

PS 3550: Research Preparation Seminar: African American Political Theory | TR 11:00 am-12:20 pm | Spring 2021 | Professor Heath Fogg Davis | GH 447 | [hfd@temple.edu](mailto:hfd@temple.edu) | Zoom Office Hours: W 9:30am-12:30pm + by appointment

### Course Description

The research preparation seminar is meant to prepare you for the junior and senior capstone seminars. The signature feature of the capstone seminars is the research paper. In the capstone seminars your work will focus on the iterative steps in the writing process. To prepare you for that adventure, this seminar will concentrate on the preliminary steps that will make your writing process more manageable, efficient and even fun! Each research preparation seminar, like each capstone, focuses on a specific political theme, and a particular set of research methods.

The theme of this seminar is African American politics, and our research methods are drawn from the political science field of political theory, which is sometimes also referred to as political philosophy. What philosophical claims have shaped, and continue to shape black political practice in the United States? How have blacks living in the U.S. responded to political theories such as liberalism, conservatism, feminism, Marxism, nationalism, and queer theory? We will explore how social categories such as class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, and geographical location intersect with black identities and black political thinking.

### Macro Learning Goals

In this seminar you will learn:

- How to identify a *research interest*
- How to develop that interest into a *research topic*
- How to further develop a research topic into a *research question*

### Micro Learning Goals

You will also learn:

- The unique features of political theory research methods
- How these methods differ from the research methods used in the other 3 fields of political science (American Politics, International Relations, and Comparative Politics)
- How to practice using political theory research methods to solve political problems related to African American politics

### Prior Knowledge

- Basic understanding of political theory (i.e., distinctions between and among liberalism, conservatism, and radicalism)

### Required Reading and Viewing

All readings and videos will be posted to Canvas.

### Course Materials

All course materials are available at no cost via Canvas.

### Course Technology Requirements

Webcam. Recommended internet speed: 8mbps download & 5mbps upload. You can test your connection at <https://www.speedtest.net> ([Links to an external site.](#)) Please note: Hard-wired connections are more consistent than Wi-Fi for Zoom sessions.

This course requires the use of Canvas, including access to materials and assignment submission. Some videos posted via Canvas will require the use of speakers. The instructor may utilize web-conferencing tools to deliver synchronous material. In order to participate in synchronous sessions, you should have a computer, a webcam, headphones, and a microphone.

This course requires the use of Microsoft Office (i.e., Word, Excel, PowerPoint). To access these materials, please login to [TUportal](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)) and look for the Microsoft Download link under TUapplications within the My Portal tab.

Students should check their Temple email daily for course updates.

All students are required to comply with [Temple University's Computer and Network Security Policy](#).

### Instructional Methods

Online asynchronous and synchronous: readings, videos, VoiceThread, individual activities, group activities, virtual Zoom meetings.

### Course Communications

To facilitate communication, the university requires you to have an e-mail account ending in [heath.davis@temple.edu](mailto:heath.davis@temple.edu). During the semester, I will generally respond to emails within 24 hours of receiving them during the week and with 48 hours on weekends.

### Assignments and Grading

Grading:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
F	0-59

### Weighting Details

- Quizzes: 10%
- VoiceThread Presentation 1: 10%
- Worksheets: 10%

- Assignment 1: 10%
- Assignment 2: 10%
- Assignment 3: 15%
- Assignment 4: 15%
- VoiceThread Presentation 2: 10%
- Participation: 10%

Total = 100%

### Assignment Descriptions

#### Quizzes

There will be several quizzes to complete via Canvas. Quiz questions will be based upon the reading assignment due that day. These are open-book quizzes. "A" quizzes must be completed by 2:00 pm on the Tuesday when the reading assignment they are based on is due. "B" quizzes may be completed at any time up until March 25, though I strongly urge you to complete them as close as possible to the Thursday when they are assigned. The purpose of the quizzes is to make sure that you are keeping up with the course modules. I will drop your 3 lowest quiz scores from each category (3 from your A quizzes and 3 from your B quizzes) when calculating your final grade.

#### VoiceThread Presentation 1

As you read the readings assigned for your designated day, be on the lookout for a sentence with which you either strongly agree or strongly disagree. Find a cultural artifact that you see as being connected in some way to the sentence you chose. This might be a brief YouTube video of a movie or television scene (no longer than 5 minutes), a news article, an artistic image, an advertisement, song lyrics, a poem, a photograph, an object, or anything else that you'd like to share with us. Be creative!

Your Voice Thread presentation should contain 2 slides:

- Slide 1: Type your chosen sentence on it and record yourself reading it to us. Then record a brief explanation why you either strongly agree or strongly disagree with it. Your recorded explanation should not exceed 1 minute.
- Slide 2: Add your chosen cultural artifact to a Voice Thread slide. (If this is a video or audio recording, it should not exceed 5 minutes). Then record an explanation of the resonance you feel between the cultural artifact and your chosen sentence. Your recorded explanation should not exceed 1 minute.

