

**Writing Assignment #4**  
**National Government**  
**Spring 2008**

One of the biggest issues in this year's election is the issue of illegal immigration. Current estimates place the population of illegal immigrants in this nation at around 12 million, and some believe that porous borders present a serious threat to our national security. Recently, the eminent political scientist Samuel Huntington wrote a book called "Who Are We," in which he argues that the American culture is being threatened by immigrants who refuse to assimilate, or become part of the melting pot. This book has led to vigorous discussion and debate among those within and without academia as to the importance of the melting pot versus the importance of the concept of multiculturalism. Read the materials on immigration that is in the online course reserve at the library's website. For the purpose of this assignment, first briefly summarize the two authors' positions on immigration. Then, address the question of whether Huntington's book and thesis should be ignored, as some would argue, or whether it is important for the public discourse. Finally, consider the following questions. Is the melting pot concept of cultural assimilation still important today for the survival of American culture, or is it an antiquated remnant of a bygone era? Is multiculturalism an important goal to pursue, or does it threaten the social fabric of the United States? Why? This paper should be three to four pages in length.

\*\*These readings are from the Rourke *You Decide!* text.