

Black Women's Health

AFA/WST 3930/AMH 3931
Fall 2015
MWF, Period 6 (12:50-1:40)
FAC, 127

Professor: Evan Hart, Ph.D.
E-Mail: hartee@ufl.edu
Office: Keene Flint, 20
Office Hours: MWF, 2:00-
3:00 and by appt.

This course explores black women's health issues in American history from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries. In particular we will examine the personal experiences and medical views of black women's life cycle events, the roles of black women as patients, providers and activists, and the effects of race and gender on perceptions of health, wellness and illness. We will also explore the historical context for the shifts in scientific/medical thinking on health/wellness, race, and gender, and how these shifts impacted black women's health and healthcare.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Marie Jenkins Schwartz, *Birthing a Slave: Motherhood and Medicine in the Antebellum South* (ISBN: 9780674034921)

Susan L. Smith, *Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired: Black Women's Health Activism in America, 1890-1950* (ISBN: 9780812214499)

Margaret Charles Smith, *Listen to Me Good: The Story of an Alabama Midwife* (ISBN: 9780814207017)

Articles and primary sources available through the files link on our Canvas site

<u>Requirements:</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>% of Final Grade</u>
Discussion/Participation	Throughout Semester	20%
Take-Home Exam 1	Fri., Oct. 2	20%
Take-Home Exam 2	Fri., Oct. 30	20%
Historical Roots Paper	Mon., Nov. 23	20%
Take-Home Exam 3	Fri., Dec 16	20%

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to do the following:

1. to provide an understanding of the relationship between race, gender, and class on black women's health experiences throughout American history
2. to develop students' abilities to analyze critically historical problems/debates and to analyze the causes of historical change
3. to improve students' writing skills and hone their ability to clearly state an argument both verbally and on the written page

CLASS POLICIES:

Attendance: Student participation is an essential component to this course. As such, attendance will be taken daily. If you arrive 10 or more minutes late, do not expect to be counted as present for the day. Indeed, you may be asked to leave or forbidden to enter if you are more than 10 minutes late. It is assumed that enrollment in the class means that there are no conflicts with other obligations (weddings, work, travel, meetings, etc.) during class time. Simply telling me or e-mailing a message indicating that you'll be absent does not automatically become an "excused absence." If you have an official excuse for an absence, provide me with a written excuse on official letterhead (either physician or university) which includes information regarding your absence (dates and times).

Additionally, regardless of points, **any student missing more than 20% of the total classes will automatically fail the course.** You cannot pass this course if you do not attend regularly.

Classroom Policies: Be courteous and professional toward your classmates. Turn off cellphones, engage with the course material, respond to classmates in discussions, and refrain from using laptops unless the use of a laptop is a medical necessity (see section on "accommodations for disabilities"). If a student is found texting or otherwise using their phone during class, there will be a verbal warning. If cellphone usage continues, the student will be asked to leave the classroom and will not be counted as present for that day.

It may seem a bit harsh to ban cellphones and laptops, but studies consistently show that distractions from texts, games, and the internet negatively impact one's grade.

Communication: I welcome student emails and will respond to them in a timely manner. However, I do not access my email 24 hours a day, so allow 24 hours for a response. Also, please use proper capitalization, grammar, and punctuation in your emails. Your correspondence reflects on you as student, and proper emailing etiquette will serve you well in your career at UF and beyond. Finally, emailed questions which can easily be answered by reading the syllabus will receive a simple SYS (see your syllabus) as a response.

Late work: To be eligible for full credit, any missed assignments, exams, or papers must be accompanied with proper documentation, i.e. a doctor's excuse, etc. Late papers without documentation will fall one letter grade per day late. **Assignments will not be accepted after three days. No exceptions.** If an assignment is due on Wednesday, for example, and is handed in on Friday (the next class period) it is considered **2 days late** and 20 points will be deducted. Additionally, you will not be allowed to hand in your final research paper unless all previous assignments have been completed. These policies are consistent with university policies concerning attendance. You can find these policies at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Grading: Grading policies follow the policies laid out by UF. To understand how UF assigns grade points see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>. I use a standard grading scale when assigning grades.

A = 93-100
A- = 90-92
B+ = 87-89
B = 83-86
B- = 80-82
C+ = 77-79
C = 73-76
C- = 70-72
D+ = 67-69
D = 63-66
D- = 60-62

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES:

Students who require specific accommodations for a disability should speak with me within the first two weeks of class to ensure these accommodations are met. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The office will provide documentation to the student who must provide this documentation to the instructor.

PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

According to UF's Student Conduct & Honor Code, plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- “1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. 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.”

