

The New Deal and American Politics

GOVT 271

Fall 2016

MWF, 11:00-11:50

Kirby Hall of Civil Rights 003

Instructor: Steven White

Office: Kirby Hall of Civil Rights 110

Office Hours: Monday 3-4, Wednesday 3-4, and by appointment

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Course Description

The New Deal transformed American politics, setting the framework for modern day debates about the role of the federal government in American society. This course examines the New Deal and the years immediately following it (roughly 1933-1953) from a range of historical and theoretical perspectives, as well as original source materials. Among other topics, we will consider the crisis of the Great Depression; the international context of fascism, Nazism, and Communism; the development of major public policies like Social Security; the role of labor unions and business; the role of southern Democrats in “limiting liberalism,” especially when it seemed to involve issues of race; and the Second World War. We will also examine how the New Deal set into motion important shifts in party politics that would define the remainder of the twentieth century.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

Describe the New Deal in terms of both its historical development and lasting legacies

Understand how factors related to race and class shaped the development of social policy in America

Assess claims about political outcomes using appropriate forms of evidence

Assessment Criteria

This is a writing-intensive [W] course. Students are required to complete an original research project, which includes turning in a research proposal, partial draft, and a final paper. Students are also required to write an analytical book review and a chapter critique based on the course readings. There are no in-class exams.

The final grade will be a weighted average of the following:

- 10%: Attendance and class participation
- 10%: Weekly reflective/analytical Moodle posts (or emails)
- 20%: Analytical book review of *Fear Itself* (5-7 pages)
- 10%: Focused critique of one chapter from *Racial Realignment* (3-5 pages)
- 5%: Research proposal (2-3 pages)
- 10%: Partial draft of research paper (3-5 pages)
- 30%: Final draft of research paper (15-20 pages)
- 5%: Presentation based on final paper

This course requires you to write an original 15-20 page research paper, which constitutes 30 percent of your final grade. The paper is due December 16 via email.

A partial draft (the introduction and preview of the overall framework) is due November 30. This draft should include 3-5 pages of writing for the final paper, including a thesis statement and some engagement with your sources. This will allow me to give you feedback before the final version.

A research proposal for the final paper (with annotated bibliography) will constitute another 5 percent of your grade. The proposal is due November 7 at the beginning of class.

An in-class presentation of your findings will constitute another 5 percent.

There are two other pieces of writing: a 5-7 page analytical book review of *Fear Itself*, due October 14; and a 3-5 page focused critique of a chapter of your choosing from *Racial Realignment*, due November 18.

Another 10 percent of your grade comes from a series of weekly reflective/analytical Moodle posts (or emails, I you prefer). Starting Week 3, these will be due **the night before class** via email so they can help inform our discussions the next day (since this class meets MWF, you can choose each week whether to submit your email Sunday night, Tuesday night, or Thursday night). You should not merely summarize the readings. The goal of these posts is to raise topics or questions for discussion the next day. The best posts will be the ones that help us think about the topics in new and interesting ways.

Finally, attendance and class participation will account for 10 percent of your grade. I encourage you to come to class with questions about the readings and ideas for discussion. I am genuinely interested in hearing your thoughts on the material! For those who feel uncomfortable or nervous speaking up in class, you will not be penalized for shyness and I encourage you to communicate your thoughts and questions on the readings to me via email and in office hours.

Books

This course requires you to purchase (or read in the library reserves) the following books:

Ira Katznelson, *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time*, (New York: Liveright, 2014)

Eric Rauchway, *The Great Depression and the New Deal: A Very Short Introduction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008)

Eric Schickler, *Racial Realignment: The Transformation of American Liberalism, 1932–1965*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016)

All other readings will be available on Moodle.

Academic Integrity

This class is focused on the development of writing skills. Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated.

Further information about the academic code at Lafayette can be found at:

<https://facultyadvising.lafayette.edu/policies/academic-integrity/>

Accommodations

Please get in touch with me within the first two weeks of the class if you need additional accommodations.

More information can be found online at: <http://attic.lafayette.edu/disability-services/>

Federal Credit Hour Compliance Statement

The student work in this course is in full compliance with the federal definition of a four credit hour course. Please see the Registrar's Office web site (<http://registrar.lafayette.edu/additional-resources/cep-course-proposal/>) for the full policy and practice statement.

Schedule

August 29: Introduction
Read the syllabus

August 31: No class

September 2: No class

September 5: Background/“Refresher”
Rauchway, 8-37

September 7: Background/“Refresher”
Rauchway, 38-55

September 9: Background/“Refresher”
Rauchway, 56-86

September 12: Background/“Refresher”
Rauchway, 87-104

September 14: Background/“Refresher”
Rauchway, 105-31

September 16: *Fear Itself*: Introduction
Katznelson, 3-28

September 19: *Fear Itself*: Part I
Katznelson, 29-57

September 21: *Fear Itself*: Part I
Katznelson, 58-95

September 23: *Fear Itself*: Part I
Katznelson, 96-129

September 26: *Fear Itself*: Part II
Katznelson, 133-155

September 28: *Fear Itself*: Part II
Katznelson, 156-194

September 30: *Fear Itself*: Part II
Katznelson, 195-222

October 3: *Fear Itself*: Part III
Katznelson, 227-275

October 5: *Fear Itself*: Part III
Katznelson, 276-316

October 7: *Fear Itself*: Part III
Katznelson, 317-363

October 10: No class (fall break)

October 12: Gender and the New Deal
Selections from Suzanne Mettler, *Dividing Citizens: Gender and Federalism in New Deal Public Policy*

October 14: *Racial Realignment*: Introduction
Schickler, 1-26

Katznelson book review due

October 17: *Racial Realignment*:
Schickler, 27-44

October 19: *Racial Realignment*:
Schickler, 45-80

October 21: *Racial Realignment*:
Schickler, 81-97

October 24: *Racial Realignment*:
Schickler, 101-128

October 26: *Racial Realignment:*
Schickler, 129-149

October 28: *Racial Realignment:*
Schickler, 150-175

October 31: *Racial Realignment:*
Schickler, 176-207

November 2: *Racial Realignment:*
Schickler, 211-236

November 4: Discussion of Research Papers

November 7: Election Discussion
Research proposals due

November 9: Election Discussion

November 11: *Racial Realignment:*
Schickler, 237-270

November 14: *Racial Realignment:*
Schickler, 271-286

November 16: Individual Meetings

November 18: Individual Meetings
Schickler chapter critique due

November 21: Individual Meetings

November 23: No class (Thanksgiving break)

November 25: No class (Thanksgiving break)

November 28: Presentations

November 30: Presentations
Draft of first 5 pages due

December 2: Presentations

December 5: Presentations

December 7: Presentations

December 9: Presentations

Research papers due December 16 (via email)