

University of Florida
History Department and African American Studies Program
Fall 2019

AFA 4931/AMH 3931: Black Lives Matter

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Course Description

This course has two goals. First it seeks to create a comprehensive history of the Black Lives Matter movement and second it seeks to make the academy accountable to a political project created by students and young activists around the country. We will accomplish this by raising questions about, offering studied reflection upon, and allocating dedicated institutional space to the failures of democracy, capitalism, the criminal justice system, and local and national leadership as these issues directly impact African Americans and as they specifically pertain to the Black Lives Matter movement. Throughout this course, we will examine the particular historical, geographical, cultural, social, and political context out of which Black Lives Matter emerged. To do so, we will approach readings and discussions from a diversity of disciplines and perspectives. We will begin our analysis with the broader context of the urban crisis, the prison industrial complex, and racial inequality, and then move to case studies of the incidents that made Black Lives Matter into a collective (though not necessarily cohesive) movement. The hope is that in striking a balance between historical inquiry, interdisciplinary methods, current events, and collective inquiry, you will be better prepared to meld activism with the academy and leave with a more rich understanding of why #blacklivesmatter.

Note: This class is a work in progress. We will build on knowledge of past events and be prepared to interrogate new events as they unfold. Thus your participation as students is central to this collective endeavor as we ask and answer questions about race, structural inequality, and violence together.

Course Objectives: In this course, we will be building a history of a contemporary social movement as it continues to unfold. Here are some of our goals for the semester:

1. You will not only acquire an understanding of key developments in the Black Lives Matter campaign but also understand the context out of which it emerged and the policies that produce and reinforce racial inequality.
2. You will develop the ability to read and analyze primary documents, situate them in historical context, and develop critical interpretations of their significance.
3. You will learn how to think across a number of disciplines, participate in a learning collective, and communicate important, difficult topics to a broad audience.

Required Readings:

We will read a variety of books, articles, and primary documents. There are five (5) required texts available for purchase at the UF Bookstore or from an online retailer. Note: Amazon.com offers competitive pricing on many of these books, including the option to rent books and purchase used copies. If you decide to purchase your books online, please make sure that you purchase the correct edition and that you allow enough time for shipping. In addition to these books, there may be various readings, images, and other primary documents available online via Canvas, the course e-learning site, at <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>. These are required readings and will form the basis of many assignments. Whether you print them out as hard copy or not is up to you, but please be sure that you can access them in time for class.

- Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*
- patrisse khan-cullors, asha bandele, *When They Call You A Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir*
- Barbara Ransby, *Making All Black Lives Matter: Reimagining Freedom in the Twenty-First Century*
- Christopher Lebron, *The Making of Black Lives Matter: A Brief History of an Idea*
- Jordan T. Camp (Editor), Christina Heatherton (Editor), *Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter*

Required Podcasts and Film Screenings

Podcasts and films are a crucial component of this class. There is one required podcast series and two required films, all of varying lengths. Podcasts and screenings will either be played during class time or assigned to watch/listen on your own. If you miss one, you are responsible for making it up on your own time. Note: there will be writing assignments associated with the podcasts and screenings and they are considered fair material on which to be tested.

Films

13th (1hr40mins)

Stay Woke: The Black Lives Matter Movement (39mins)

Podcasts

Minnesota Public Radio, 74 Seconds

Course Assignments:

- This is an upper-level course. As such, this class requires a serious commitment of time and energy. Please have your syllabus on hand and be sure to keep up with all of the reading and writing deadlines. Note: we will always allow time for formal and informal discussion of assignment prompts.
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- **Readings:** The reading for this class will ebb and flow. I will alert you to the weeks that have heavier reading assignments ahead of time and discuss with you time management strategies for these weeks. You are expected to read all of the assigned readings prior to class and arrive in discussion section with questions, comments, and opinions about what you have read. Make sure to allow enough time in your schedule to read thoroughly and critically.
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- **Quizzes:** There will be six (6) quizzes given during the semester. I reserve the right to let you know when they will be administered (or not!). These quizzes will be short and will be on the day's reading. Quizzes will be graded on a 20-point scale, and you may drop your lowest score.
- **Reflections:** You are required to write a five hundred (500) word reflection on five of the films, podcasts, and/or books. These will be due at the beginning of the class following the viewing/listening unless otherwise noted. Reflections will be graded on a 20-point scale.
- **Timeline Exercise:** You are required to research an incident that resulted in either local or national Black Lives Matter protests through newspaper articles and other online reports and construct a detailed timeline about it. You will also present your findings in class. Further instructions regarding format and content will be distributed before the assignment is due. This is a group project. Timelines are due on **September 27**. Presentations will be ongoing.
- A take-home midterm exam covering all material up to that point will be due on **October 14**.
- **Final Project:** You will have the option to choose from three different research projects: 1) a research paper drawing from course material and themes 2) a creative project drawing from course material and themes or 3) a public impact project drawing from course materials and themes. You must decide what type of project you want to do by **October 25**. The proposal is due on **November 4** and the final project is due on **December 4**. This will be a group project. Further instructions regarding format and content will be distributed before the assignments are due.

