Syllabus: PPAI 1701E, CRN 15985 **Research Seminar (Brown)**
Local Political Cultures, New Electronic Practices and 2008 National Elections.

Course Description and Rationale. This course is being taught at two sites simultaneously: Taubman Center for Public Policy and Tougaloo College Center for Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility. At Brown, the course is a research seminar under Prof. Geri Augusto-- one which student input will help shape. At Tougaloo, the course is being taught by Profs. Stephen Rozman and James Stewart. Students taking the course at Brown are expected to work on their own, meeting for discussion three-four times a month, at a time and place to be mutually determined. The class will also meet informally with the instructor twice a month, at 101 Thayer Street. At Brown, the course is open to juniors and seniors in Public Policy. Students from other departments and centers will be welcome, as space permits. Due to its experimental nature, class enrolment at Brown will be limited to 8 students.

Students in the course will closely follow the election campaigns of the candidates and interrogate their positions and respective party platforms, among other ways, against the backdrop of the political cultures of Mississippi and Rhode Island, respectively. In the dialogue between Tougaloo and Brown students, Tougaloo students will gain greater understanding of Rhode Island political culture, and Brown students will gain greater understanding of Mississippi political culture. Students will, through readings and dialogue, also sharpen their capacity for thinking critically and reflectively about the new electronic practices themselves, and how their use is changing the public sphere, and the way we think about all things political.

Cross-Campus Cyber-Conversation. Central to the course is students' engagement in a semester-long, cross-campus Brown-Tougaloo dialogue on local/regional political cultures and new electronic practices around voting and campaigning. These will take place in several modalities. The main one will be the dedicated MyCourses page at http://mycourses.brown.edu/webct . This is where most course readings will be accessible, either via Brown's Online Course Reserves Access system (OCRA) or as a direct web link. This is also where three communication modes have been set up for class use (blog, threaded discussion, and journal for individual student reflections in real-time). At the beginning of the course, students on both campuses will discuss "netetiquette" and suggest norms for the cross-campus dialogue, which will then be adopted by mutual agreement. Another modality for cross-campus dialogue, i.e. exchange of audio and video files, will be the iTunes-University environment being set up for this class. (This is being done by Brown's Instructional Technology Group.) All three professors may, from time to time, make available online, via MyCourses, lecture notes or class presentation slides on specific topics or themes.

There will be as well two scheduled video-conferences for all members of both classes— one before the Presidential Election, and one afterwards. Students will take responsibility for organizing the content of these conversations, with general guidelines from the professors. Since only the MyCourses page communications will be accessible by the

professors, the **minimum course requirements for online participation are expected to occur in that space**. Topics for discussion and dialogue will be formulated by the professors and students, with students at Brown and Tougaloo alternating responsibility for putting forward a threaded topic each week. But students are very much encouraged to initiate more conversation and exchange of ideas and impressions, by mutual agreement, utilizing any other modalities, as long as the class norms on dialogue (see above) are adhered to. The journal option on the MyCourses page may be used to store individual reflections while the course is in progress; only the professor and each individual student will have access to what s/he writes in it.

Assigned Readings. Assigned interdisciplinary course readings will inform the electronic communications between the two groups of students, helping them explore the intersection of local political cultures, political action, public policy issues, civic engagement, new practices of cyberpolitics (blogging, viral networking, etc.), and the 2008 presidential election. By reading about political culture and social history at two different localities, students will also explore areas of respective convergence and divergence. Students on both campuses will read the assigned readings in the syllabus. Additional readings may be suggested by the professor(s), for students wishing to dig deeper into the topics. *At Brown, students may also customize their own reading program with additional, or alternative, readings, in consultation with Prof. Augusto.* Assigned readings are articles and books, most of which will be available online, via the MyCourses page and its link to OCRA. Some digitized materials/sites are also assigned.

The PPAI 1970 Library Resource Page will offer as well a wide array of readings and sites on several of the class topics. **This does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of the authors' ideas or of the sites.** Students are expected to select, utilize and interrogate these resources with a critical eye—something we wish to encourage with respect to *all* internet and digital resources. For some suggestions on how to do this, see "Research and the Internet – What to Look For?" at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/pp/Internet.ppt .

To access the Library Resources Page:
1) Go to http://dl.lib.brown.edu/gateway/program.php?programid=520&task=internet.
2) Click on "Research".
3) Next, click on "Resources by Course".
4) Then click on "Instructors" and choose Augusto, Geri.
5) From the left-hand side of the page, click on "Internet Resources".

References to be purchased. There is only one: John Armitage and Joanne Roberts, *Living with cyberspace: technology and society in the 21st century*. New York: Continuum, 2002. This book will also be on reserve in the library.

Other Class Activities. A reciprocal weekend visit to the other campus will take place, if possible. Students will design and administer a small survey on local use of new electronic practices as a means of acquiring information about and participating in the presidential campaign and elections. The survey will be carried out at one Rhode Island

and one Mississippi site, either on campus or in a mutually agreed-upon local institution or neighborhood.

