

POLS 405.090 Capstone Seminar
Discrimination: Theory, Law and Practice
Claire P. Curtis
Office: 114 Wentworth, #106
Office Hours: M/W 9-9:45, 11:15-12:45 or by appointment
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This capstone takes up the issue of discrimination in multiple contexts and in diverse ways. With discrimination understood theoretically, legally and in practice as our starting point we will examine the interrelated issues of rights, justice and equality in the United States and internationally. We will look specifically at discrimination based on gender and race, the current legal understanding of anti-discrimination law, the current impact of class on children's upbringing and the idea of universal human rights. Other issues will be examined based on student choice. The course is structured around intensive discussion of particular readings and issues. Because the class only meets once a week the readings may seem long. Preparation for class is essential and you are asked to hand in response papers every week and a more in depth analysis of the week's reading twice during the semester (explained further below). Each student will choose a particular area of discrimination for research throughout the semester. This project will result in a research paper at the end of the semester.

Required Books:

Pervasive Prejudice, Ian Ayres
Prejudicial Appearances: The Logic of American Antidiscrimination Law, Ed. Robert Post
Unequal Childhoods, Annette Lareau,
Universal Human Rights, Jack Donnelly (second edition)
Are Women Human? Catharine MacKinnon

Course requirements:

Research Paper		40%
initial proposal	(10pts)	
extended proposal	(20pts)	
annotated bibliography	(20pts)	
rough draft	(20pts)	
presentation	(30pts)	
final draft	(100pts)	
Class participation plus response papers		20%
Exam		20%
Normative/Empirical discussion papers		10% each (2)

Schedule of Readings

1/9 Introduction

- 1/16 “Prejudicial Appearances” Robert Post, pp. 1-53 in *Prejudicial Appearances*, “Untitled Discrimination,” pp. 1-15 in *Pervasive Prejudice*, “The Concept of human rights” Jack Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights* and the following cases: *Brown v. Board of Education* (347 U.S. 483 **and** 349 U.S. 294), *Van Orden v. Perry* (545 U.S. 677)
- 1/23 “Stereotypes and the Shaping of Identity” K. Anthony Appiah and “Appearances Aside” Judith Butler, from *Prejudicial Appearances* and *Unequal Childhoods* pp. 1-160
- 1/30 *Unequal Childhoods* pp. 163-278
- 2/6 “Cover Blindness” Thomas Grey in *Prejudicial Appearances* and *Pervasive Prejudice*, Ayres pp. 19-162
- 2/13 “Discrimination in the Eyes of the Law” Reva B. Siegel, in *Prejudicial Appearances* and *Pervasive Prejudice*, Ayres, pp. 165-311
- 2/20 TBA
- 2/22 Political Science Convocation**
James Kunstler, author of *Geography of Nowhere*
7pm Physician’s Auditorium
- 2/27 TBA
- Spring Break**
- 3/13 Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights*, pp. 22-123
- 3/20 MacKinnon, *Are Women Human?* pp. 1-67
- 3/27 MacKinnon, pp 71-138, 237- 278 and Donnelly, pp. 185-260
- 4/3 Presentations
- 4/10 Presentations
- 4/17 Presentations

Research Papers:

Each student will produce a long (20-25 page) research paper on an area of discrimination (either domestic or international) of his or her choosing. These papers are broken into the following parts. Each of these parts will be graded on their own scale (noted parenthetically) and the final grade will combine all of the points accumulated. Final papers should focus on three kinds of questions: First, what is the form of discrimination at hand and how does it manifest itself, second what are the key studies, cases and/or incidents that have shaped people's understanding of this form of discrimination; finally what kinds of proposals would you put forward to combat this discrimination.

1) **Initial proposal:** general indication of kind of discrimination you want to analyze, what initial questions you have (10 pts)

Due: 1/30

2) **Annotated Bibliography:** presentation of at least ten secondary sources pertinent to your topic. Include full citation of work and a brief description of the author's main argument and how you plan to use it. (20 pts)

Due: 2/20

3) **Expanded proposal:** Presentation of your main thesis, the questions you plan to answer and the plan you have for framing the paper (1-2 pages) (20 pts)

Due: 3/20

4) **First draft:** Must be at least 10-15 pages and include an outline of any unfinished sections. Must hand in a full bibliography with first draft and must use proper citation format in first draft. (20 pts)

Due: 4/3

5) **Presentation and discussion:** 10-12 minute presentation of your paper's main argument. Choice of a reading (10-15 pages) for other students (must be given to me one week before presentation for copying and distribution). Questions that you will have for students to facilitate discussion on your paper. These presentations can be done in tandem with other students if you are working on either the same or similar incidents. (30 pts)

6) **Final Draft (100pts)**

Due: Noon on May 1

Response papers

Each week students will e-mail a short response to some portion of that day's reading. The response should include questions for discussion and you should be prepared to talk about your response in class. These need to be e-mailed to me by 4pm on the day of class.

Normative/Empirical discussion papers

Students will write two brief analyses stemming from an issue present in that day's reading. You will write one analysis from an empirical perspective, drawing on data that you find, present and relate to the reading. The second paper will be based on a normative analysis you find on the reading for that day. Each of these papers will be no more than 3 pages long. There will be a sign up sheet the first day of class and you will choose the two dates for the papers. You will be expected to discuss your findings in class.

Paper Guidelines

- 1) All papers must be typed, double-spaced and stapled
- 2) All papers must be handed in hard copy, no papers sent via e-mail will be accepted
- 3) All citations must be in accordance with the departmental referencing guide:
<http://polisci.cofc.edu/referenceguide.html>
- 4) Extensions must be approved 24 hours before the paper is due
- 5) Students must retain a copy of the paper, either on disk or in hard copy
- 6) Plagiarism will be prosecuted by the honor board and **students who plagiarize will fail this class**

Papers that do not meet these guidelines will not be accepted

Normative/Empirical discussion paper sign up sheet. Sign up twice and designate E for empirical or N for normative next to your name

1/16: **2/21**

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