The total time of your Voice Thread presentation should not exceed 10 minutes. Check out the rubric on Canvas to see how you will be evaluated. **Important tip:** Do not assume that previous presenters have followed the instructions and model your presentation on theirs. My hope is that you will find this format less daunting and more interesting than a traditional class presentation. Please post your VT presentation by Saturday at 7pm before the Tuesday when we'll be discussing the readings they're based on.

## Worksheets

There are several worksheets to complete via Canvas. These worksheets are posted in the Thursday asynchronous modules. Each worksheet is due the following Tuesday by 2pm, but I strongly encourage you to complete them on or close to the Thursday when they are available. You earn a completion grade of 1 point per worksheet, and I will provide you with some brief feedback on each worksheet. The worksheets are based on the reading assignments from *The Craft of Research*.

## Assignments 1, 2, 3, and 4

These assignments are based on the developmental writing steps you are reading about in *The Craft of Research* and practicing in the worksheets. They will be posted to Canvas.

## VoiceThread Presentation 2

The second VoiceThread presentation will be based on the research question that you have been working on throughout the semester. They will take place during the final weeks of the semester, according to a schedule that will be posted to Canvas. You are not expected to have completed the final draft of your research question in this presentation. But you should be in the final stages of revision and polishing. Your classmates will be asked to offer brief constructive critical feedback on your VT presentation, and you will also receive feedback from me in a rubric that will be posted to Canvas. Please use the feedback from your peers and me as you put the final touches on your project.

## Participation

The more you participate in this class the better your learning experience will be. This can take the form of asking questions and contributing comments to our large- and small-group Zoom meetings verbally or via the chat feature, as well as by commenting on your classmates' VoiceThread presentations. Your participation grade will be based on whether you offer at least one comment on one of VoiceThread presentations before 2 pm on Tuesday. You get one point per week for completing that task, and no points if you do not.

## General Policies

All [Temple University Academic Policies](#) will be upheld.

## TEMPLE AND COVID-19

Temple University's motto is Perseverance Conquers, and we will continue to meet the challenges of the COVID pandemic with flexibility and resilience. Working together as a community to deliver a meaningful learning experience is a responsibility that we all share: we're in this together so we can be together.

## How This Course Will Be Taught

- Synchronously via Zoom on Tuesdays (content listed in A modules)
- Asynchronously on Thursdays (content listed in B modules)

### Attendance Protocols and Your Health

To achieve course learning goals, students must attend in-person classes, and/or participate in classes or portions of classes that are taught remotely, to the extent that they are able. However, if you feel unwell or if you are under quarantine because you have been exposed to the virus, you should not come to campus, and you will not be penalized for your absence. Instructors are required to ensure that attendance is recorded for each in-person class session. The primary reason for documentation of attendance is to facilitate contact tracing, so that if a student or instructor with whom you have had close contact tests positive for COVID-19, the university can contact you. Students should contact their instructors to create a plan for participation and engagement in the course as soon as they are able to do so. Faculty and students agree to act in good faith and work with mutual flexibility. The expectation is that students will be honest in representing class attendance.

### Course Materials

Course materials for this course are provided at no cost via the library's electronic reserve. See the "course reserves" tab on the home page menu.

### Student Support Services

The following academic support services are available to support you. Check the color-coded system in TUPortal to determine which services are virtual or in-person:

[Student Success Center \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[University Libraries \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Undergraduate Research Support \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Career Center \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Tuttleman Counseling Services \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Disability Resources and Services \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

If you are experiencing food insecurity or financial struggles, Temple provides resources and support. Notably, the Temple University [Cherry Pantry \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and the Temple University [Emergency Student Aid Program \(Links to an external site.\)](#) are in operation as well as a variety of resources from the [Division of Student Affairs \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

### Technology specifications for this course

- Limited resources are available for students who do not have the technology they need for class. Students with educational technology needs, including no computer or camera or insufficient Wifi-access, should submit a request outlining their needs using the [Student \(Links to an external site.\)Technology Assistance Application form \(Links to an external site.\)](#).
- The university will endeavor to meet needs, such as with a long-term loan of a laptop or Mifi device, a refurbished computer, or subsidized internet access.
- Note that some software is available for free download on the [ITS Academic Support \(Links to an external site.\) page \(Links to an external site.\)](#). Other specialty software may be available for remote access through ITS.

