(1) Despite the significant potential of a Black-Latino political coalition there is minimal quantitative research on the similarities and differences between Black and Latino national political opinion. The bulk of the literature compares Black-White or Latino-White political ideologies or presents case studies on instances of group political conflict (Jackson, Gerber, Cain 1994; Claasen 2004; Meier, McCalin, Wrinkle 2004). The previous assertions of group commonality, cited as 'given' in much the relevant literature, are generalizations mainly based on demographic similarities rather than rigorous quantitative analysis. There must be significant ideological overlap for any local or national coalitions to succeed. Regardless of shared demographic variables, without an ideological overlap there is no reason for the two groups to pool resources and political voices because there would be no common goals to work towards. My thesis will first analyze whether there is a common political ideology. I will additionally analyze the magnitude of the shared opinions as well as the distinctiveness from white political opinion as a means to understand the potential strength of a political coalition.

In the second part of my research I will create a statistical model to understand how significant the candidate's race is when Blacks and Latinos vote. As of now I am undecided whether I want to look at the question on a national level (measuring Obama's support amongst Latinos against both Clinton and McCain) or whether I want to look at the question for local elections.

Finally I will analyze the barriers to coalitions or political alliances. The lack of a visible Black-Latino political alliance or coalition indicates deeply held sentiments of group animosity or ideological barriers to cooperation. The dramatic growth of the Latino population in the US

has resulted in racial antagonism and disintegration of previous coalitions rather than increased collective electoral power. Is there no hope for a progressive race-based political alliance? Are the cultural differences too daunting, the competition for jobs too disruptive, the similarities and shared-goals too few?

(2) I will perform quantitative analysis to answer these questions. For my final paper in a government seminar entitled "Black Politics" I essentially answered the first section of the analysis already. I was able to find a host of survey data measuring both black and Latino political opinion.

For the second part of the research I am undecided whether I will use national data or local electoral data. While national data on the Latino response to Obama would be incredibly timely and interesting, unfortunately there is not a case of a national Latino candidate to likewise measure black national opinion. Additionally, the characteristics of local politics, and therefore the determinants of local voting preference, are different than those of national politics. Mayoral or municipal elections could be seen to impact local communities more (particularly in terms of government contracts and public sector employment) and so voters may be more likely to vote along racial lines. Additionally, such small samples do not account for historical circumstances, such as James Hahn's father's strong inroads with the black community in South Central LA, which altered the racial voting preferences in the much-discussed Hahn-Villaraigosa Mayoral race. Highlighting relevant data sets for this question will be a chief goal.

For the third part of my research I hope to analyze national data on black opinions towards Latinos and vice versa.

(3) Work Schedule: As of now I do not plan on working extensively during the summer. In the fall I hope to quickly identify all of my relevant data sets and begin to work with the data. If I were to focus on national opinion data the trajectory of my work would be dramatically altered because the Obama-McCain data sets would not be available until late November. If that was my decision I would try to complete all of my literature review before that date and merely have to analyze/interpret the data. I would also start my research on groups attitudes earlier. It is incredibly difficult for me to forsee my exact work schedule but my general goal is to be done with all literature review and quantitative analysis (including construction of Tables and whatnot) by the end of January and to spend the months of February and March writing up my analysis.

(4) I agree to the deadlines and process detailed in "A Guide to The Thesis in Sociology"