Grades: Your grade in this class will be determined largely by your performance on a variety of written assignments and exams. These exercises will allow you to hone your critical thinking and writing skills and allow you to reflect thoughtfully on race and the criminal justice system. Improvement over the course of the semester is not only encouraged but also rewarded.

Your grade for this class will be determined as follows:

Quizzes	10%
Reflections	10%
Timeline Exercise	15%
Midterm	20%
Final Project Proposal	10%
Final Project	25%
Participation and Attendance	10%
(5% before the midterm/5% after the midterm)	

UF Grading Scale

Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	WF	I	N	S	U
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	.67	0	0	0	0	0	0

A100-94, A-: 90-93

C+: 77-79, C: 74-76, C-: 70-73

B+: 87-89, B: 84-86, B-: 80-83

D+: 67-69, D: 64-66, D-: 60-64

F: below 64

More information on UF's grading policies is available at

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Essays: Generally speaking, I will look for the following in your papers:

1. Analysis. Does the paper make a convincing and coherent argument?
2. Evidence. Is the argument well supported by evidence? Is evidence used effectively?
3. Organization. Is the paper structured in logical way?
4. Content and originality. Does the paper make an original contribution or insight? Does the author's own opinion and voice come through?
5. Mechanics and style. Is the paper free of spelling and grammar errors? Is it clearly written?

Attendance and Assignment Policies

- Class will begin and end on time each day. Please be considerate of your classmates and avoid disrupting their learning experience.
- Attendance is required, expected, and central to your learning experience. Attendance is taken in a few ways including: roll call, sign-up sheets, quizzes, and in class activities.
- In addition to showing up for class on time, be ready to articulate and defend your ideas, as well as to listen to and work with the ideas of others.
- Participation in discussion is an important part of your role as a member of this class. I will evaluate participation halfway through the semester and offer tips for improvement.

You will receive half your participation points before the midterm and half after the midterm. You are also encouraged to ask for feedback at any point in the semester.

- If you will be absent, please contact me as soon as possible and provide documentation of illness or other university-approved absences. Dated documentation can include, but are not limited to: dated doctor's note, documentation of jury duty, obituary, etc. Your instructor reserves the right to contact the appropriate sources to confirm the documentation. If you know you must have an excused absence, contact me beforehand to make arrangements to turn in work before class.
- A model student will demonstrate responsibility for getting the information and material missed in class from a classmate. A student with 6 unexcused absences will have their grade reduced a full letter grade. More than 9 absences will result in automatic failure of the course.
- Arriving at class late and/or leaving before class is over counts as ½ an absence. I will not contact students during the semester to apprise them of their attendance status; it is the responsibility of the students to check this regularly. Religious holidays, UF athletic travel conflicts, and written explanations from a certified health professional are eligible for an excused absence when cleared with the instructor ahead of time. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>
- Note: A model student will not engage in behavior such as reading texts, browsing the Internet, sleeping, or doing homework for another class. If you engage in this or any other behavior that we consider to be disrespectful to us or to your classmates, you may be considered absent for that day.

Late Work and Make-up Policy

- Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date (unless otherwise stated) and turned in by you and you alone. Unless stated otherwise, late assignments will be penalized one-third-letter grade per 24-hour period after the deadline. So if you turn your assignment in after class ends the same day it is due, and your grade is a B, your final grade will be a B-.
- If you turn in an assignment and leave before class ends, your assignment will be discarded and will be considered late once re-submitted.
- Missed exams cannot be made up unless you have a university excused absence that you notify your instructor of beforehand. If you have an unforeseen emergency, please contact me as soon as possible after your absence.