Course Objectives:
- To explore in an innovative, interdisciplinary way the characteristics and import of new electronic technologies and practices on U.S. politics, political action and civic engagement.
- To enhance students' capacity for comparative political and public policy analysis.
- To combine study of theory and practice in real-time, with a view to better equipping students to make policy decisions about democratization and new technologies.
- To introduce alternative ways of engaging with the political process.
- To create new knowledge about how and why the electorate, particularly but not only younger voters, engage (or fail to engage) in the political process and in social activism.
- To pilot the use of new technologies in collaborative teaching and learning across multiple sites.
- To further foster two-way, equitable knowledge relations between Brown University and Tougaloo College, building on four decades of collaboration and interaction.

There is one further goal: for students to be as creative as possible in constructing the dialogue, and to enjoy it!

Graded requirements:
- Effective, respectful participation in the on-campus discussions with classmates and the professor, and especially in cross-campus dialogue, including required *weekly participation in at least one threaded topic discussion* (40%);
- An individual reflection paper (40%); and
- A group report on contemporary local political culture, including use of electronic practices to create and exchange information about the presidential election, and incorporation of the small local survey (20%). Brown students will write their group report(s) on political culture and new electronic practices in Providence and on the Brown campus; Tougaloo students will do the same with respect to Tougaloo/Jackson and the Tougaloo campus.

Prof. Augusto will grade the Brown students in this course; Profs. Rozman and Stewart will grade the Tougaloo students. Further guidelines on the individual reflection paper and on the group report will be provided in due time.

Course Overview:

Month 1 – End-August/September. Themes**:** The Concept of Political Culture*,* Local Political Cultures & Party Conventions. Nominations for President and Vice-President at party national conventions.
Month 2 – **October**. Themes: Local Political Cultures (continued). Cyberpolitics & Cyberadvocacy. 1st scheduled video conference between the two sites; class design of survey.
Month 3 – November. Themes: Digitality/Sociality. Administration of survey; national elections for President and Vice-President take place. Group report(s) due.
Month 4 – December. Themes: Divergence & Convergence in Political Cultures and New Electronic Practices and The Meanings of the 2008 Election. 2nd scheduled video conference between the two sites. Individual reflection papers due.

Reading/Viewing Assignments, Themes and Topics

Note: Weekly topics for discussion and dialogue will be formulated by the professor(s) and students.

I. End-August/September Themes: *The Concept of Political Culture***,** *Local Political Cultures* and the *Party Conventions*

Assigned Readings/Digitized Materials

Formisano, Ronald. (2001). The Concept of Political Culture. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, XXXI:3 (Winter), 393-426. [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses.**]

Erikson, Robert and McIver, John. (1987). State Political Culture and Public Opinion. *American Political Science Review*, 81(3): 797-814. [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses.**]

Other readings, digitized materials and sites on Political Culture are accessible from the Brown Library Resources page for the course, at
http://dl.lib.brown.edu/gateway/program.php?programid=520&task=internet. **Brown students should select some of these sites/sources from the list to read or "visit".**

***

MacKay, Scott. (2003). Rhode Island, in John Leonard, *These United States: original essays by leading American writers on their state within the Union*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press/Nation Books. (8 pages). [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses.**]

West, Darrell M. (1992). Chapt. 15, Stalled Realignment: Party Change in Rhode Island, in Maureen Moakley (Ed.), *Party realignment and state politics*. Columbus : Ohio State University Press. (13 pages). **Available online through OCRA/MyCourses link.**

Nash, Jere and Taggart, Andy. (2006). *Mississippi Politics: The Struggle for Power 1976-2006.* University Press of Mississippi. Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 6. [Specific pages will be suggested for Brown students; copy of book in Rockefeller Library.]

<center>***</center>

Crespino, Joseph, (2007). *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 8 & Conclusion. [Specific pages will be suggested for Brown students; copy of book in Rockefeller Library.]

Finck, John. (1984). The Hmong resettlement study, site report, Providence, Rhode Island. Prepared for the Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. (6 pages). [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses link.]**

<center>***</center>

Katagiri, Yasuhiro. (2001). *The Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission.* University Press of Mississippi. [Specific pages will be designated for Brown students; copy of book in Rockefeller Library.]

Executive orders issued by the Governor of Rhode Island: The 2008 Illegal Immigration Control Order, at http://www.governor.ri.gov/executiveorders/.

II. October Themes: *Local Political Cultures (cont.)* and *Cyberpolitics & Cyberadvocacy*

Assigned Readings/Digitized Materials

Feig, Douglas G. (2004). Race, Symbolic Politics and the Mississippi Flag Vote. Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, New Orleans. Unpublished paper. [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses link.]**

Herndon, Ruth Wallis. (2002). Chapt. 6, Women as symbols of disorder in early Rhode Island, in Tamara L. Hunt and Micheline R. Lessard (Eds.), *Women and the colonial gaze*. New York : New York University Press.(11 pages). [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses link.]**

<center>***</center>

Herndon, Ruth W. and Sekatau, Ella W. (1997). The Right to a Name: The Narragansett People and Rhode Island Officials in the Revolutionary Era. *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 44, No. 3, (Summer, 1997), pp. 433-462. http://www.jstor.org/stable/483031 [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses link.]**

Delaughter, Bobby. (2001). *Never too Late: A Prosecutor's Story of Justice in the Medgar Evers Case.* New York: Simon & Schuster. [specific pages will be designated for Brown students].