This can include, but is not limited to, papers on the internet, friends' papers, websites, or any other source you do not cite. As noted in the Student Conduct Code, there are a number of possible penalties for plagiarism or cheating. In this course, a student who is discovered plagiarizing on any assignment will automatically receive a grade of zero (0) for that assignment and the assignment cannot be redone to obtain a different grade on the plagiarized assignment. A second incidence of plagiarism will result in automatic failure of the course. If on any of the exams you quote directly from the textbook or readings without attributing them to the source, the professor has the option of assigning a failing grade to the exam. For further details on the issue of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, see the Student Conduct and Honor Code available on UF's website at: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

CLASS SCHEDULE

This class schedule is tentative and subject to change. Any alterations to the schedule will be announced to the class.

BAS: indicates the reading comes from *Birthing a Slave*

SAT: indicates the reading comes from *Sick and Tired*

LTM: indicates the reading comes from *Listen to Me Good*
CR: indicates the reading is available on the files link on our Canvas site

Week One: Introductions

- Aug. 24 Introduction to Course
- Aug. 26 What is Women's Health?
- Aug 28 Guest Speaker, Dr. Erieka Bennett

Week Two: Race and Science

- Aug. 31 Science and the Construction of Race
CR: Nicholas Hudson, *From 'Nation' to 'Race:' The Origins of Racial Classification in Eighteenth Century Thought*
CR: Londa Schiebinger, *The Anatomy of Difference: Race and Sex in Eighteenth Century Science*
- Sept 2 The Construction of Race, Pt II
CR: Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *African American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race*
- Sept 4 Colonial Encounters
CR: Jennifer L. Morgan, "Some Could Suckle Over Their Shoulder:" *Male Travelers, Female Bodies and the Gendering of Racial Identity, 1500-1770*

Week Three: The Body as Spectacle

- Sept 7 **NO CLASS: LABOR DAY**
- Sept 9 The Life and Times of Sara Baartman
CR: Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Gender, Race, and Nation: The Comparative Anatomy of "Hottentot" Women in Europe, 1815-1817*
CR: Sadiya Qureshi, *Displaying Sara Baartman, the "Hottentot Venus"*
- Sept 11 Sara Baartman Continued
No additional readings. Be prepared to discuss readings from Sept. 10

Week Four: Life on the Plantation

- Sept 14 Medical Practices in Colonial America
No readings

Sept 16 Defining Images of Female Slaves
 CR: Deborah Gray White, *“Jezebel and Mammy: the Mythology of Female Slavery”*

Sept 18 The Life Cycle of Enslaved Women
 CR: Deborah Gray White, *“The Nature of Female Slavery”*

Week Five: Medicine and Reproduction on Southern Farms

Sept 21 Enslaved Women's Health on Southern Farms
 BAS: Chapters 1-3

Sept 23 The Birth of Gynecology
 BAS: Chapter 4-6

Sept 25 Birthing a Slave: Discussion
 BAS: Chapters 7-8

Week Six: The Civil War

Sept 28 Women's Health in a Nation at War
 CR: Jim Downs: *Dying to Be Free: The Unexpected Medical Crises of War and Emancipation*

Sept. 30 Black Women Nurses
 Readings Listed at a Later Date

Oct 2 **EXAM ONE DUE TO MY OFFICE BY 1:40 PM**

Week Seven: Free, and Healthy, at Last?

Oct 5 Experiences of Freedwomen in the Postbellum South
 BAS: Chapter 9

Oct 7 Freedmen's Health Care
 CR: Jim Downs, *Freedmen's Hospitals: The Medical Division of the Freedmen's Bureau*

Oct 9 The Debate over Birth Control
 CR: Jesse Rodrique, *The Black Community and the Birth Control Movement*
 CR: Jamie Hart, *Who Should Have the Children? Discussions of Birth Control Among African-American Intellectuals*

Week Eight: The Movement for Self-Help

- Oct 12 Black Women's Club Movement and Public Health
 SAT: Chapter 1 (Private Crusades for Public Health)
- Oct 14 Public Health, Pt. II
 SAT: Chapter 2 (Spreading the Gospel of Health)
- Oct 16 Professionalization of Black Practitioners
 CR: Selections from Darlene Clark Hine, *Black Women in White*
 CR: Darlene Clark Hine, *The Ethel Johns Report: Black Women in
 the Nursing Profession, 1925*

Week Nine: Black Health Professionals

- Oct 19 The Black Hospital Movement
 CR: Vanessa Northington Gamble, *Making a Place for Ourselves:
 the Black Hospital Movement, 1920-1945*
- Oct 21 The Case of Tuskegee
 SAT: Chapter 4
- Oct 23 Health Problems of the Great Depression
 SAT: Chapter 6

Week Ten: A New Deal for Health?

- Oct 26 Activism During the New Deal
 SAT: Chapter 3
- Oct 28 Fight for Acceptance: Black Nurses During WWII
 CR: Additional selections, Darlene Clark Hine, *Black Women in White*
- Oct 30: **EXAM TWO DUE IN MY OFFICE BY 1:40 PM**

Week Eleven: Women on the Front Lines

- Nov 2 Women Helping Women: Black Midwifery
 SAT: Chapter 5
 LTMG: Chapters 1-4
- Nov 4 Midwifery Continued
 No additional readings. Be prepared to continue discussion of readings
 from Nov. 2
- Nov 6: **NO CLASS: HOMECOMING**

Week Twelve: Health: a Civil Right?

