a group. Not as an individual!

NEWS AND CURRENT EVENTS:

You will be required to remain abreast of news and current events relative to Race and American Politics. During the beginning of each class I will open the floor to discussion of news and current events. In your report on a particular news story you need to address what the issue is, how it relates to the topic that we are studying, and why it is important. You may want to follow me on twitter @DrRiles06 or my Facebook class page https://www.facebook.com/eyrile3rdphd/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel. I will be sending out important announcements related to the class.

Suggested news sources are listed below:

- The Atlantic
- The Huffington Post Black Voices
- The Root
- New Times
- Washington Post

GROUP PRESENTATIONS:

Given the size of this class you will conduct this assignment in groups of four. You will present an oral presentation which must be accompanied with a written report. Noted in the course schedule is a list of special topics. You will select a topic and conduct research by consulting academic journals on the topic. Please note no two groups should present the same topic. You will be required to consult a minimum of five academic sources. The written report must contain the following components:

1. Introduction of Problem (This section should provide the context out of which the issue at hand is addressing)
2. Review of the Academic Research (This section should be a critical evaluation and review of the sources consulted for the project. What are the major debates in the literature? What do we know? What has the literature failed to address?)
3. Methodology It can also contain an evaluation of the methods, measurement for variables, hypothesis, and etc.)
4. Findings (This section should discuss an overview of the data and what it tells us about the topic.)
5. Conclusion (Concluding Thoughts, debates and recommendation for future research)

I am asking that you be creative. You are permitted to use powerpoint presentation, poster presentations, video presentations or etc. You will be graded on both content and creativity. Presentations are limited to 10 minutes. Please note, this is not an informational presentation. This is an academic presentation. If your presentation does not contain the elements listed above, it is likely you are not doing the assignment correctly. Please note that you are not to discuss the articles one by one but rather approach the presentation from a thematic stand point.

QUIZZES:

ALL QUIZZES WILL BE UNANNOUNCED.

MISCELLANEOUS ASSIGNMENTS: This includes any assignments that are classified on the syllabi as “Assignment” or any additional assignments or events that you will be required to attend during the semester.

MAKE-UP WORK: All work must be submitted on time. (unless you have an official excuse) or your will be penalized. Make-up exams will be given only when a bona fide excuse is obtained from the office of dean of students. **ALL LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE PENALIZED 1 LETTER GRADE FOR EACH DAY THAT THE WORK IS LATE.**

Extra Credit Opportunity:

Dr. Tiyi Morris will hold a lecture on February 7th at 7:00 in Watson Forum. If you attend this event you will receive extra credit and it will count as 100 points in the Quiz category.

ACADEMIC LECTURE/SEMINARS: Academic seminars are excellent courses for undergraduate students who are interested in attending graduate school. One of the great experiences of the academy is the free exchange of ideas. It is through intellectual exchanges and discourse that we discover, recover, and stimulate the interest in making society a better place for all people to live. As such, it is imperative that each student contribute regularly to the discussion. There is nothing more excruciating than sitting in a seminar and the parties are not prepared for the

discussion. You will be expected and required to complete the readings and be prepared to hold meaningful conversations regarding the materials.

CELL PHONES/LAPTOPS: Turn off all cell phones!!! If you answer a cell phone in class you will be counted absent that day. Do not sit and send text messages during class. It is extremely rude and it will result in being counted absent. As a millennial I recognize the importance of technology. I will allow you all to use your laptops, however, you need to make certain that you are paying attention to what is happening in class.

MIDTERM AND PROGRESS REPORTS: Each student will arrange to meet with the professor the week before midterm exams to discuss progress towards successfully completing the course.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: DePauw University is committed to providing equal access to academic programs and university administered activities with reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities, in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act and Amendments (ADAAA). If you are a student who believes you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability or learning challenge you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Disability Services for further information on how to receive accommodations and support. Contact information for Student Disability Services is: 408 S. Locust Street, Suite 200, in The Memorial Student Union Building (765-658-6267)(studentdisabilityservices@depauw.edu). Accommodations cannot be implemented until the faculty member has received the official ADA letter, released by Student Disability Services. It is critical that you schedule a time to discuss the implementation of the accommodations specified in your letter with each faculty member receiving the letter. Accommodations are not retroactive. Students with documented disabilities have the right to choose not to use accommodations, and in exercising that right, they accept the resulting outcomes. This means that faculty are under no obligation to retroactively address any issue arising from students' choices to forgo accommodations.