### Statement on recording and distribution of recordings of class sessions

Recordings of Zoom sessions by students for this class are not permitted except in cases of an approved accommodation from the Office of Disability Resources (DRS). The instructor may record one or more Zoom sessions for this course for the purposes of pedagogical review, but will notify students of this prior to such recording. In the case of an approved accommodation from the Office of DRS, students may only use class recordings for their personal educational use. Students are not permitted to copy, publish, or redistribute audio or video recordings of any portion of the class session to individuals who are not students in the course or academic program without the express permission of the faculty member and of any students who are recorded. Distribution without permission may be a violation of educational privacy law, known as [FERPA \(Links to an external site.\)](#) as well as certain copyright laws. Any recordings made by the instructor or university of this course are the property of Temple University.

### Expectations for Class Conduct

In order to maintain a safe and focused learning environment, we must all comply with the four public health pillars, wearing face coverings, maintaining physical distancing, washing our hands, and monitoring our health. It is also important to foster a respectful and productive learning environment that includes all students in our diverse community of learners. Our differences, some of which are outlined in the [University's nondiscrimination \(Links to an external site.\) statement \(Links to an external site.\)](#), will add richness to this learning experience. Therefore, all opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse.

Please treat your classmates and instructor with respect in all communication, class activities, and meetings. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual. Please consider that sarcasm, humor and slang can be misconstrued in online interactions and generate unintended disruptions. Profanity should be avoided as should the use of all capital letters when composing responses in discussion threads, which can be construed as “shouting” online. Remember to be careful with your own and others’ privacy. In general, have your behavior mirror how you would like to be treated by others.

### Course Minimum Grade

Although D- is a passing grade, a minimum grade of C- is required in many programs, and in courses required by the major.

For more information, please see [Temple University's Academic Policies on Grades and Grading.](#)

### Incomplete

A student will be eligible for a grade of “Incomplete” only if the student: 1) has completed at least 51% of the work at a passing level, 2) is unable to complete the work for a serious reason beyond their control, and 3) files a signed agreement with the instructor outlining the work to be completed and the time frame in which that work will be completed. The student is responsible for initiating this process and all incomplete forms must be sent to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs prior to the start of study days in that semester.

Please refer to the following for further details: [Temple University's Incomplete Policy.](#) (Policy #02.10.13).

### Withdrawal from the Course

If a student wishes to withdraw from a course, it is the student's responsibility to meet the deadline for the last day to withdraw from the current semester.

See [Temple University's Academic Calendar](#) for withdrawing deadlines and consult the [University policy on withdrawals](#) (Policy # 02.10.14).

### Statement of Academic Rights and Responsibilities

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The University has a policy on [Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities](#) (Policy #03.70.02).

### Academic Honesty

According to the University Student Code of Conduct, students must not commit, attempt to commit, aid, encourage, facilitate, or solicit the commission of academic dishonesty and impropriety including plagiarism, academic cheating, and selling lecture notes or other information provided by an instructor without the instructor's authorization. Violations may result in failing the assignment and/or failing the course, and/or other sanctions as enumerated in the [University Code of Conduct](#).

### Netiquette

Your instructor and fellow students wish to foster a safe online learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual.

Our differences, some of which are outlined in the [University's nondiscrimination statement](#), will add richness to this learning experience. Please consider that sarcasm and humor can be misconstrued in online interactions and generate unintended disruptions. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course atmosphere.

### Disability Disclosure Statement

COVID-19 may result in a need for new or additional accommodations. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should contact [Disability Resources and Services \(Links to an external site.\)](#) (DRS), Ritter Annex 100, (215) 204-1280 or 215-204-1786 (TTY) or [drs@temple.edu](mailto:drs@temple.edu), to make arrangements. Students requesting accommodations should meet with the instructor as soon as possible after the start of classes to discuss their needs and to provide documentation from DRS. Accommodations are not retroactive.

Additional information regarding accessibility for all technologies used in this course is provided below:

- [Canvas](#)
- [Zoom](#)
- [VoiceThread \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [ProctorU \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Proctorio \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [GoogleDrive](#)

## Technical Support

For a listing of technical support services available to Temple University students, [see the information linked here](#)

## Academic Support Services

Temple University provides a variety of services to support you throughout your studies. Please take a moment to view these [by visiting the page outlining resources that is linked here](#)

## Continuity of Instruction in Event of Emergency

Students are to register for the TUAAlert System to be made aware of University closures due to weather or other emergency situations and follow all additional university-wide emergency instruction. Students can register for this system on the [Campus Safety Services website \(Links to an external site.\)](#). Students registered for the class will be alerted to any alternate testing procedures and submission of assignment requirements from the instructor via email. Please note that online classes are generally not affected by campus closures.

## Privacy Policy

- [Temple University](#)
- [Canvas Instructure](#)
- [Zoom](#)

## Course Schedule

Key Dates:

See modules for reading assignment due dates.

