

# African American Studies

## Key Issues in African American Black Atlantic Thought

AFA 24856 Section 12AA

Spring 2020

Professor Rik Stevenson, PhD

Visiting Assistant Professor of African American Studies

University of Florida

**Class Meeting Times: Tuesdays 11:45am- 1:40pm & Thursdays 12:50pm- 1:40pm**

**Meets in: MAT 0108**

### **Contact Information :**

**Office Hours:**

**Office Room:**

**Office Phone number:**

**Email address:** [rstevenson2@ufl.edu](mailto:rstevenson2@ufl.edu)

### **Course Description:**

This survey course examines key themes in the intellectual and social history of African American and African diasporic experiences that intersect in the United States and other national contexts in the transatlantic world. We will examine the prevailing trends in the social interactions of Black people by engaging in questions about racism, slavery, police brutality, education, cultural identity, gender and sexual politics, economics, politics, Black criminalization and spirituality, in diasporic, and international affairs. We will interrogate the racialization of the criminal justice system and focus on how it mirrors the reconstruction period and the convict lease system. We will discuss the interventions of leading social activists voices, such as Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells, Pauli Murray, Bayard Rustin, Fannie Lou Hamer, Ella Baker, the Me Too Movement, Colin Kaepernick, Fusion Politics and the Black Lives Matter Movement. We will interrogate the voices of those who have promoted multiple dimensional forms of resistance and social change via public consciousness and social activism. The course fulfills the General Education requirements for the humanities (H) and diversity (D). It also fulfills the Gordon Rule 6 requirement. This means that the major writing assignments will amount to a total of 6,000 words, and that students will receive feedback on their research proposals so that they can improve their writing skills.

### **General Education Objectives:**

Our main objective is to help students gain an increased awareness of the most important thematic issues of Black Atlantic Thought within the context of Africa American and African diasporic

Studies so that those who are interested in pursuing advance undergraduate study and graduate study in the disciplines are provided with the most essential basic knowledge about the scholarship that these disciplines produce. As such, the course examines the traditional historiography composed by classic and contemporary authors, as well as Afro-centric literature that focuses on the intellectual contributions to African and African American scholarship.

- