GU POLITICS FELLOW EUGENE SCOTT
DISCUSSION GROUP OUTLINE

IDENTITY POLITICS IN THE AGE OF TRUMP

Discussion Group Synopsis

We will recognize that different policies impact different people differently. And we will discuss how various identity groups are impacted by, benefit from or may be disadvantaged by policies put forward by the Trump Administration and the Congress that supports his presidency. The ultimate goal will be to unpack the idea that everyone benefits equally and/or in the same way from a policy.

Week 1 - What IS identity politics?
We will read a few writings explaining identity politics, examining criticism and praise of the concept and hopefully come up with a working definition for ourselves to use throughout the semester. Also for the sake of discussion, we will discuss the multiple identity groups to which we belong, which groups we believe shape our worldviews most and the advantages and challenges of that.

Week 2 - The Fight for Millennials
Recent polling said millennials trust neither Republicans nor Democrats. We can look at the reasons why and the issues that are of most importance to millennials and what the leading parties have done to address them – specifically pertaining to millennials.

Week 3 - Forgotten Identities
When people think of identity politics, they often focus on a few very prominent groups like black Americans, women and gay Americans, but so many other groups have been left out of the conversation. We’d take a look at forgotten identities like Native Americans, people with disabilities, seniors and religious minorities and discuss the impact of having only a handful of identity groups dominating the political conversation and what are the ramifications of that.

Week 4 - Post-racial America: Myth or Reality
A discussion on race in politics after the end of the Obama Administration. Students will examine if society ever was actually post-racial and if not, how that idea came about; is being post-racial ever possible and if so how, and the presence of white identity in the Trump administration.
**Week 5 - Beyond 2016: Gender and the Future of America**
The 2016 outcome saw the largest divide based on gender in decades when it came to who voters chose. Trump won the male vote and Clinton won the woman vote. The topic of gender surfaces in ongoing conversations about sexual harassment, the economy, healthcare and more.

We will read and discuss how despite the progress many women have made in multiple areas of society, the gender divide pertaining to worldview continues among the electorate and doesn’t show any signs of closing before the next election.

**Week 6 - The Media’s Role in Identity Politics**
A discussion on the role columnists play in helping Americans understand political issues and their impact on various groups. We’ll have an honest conversation examining media echo chambers, the problems with what the media does and how well they do it and why it matters.

**Week 7 – The Problem of Identity Politics**
There are Americans on the Right and the Left that believe too much focus on identity politics has divided – opposed to united – Americans. Focusing on what distinguishes us keeps us from coming together to find solutions to the issues impacting Americans most. We will read some arguments criticizing identity politics and unpack them to see if they are fair or valid, and why or why not.

**Week 8 - Looking forward: Identity and the 2018 Midterms**
The midterms will be the first national election since Americans sent Trump to the White House. What impact could – or even should – identity have on the policy ideas and conversations that arise as Americans process what happened in 2016. What are the possible drawbacks and benefits of this. What can various parties and candidates do to acknowledge identity and address the real issues related to the topic without exploiting groups.