Nov 9 Health Care and the Medical Committee for Human Rights
CR: Leslie Falk, *The Negro American's Health and the Medical Committee for Human Rights*
CR: Selections from John Dittmer, *The Good Doctors*

Nov 11 **NO CLASS: VETERANS DAY**

Nov 13 The Black Panther Party and Alternative Clinics
CR: Selections from Alondra Nelson, *Body and Soul*

Week Thirteen: Defining Reproductive Health

Nov 16 The Rise of a Women's Health Movement
CR: Selections from Wendy Kline, *Bodies of Knowledge*
CR: Selections from Sandra Morgen, *Into Our Own Hands*

Nov 18 Controlling Reproduction
CR: Selections from Jennifer Nelson, *Women of Color and the Reproductive Rights Movement*

Nov 20 Abortion and Sterilization Abuse
CR: Loretta Ross, *African-American Women and Abortion*
CR: Selections from Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body*
CR: The Committee to End Sterilization Abuse, *Statement of Purpose*

Week Fourteen: Turkey! Turkey! Turkey!

Nov 23: **Historical Roots Paper Due**
Discussion of papers

Nov 25 **NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK**

Nov 27 **NO CLASS: THANKS GIVING BREAK**

Week Fifteen: Expanding “Women's” Health

Nov 30 The National Black Women's Health Project
CR: Jael Silliman, et. al., *Founding the National Black Women's Health Project: A New Concept in Health*
CR: Byllye Avery, *Breathing Life into Ourselves*

Dec 2 Moving Beyond Reproduction
CR: Selections from *Body & Soul: The Black Women's Guide to Physical Health and Emotional Well-Being*
CR: Selections from *The Black Women's Health Book*

Dec 4 Moving Beyond Reproduction, Pt. II
CR: Nikki Franke, *African American Women's Health: the Effects of Disease and Chronic Life Stressors*

Week Sixteen

Dec 7 Contemporary Health Issues
Readings Chosen by the Class

Dec 9 Contemporary Health Issues, Pt. II
Readings Chosen by the Class

Dec. 11 No Class, Reading Day

FINAL EXAM: DUE TO ME IN OFFICE ON WEDS., Dec. 16: 10:00 am- 12:00 pm

EXPLANATION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Discussion/Participation (20%)

For this class to be successful, students must take responsibility for actively participating each day in the course. Discussion of course materials allows for a higher degree of interaction and collaboration than the traditional lecture format. And, let's be honest, no one wants to sit through 16 weeks of solid lectures! For these reasons, discussion and participation is worth 20% of your grade. This means you **MUST** attend class regularly and participate in the discussions.

Attendance will be taken every day, and unexcused absences will lower your grade. At a bare minimum, participation requires you to ask an occasional question and display attentiveness to both the lectures and discussions. At least once a week, if not more, we will engage in various activities to get students more involved in the material. Throughout the semester, you will have opportunities to give informal presentations, lead discussions on particular readings, and participate in a host of small-group activities. I will be keeping track of who is keeping up with the readings and is actively involved and those who remain passive. I can't stress this enough: **discussion is integral to the success of the course and to your final grade.**

Take-Home Exams (each worth 20% for a total of 60%)

All three of the exams will be take-home exams. Questions will be handed out roughly a week in advance. Each exam will require you to answer one to two questions which will require you to discuss the lectures, readings, and discussions. The exams will require you to write roughly six pages. They must be handed in hard copy, double spaced, written in Times New Roman, 12 pt font with 1 inch margins.

Historical Roots of a Contemporary Issue Paper (20%)

Throughout the semester, keep an eye out for newspaper or magazine articles (reputable online sources count) that address some aspect of black women's health. I suggest that you collect some that look especially interesting to give you a bit more of a selection. Choose at least one article (if you choose more than one they **MUST** discuss the same topic), and discuss how the history you have learned informs the current issue. Remember: you must make an argument which discusses the role of history. As an example, your paper could include a thesis about how the past helps explain the present issue or you could possibly argue how the past can help guide the future. Or you could try something else as the issue and article suggest. But your paper must have a thesis, it must connect historical analysis with a current issue, and you must utilize sources from the course readings to help you support your claim.

Your paper must be approximately 6 pages long, following the formatting guidelines laid out in the exam section. Your paper will be evaluated on these criteria:

1. Your ability to articulate a strong argument
2. The clarity of your prose
3. The quality of your sources and how you use them to support your arguments
4. Your organization and writing (do you use proper grammar? Is everything spelled correctly? Does your paper flow well?)
5. The quantity/quality of your citations. (i.e. in a 10 page paper do you only cite two sources? Is the majority of your paper simply direct quotes from your sources?)

Consider these the grading guidelines for all writing assignments!