<div align="center">***</div>

Agre, Philip. (2002). Real Time Politics: The Internet and the Political Process. *The Information Society* 18(5): 311-331. [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses link.**] Also at http://polaris.gseis.ucla.edu/pagre/real-time.html

Chapters in Armitage & Roberts (2005):
- Dutton, William & Lin, Wan-Ying. "E-Democracy: A Case Study of Web-Orchestrated Cyberadvocacy," pp. 98-108.
- Sassen, Saskia. "Mediating Practices: Women With/in Cyberspace,: pp. 109-119.
- Jordan, Tim. "Technopower and its Cyberfutures," pp. 120-128.

Other readings and digitized materials on cyber-politics and cyber-advocacy are accessible from the Brown Library Resources page for the course, at http://dl.lib.brown.edu/gateway/program.php?programid=520&task=internet.

Reading/notes on designing a simple survey [TBA]. Brown students will meet with the Instructor to discuss this topic.

Brown University Slavery and Justice Committee. http://www.brown.edu/Research/Slavery_Justice/ Students should explore the site creatively and critically.

Documentary of the Brown University-Pembroke College 1968 walk out led by African American women. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZmEY4ZMpGI. Students should watch this short video clip.

Other resources on Brown political culture and activism are accessible from the Brown Library Resources page at http://dl.lib.brown.edu/gateway/program.php?programid=520&task=internet.

Readings/Digitized Materials on Tougaloo Political Culture & Social History [TBA]

Some Suggested Readings/Digitized Materials
- Claire Andrade-Watkins. (Director). (2006). "Some kind of funny Porto Rican": Video recording, SPIA Media Productions. (83 min.). [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses link.**]
- West, Darrell. (2005). *Digital Government: Technology and Public Sector Performance*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Assignment: Proposed survey design due on October 17. Survey administered at any time between October 20-November 3.

III. November Themes: *Digitality/Sociality* and *Election Results*

Assigned Readings/Digitized Materials

Chapters in Armitage & Roberts (2005):
- Lynn, David. "Cyberspace: Beyond the Information Society?" pp. 21-33.
- Webster, Frank. "Cybernetic Life: Limits to Choice," pp. 34-42.
- Armitage, John & Roberts, Joanne. "Chronotopia," pp. 43-54.

Assignments: 1) Exchange of images/visual/audio materials regarding Election Day.
 2) Compilation of survey results and Group Report(s) on Local Political Culture due on November 17. Guidelines for writing the report will be distributed in advance.

Some Suggested Readings

- Illia, Laura. (2007). "Passage to cyberactivism". [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses link.**]
- Anonymous. (2007). "The politics of web space". [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses link.**]
- Boyd, Danah. 2007. "Viewing American class divisions through Facebook and MySpace ." *Apophenia Blog Essay.* June 24 . http://www.danah.org/papers/essays/ClassDivisions.html
- Westling, Mike. (2007). Expanding the Public Sphere: The Impact of Facebook on Political Communication. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses link.**]
- Social Networks in Political Campaigns: Facebook and the 2006 Midterm Elections. [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses link.**]
- Buchstein, Hubertus. (1997). Bytes That Bite: The Internet and Deliberative Democracy. *Journal of Critical & Democratic Theory*, October, 4(2): 248-264. [**Available online through OCRA/MyCourses link.**] Also at http://www.ri.gov/facts/index.php?subcategory=&linkgroup=73
- Berger, John, Sven Blomberg, Chris Fox, Michael Dibb, and Richard Hollis. (1972). *Ways of Seeing*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) & Penguin.
- Barthes, Roland. (1977). *Image Music Text*. Translated by Stephen Heath. New York: Hill & Wang.
- Dodge, Martin, and Rob Kitchin. (2001). *Mapping Cyberspace*. London: Routledge.
- Castells, Manuell, Ed. (2004). *The Network Society: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

Other readings and digitized materials on this topic are accessible from the Brown Library Resources page for the course, at http://dl.lib.brown.edu/gateway/program.php?programid=520&task=internet

---

IV. December Themes: *Divergence & Convergence in Political Cultures and New Electronic Practices* and *The Meanings of the 2008 Election*

No new assigned readings. Students at both sites should read each others' Group Reports on Local Political Culture. Brown students should meet with Prof. Augusto regarding any additional or alternative readings they may have decided to explore.

Final Assignment: Individual Reflection Papers due on December 16 (Brown students). Guidelines for writing the paper will be distributed in advance.