Assignment 1: 2/12 by 7:00pm

Assignment 2: 3/5 by 7:00pm

Assignment 3: 3/19 by 7:00pm

Assignment 4: 4/29 by 7:00pm

VoiceThread Presentation 1: Check schedule posted under "People" tab on Canvas

VoiceThread Presentation 2: Check schedule posted under "People" tab on Canvas

"A" Quizzes: Posted in course modules

"B" Quizzes: Posted in course modules

Worksheets: Posted in course modules

Week	Date	Synchronous/Asynchronous	Readings CR=The Craft of Research
<b>Week 1</b>	1/19	Synchronous	Introduction, no reading assignment.
	1/21	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CR, chapter 1</li> <li>• Worksheet 1 B</li> </ul>
<b>Week 2</b>	1/26	Synchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haslanger, "Gender and Race"</li> <li>• 2020 Census</li> <li>• <a href="#">Quiz 2 A</a></li> </ul>
	1/28	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CR, chapter 2</li> <li>• Worksheet 2 B</li> <li>• <a href="#">Quiz 2 B</a></li> </ul>
<b>Week 3</b>	2/2	Synchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Video: Frederick Douglass' Descendants Deliver his 'Fourth of July' Speech</a></li> <li>• Mills, "Whose Fourth of July: Frederick Douglass and 'Original Intent'"</li> <li>• Du Bois, "Of our Spiritual Strivings"</li> <li>• <a href="#">Quiz 3 A</a></li> </ul>
	2/4	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CR, chapter 3</li> <li>• Worksheet 3 B</li> <li>• <a href="#">Quiz 3 B</a></li> </ul>
<b>Week 4</b>	2/9	Synchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harris, Barbershops, Bibles, and BET, chapters 1 and 2</li> <li>• <a href="#">Quiz 4 A</a></li> </ul>
	2/11	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CR, chapter 4</li> <li>• Worksheet 4 B</li> </ul>
	2/12	Assignment 1 Due	
<b>Week 5</b>	2/16	Synchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shelby, We Who Are Dark, ch. 1</li> <li>• <a href="#">Video: Lorde, "There is</a></li> </ul>

			<p>No Hierarchy of Oppression”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz 5 A</li> </ul>
	2/18	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CR, chapter 5</li> <li>• Worksheet 5 B</li> <li>• Quiz 5 B</li> </ul>
<b>Week 6</b>	2/23	Wellness Day—No Assignments and No Class Meeting!	
	2/25	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CR, chapter 6</li> <li>• Worksheet 6</li> <li>• Quiz 6 B</li> </ul>
<b>Week 7</b>	3/2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• McKinley, The African Look Book</li> <li>• Quiz 7 A</li> </ul>
	3/4	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CR, chapter 7</li> <li>• Worksheet 7 B</li> </ul>
	3/5	Assignment 2 Due	
<b>Week 8</b>	3/9	Synchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rigeuer, The Loneliness of the Black Republican, Intro and Ch. 1</li> <li>• Watson, “Guess What Came to American Politics?”</li> <li>• Additional reading TBD</li> <li>• Quiz 8 A</li> </ul>
	3/11	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CR, chapter 15</li> <li>• Worksheet 8</li> <li>• Quiz 8 B</li> </ul>
<b>Week 9</b>	3/16	Synchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video: Crenshaw’s Ted Talk on #SayHerName</li> <li>• Nash, Black Feminism Reimagined, Intro and Ch.5</li> <li>• Quiz 9 A</li> </ul>
	3/18	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD</li> <li>• Worksheet 9 B</li> </ul>

	3/19	Assignment 3 Due (3/19)	
<b>Week 10</b>	3/23	Synchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kai Green, TBD</li> <li>• Additional reading TBD</li> <li>• <a href="#">Quiz 10 B</a></li> </ul>
	3/25	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD</li> </ul>
<b>Week 11</b>	3/30	Synchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Ted Talk: Patrice Cullors, Alicia Garza and Opal Tometi</a></li> <li>• Nunnally, “(Re)Defining the black body in the era of BLM”</li> <li>• Cullors, When They Call You a Terrorist (selected chapters)</li> </ul>
	4/1	Asynchronous	View+ Comment on Research Question Presentations
<b>Week 12</b>	4/6	Synchronous	Discussion of Research Question Presentations
	4/8	Asynchronous	View+ Comment on Research Question Presentations
<b>Week 13</b>	4/13	Synchronous	Discussion of Research Question Presentations
	4/15	Asynchronous	View+ Comment on Research Question Presentations
<b>Week 14</b>	4/20	Synchronous	Discussion of Research Question Presentations
	4/22	Asynchronous	Last Day Worksheet 10
	4/29	Assignment 4 Due	