REQUIREMENTS FOR TYPED DOCUMENTS: All typed documents must be formatted properly. They should adhere to the standards of the Chicago Style Manual. If you need help regarding proper citation please see me or the internet. The document should include the following: 1 inch margins on all four sides, name, class, date, and title of document and the font size should be 12 points.

Special Presentations:

1. Minority Representation
2. America's Reaction to the first black president
3. The Confederate Flag (Public Opinion)
4. Public Opinion and Race
5. The SCOTUS and race
6. The Media's Portrayal of Minorities

7. Voter ID Laws
8. Social Media and Campaigns
9. Voting Rights for Convicted Felon
10. Impact of Special Interest on Public Policy
11. Follow the Money, Special Interest and Candidates

Spring 2019 Tentative Class Schedule *Subject to revision as exigencies dictate	
Jan 29	<p style="text-align: center;">Introduction, Syllabi Review, Democracy, Politics, Power, and Civic Respect</p> <p>Readings: 2018 Election Reflection Series: It's time for political science to come off the sidelines by Dr. Christina Greer</p>
Jan 31	<p style="text-align: center;">Foundations: Universal Freedom Declared, Universal Freedom Denied: Racism, Slavery and Ideology of White Supremacy</p> <p>Readings: Chapter 1 * <i>The Declaration of Independence</i> * <i>Democracy Matters are Frightening in Our Time</i> excerpt from <i>Democracy Matters</i> by Cornel West Legacies of the 1964 Civil Rights Act by Bernard Grofman – Selected Chapters *Plessy v. Ferguson *Dred Scott v. Sandford *Bill of Rights Plus All other Constitutional Amendments</p>
Feb 5	<p style="text-align: center;">Foundations: Federalism and the Limits of Universal Freedom</p> <p>Assigned Readings: * Chapter 2 *Princeton Concludes what kind of government America really has, and its not a Democracy by Tom McKay http://mic.com/articles/87719/princeton-concludes-what-kind-of-government-america-really-has-and-it-s-not-a-democracy *<i>The Deep Democratic Tradition</i>, excerpt from <i>Democracy Matters</i> by Cornell West *Robert A. Dahl. 2001. <i>How Democratic is the American Constitution?</i> New Haven: Yale University Press. Introduction (pp. 1-6). Available: http://yalepress.yale.edu/yupbooks/excerpts/dahl_democratic.pdf Group1</p>

<p>Feb 7</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Institutions: The Legislature</p> <p>Assigned Readings: * Chapter 11: Congress and the African American Quest for Universal Freedom *Do Majority-Minority Districts Maximize Substantive Black Representation in Congress? Charles Cameron, David Epstein and Sharyn O'Halloran <i>The American Political Science Review</i> Vol. 90, No. 4 (Dec., 1996), pp. 794-812 *Chapter 1 <i>Perceptions of the Constituency</i> from Richard Fenó's Homestyle.</p> <p>Paper 1 Due!</p>
<p>Feb 12</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Institutions: The Legislature</p> <p>Assigned Readings: * Chapter 11: Congress and the African American Quest for Universal Freedom con't *U.S. Constitution Article 1 Section 1 *Hill Styles and Parties: The Delegation Puzzle II</p> <p>Research Topic Due in Moodle</p>
<p>Feb 14</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Institutions: The Executive</p> <p>The Presidency and the African American Quest for Universal Freedom</p> <p>Assigned Readings: * Chapter 12 *U.S. Constitution The Executive Branch *Neustadt. 1960. Presidential power – Selected Chapters -TBA The 11 Most Racists U.S. Presidents http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ibram-x-kendi/would-a-president-trump-m_b_10135836.html *The Price of a Black President by Frederick Harris http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/28/opinion/sunday/the-price-of-a-black-president.htm</p> <p>Group 2</p>
<p>Feb 19</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Institutions: The Executive</p> <p>The Presidency and the African American Quest for Universal Freedom</p> <p>Assigned Readings * Chapter 12 *The Persistence of Racial Resentment by Thomas Edsall http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/02/06/the-persistence-of-racial-resentment/ *Kernell. 1997. <i>Going public: New strategies of presidential leadership.</i> Selected Chapters- TBA</p>
<p>Feb 21</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Institutions: Federal Courts</p> <p>Assigned Readings: * Chapter 13 *Alexander Hamilton. <i>The Federalist Papers.</i> No. 78, "The Judiciary Department"</p> <p>Research Question Due in Moodle</p>