Guidelines for Discussion

Participation in discussion is an important part of your role as a member of this class. I expect students to be prepared and engaged in discussion. You should expect to be called on from time to time. Please keep in mind that conversations about race can stir up strong emotions. A great deal of this results from the environment of mistrust and misunderstanding that exists in the wider society. I start from the assumption that those of you that have chosen to take this class have come with an open mind, ready not only to share your points of view but to try to understand the perspectives of others. Thoughtful, insightful, and honest points of view are needed in order to help us all learn to communicate more effectively and openly about race.

So that everyone feels respected in the classroom, use tact and understanding when presenting your ideas. Personal attacks, disparaging remarks, or attempts to dominate the conversation will not be tolerated. Remember as well that individuals in the classroom may have been personally affected by the issues that we are discussing; and to show respect to your peers and the educational process.

Mobile Electronic Device Policy

Recent studies have shown that college students retain less information when they use laptops instead of pen and paper, and that open laptops are disruptive to nearby students. However, I recognize that many of you are more comfortable taking notes on a computer, so I will allow it during lecture and discussion. Laptops will not be allowed during film screenings, so do bring pen and paper to class on these days. I reserve the right to ban laptops if they become disruptive over the course of the semester. Please silence your cell phone prior to the start of class, keep it out of sight, and do not text or use social media apps during class time.

Correspondence

I will send important course announcements and other correspondence to you via your UF email account. If you do not use this as your primary account, please make sure that you have your UF email forwarded to you and check your email regularly! Sadly I will not text you reminders about when assignments are due.

How to get in touch with your professor

- Come to office hours. I truly enjoy getting to know more about students outside of the classroom. You are encouraged to stop by with any questions that you may have about assignments, readings, your major, going grad school, or other pertinent topics.
- Email me at lpearlman@ufl.edu. I will generally get back to you within 24 hours, though my response will be slower during the weekend. Do not email me the night before an assignment is due and expect to receive a response.

Students with Disabilities

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students requesting classroom accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting an accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Academic Honesty

The University, as well as your instructor, values and expects academic integrity. Ethical violations include cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and academic misconduct (including turning in the work of others as your own and reusing old assignments). These will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic failing grade in the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows: "A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially

identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student." Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy

To avoid plagiarism, you must not copy the words, phrases, arguments, ideas, or conclusions of another person or source (including Internet sources) without properly crediting the person or source with both quotation marks and a footnote. Make sure that you properly cite direct quotations, paraphrased information, and facts that are not widely known. I will provide you with guidelines for proper citations and formatting prior to your submission of all written work, but you may contact me at any time for clarification. For more information on UF's honest policy, see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php>. For more information on how UF's Judicial Affairs processes cases of plagiarism, see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php>.

Student Evaluations

Students in this class are participating in the pilot evaluation of the new course evaluation system called GatorEvals. The new evaluation system is designed to be more informative to instructors so that teaching effectiveness is enhanced and to be more seamlessly linked to UF's CANVAS learning management system. Students can complete their evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/so-eng.htm?_Themes/blue.css&images/Explorance-Logo.gif&seed=bd86c681-cca4-4c28-abc9-0b4cf542e5c4&University+of+Florida Please note your other classes this semester may be evaluated in the current GatorRater online evaluation system at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Thank you for serving as a partner in this important effort.

U Matter, We Care

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

Course Schedule

Readings should be completed by the beginning of class on the day they are listed
Please Note: the schedule is provisional and may be changed as needed by the instructor.

Week One: Introduction

- August 21 None
- August 23 In Class: Vice, Charlottesville: Race and Terror
Read course syllabus
Coates, *Between the World and Me*, 1-40

Week Two: Setting the Stage

- August 26 In Class: MPR, 74 Seconds, episodes 1-2
Coates, *Between the World and Me*, 41-80
- August 28 In Class: MPR, 74 Seconds, episodes 3-4
Coates, *Between the World and Me*, 81-120
Syllabus Acknowledgement form due
- August 30 In Class: Book discussion
Coates, *Between the World and Me*, 121-150
Reflection #1 due on Coates

Week Three: Reckoning With Our History

- September 2 No Class
- September 4 Lebron, *The Making of Black Lives Matter*, intro and ch 1,
- September 6 Lebron, *The Making of Black Lives Matter*, ch 2

Week Four: Origin Stories

- September 9 Lebron, *The Making of Black Lives Matter*, ch 3
- September 11 Ransby, *Making All Black Lives Matter*, intro and ch 1
- September 13 In Class: MPR, 74 Seconds, episodes 5-7
When They Call You a Terrorist, Part 1

Week Five: Origin Stories (cont.)