Feb 26	Institutions: The Federal Courts
	Assigned Readings: * Chapter 13 *The Puzzle of Judicial Behavior Chapter 4: Strategic Behavior
February 28	Political Behavior : Political Culture
	Assigned Readings: Chapter 3: Political Culture
March 5	Political Behavior : Political Socialization
	Assigned Readings: Chapter 4: Political Socialization
March 7	Political Behavior: Public Opinion
	Chapter 5: Zaller, John. 1992. The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion, Cambridge University Press. Selected Chapters – Information, Predispositions, and Opinions Pages 6-13. * NA Valentino, VL Hitchings, & IK White. Cues that Matter: How political adds prime racial attitudes during campaign. American Political Science. Paper 2 Due! Group 3
March 12	Political Behavior: African Americans and the Media
	Assigned Reading: Chapter 6
March 14	Away at Professional Conference Proposal Draft Due
March 19	Coalitions, Movements, Interest Groups, Parties, and Elections
	Assigned Readings: Chapter 7: Social Movements Doug McAdam. 1982. <i>Political Process and Black Insurgency</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago. Chapters 3 and 5.
March 21	Interest Groups
	Assigned Readings: Chapter 8: Interest Groups Do interest groups represent the disadvantaged? Advocacy at the intersections of race, class, and gender. Journal of Politics. DZ Strolovitch. Group 4
March 23-31	Spring Break

March 28	Political Parties
	<p>Assigned Readings: * Chapter 9: Political Parties *Aldrich, John. 1995. <i>Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America</i>, Chicago. University of Chicago Press. – Politics and Parties in America Selected Chapter from Walters, White Nationalism</p>
April 2	Voting Behavior and Elections
	<p>Assigned Readings: Chapter 10 Giles, Michael. 1996. “Racial Threat and Partisan Identification.” <i>American Political Science Review</i> 88 (2) 317-326.</p>
April 4	Voting Behavior and Elections
	<p>Lau, Richard and David Redlawsk. 2006. <i>How Voters Decide: Information Processing During Election Campaigns</i>, Cambridge University Press. Selected Chapter: What is Voting Correctly? Assignment: Political Typology Quiz Go to the following link http://www.people-press.org/quiz/political-typology/ Once you have clicked on the link I want you to take the survey. After taking the survey you are to write a reaction paper to your results. Consider if the findings of the survey accurately describes you politically. Were you shocked? Were you reassured? This assignment is due. Three pages!</p> <p>Group 4</p>
April 9	Presentation Day
April 11	Presentation Day
April 16	Contemporary Issues in American Politics
	<p>Anderson, Carol. <i>White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of our Racial Divide</i> Chapters: 1-3</p>
April 18	Contemporary Issues in American Politics
	<p>Anderson, Carol. <i>White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of our Racial Divide</i> Chapters: 4-5</p>
April 23	The U.S. Criminal Justice System
	<p>Film: 13th</p>
April 25	The U.S. Criminal Justice System
	<p>Film: 13th</p>

April 30	Adjustment Day
May 2	Adjustment Day
May 7	Adjustment day
May 9	Adjustment Day/ Research
May 13-16	Research Proposal Due in Moodle