- September 16 In class: Book discussion

When They Call You a Terrorist, Part 1
Reflection #2 due on MPR, 74 Seconds, episodes 1-7

September 18 Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, ch 2 (online via UF libraries)

September 20 Group work on Timeline Project
When They Call You a Terrorist, Part 2

Week Six: Making a Movement

September 23 In Class: MPR, 74 Seconds, episodes 8-10
When They Call You a Terrorist, Part 2
Group work write up due

September 25 In Class: Book discussion
When They Call You a Terrorist, Part 2

September 27 Watch *13th*
Timelines Due

Week Seven: Making a Movement (cont.)

September 30 Lebron, *The Making of Black Lives Matter*, ch 4
Reflection #3 due on *13th*

October 2 Ransby, *Making All Black Lives Matter*, ch 2-3

October 4 No Class

Week Eight:

October 7 Ransby, *Making All Black Lives Matter*, ch 4-5

October 9 Ransby, *Making All Black Lives Matter*, ch 6, Laurie Collier Hillstrom, *Black Lives Matter*, ch 6 (online via UF libraries)

October 11 Work on Midterm Exam

Week Nine: Living in the Black Lives Matter Era

October 14 In Class: MPR, 74 Seconds, episodes 11-15
Midterm Exam Due

October 16 Laurie Collier Hillstrom, *Black Lives Matter*, ch 7 and conclusion (online via UF libraries)

October 18 In Class: Workshop #1 with African American Studies librarian
Homework: MPR, 74 Seconds, episodes 16-17

Week Ten: Living in the Black Lives Matter Era (cont.)

October 21 Policing the Planet, ch 1-2

October 23 Policing the Planet, ch 3-4

October 25 Policing the Planet, ch 5-6
Final Project Topics due

Week Eleven:

October 28 Policing the Planet, ch 7-8

October 30 Policing the Planet, ch 9

November 1 Group work on final projects
Homework: MPR, 74 Seconds, episodes 18-20

Week Twelve:

November 4 **Final Project Proposals due**

November 6 Policing the Planet, ch 10-12

November 8 In Class: Workshop #2 with African American Studies librarian
Homework: MPR, 74 Seconds, episodes 21-22
Reflection #4 due on MPR, 74 Seconds, episodes 16-22

Week Thirteen:

November 11 No Class

November 13 Policing the Planet, ch 13-14

November 15 Policing the Planet, ch 15-16

Week Fourteen:

November 18 Policing the Planet, ch 17-18

November 20 Policing the Planet, ch 20-22

November 22 Group work on final projects

Week Fifteen: Thanksgiving Break

November 25 Watch *Stay Woke: The Black Lives Matter Movement*
Group work write up due

November 27 No Class

November 29 No Class

Week Sixteen: Conclusions?

December 2 Ransby, *Making All Black Lives Matter*, ch 7-8 and conclusion
Reflection #5 due on *Stay Woke*

December 4 Lebron, *The Making of Black Lives Matter*, ch 5 and afterword
Final Projects Due

Guidelines for Discussion (Rubric)

Above Average (85-100%)	Satisfactory (75-85%)	Unsatisfactory (below 75%)
<p>The student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actively listens • moves the discussion forward with deeper questions and well thought-out answers • consistently provides evidence to support responses • connects responses to others' comments • shows respect to peers • reflects on what reading strategies they are using 	<p>The student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • passively listens • joins the discussion by occasionally answering questions • asks (mostly surface) questions • occasionally provides evidence to support responses 	<p>The student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ignores discussion and/or distracts others • shows little or no understanding of the text • Makes personal attacks, disparaging remarks, or attempts to dominate the conversation • is reading texts, browsing the internet, doing homework for another class, or sleeping

Syllabus Acknowledgement and Acceptance

I _____ have carefully read the syllabus in its entirety and agree with the requirements, policies, and all other terms. I have asked clarifying questions to ensure that I understand what I read.

Signature: _____ Date: _____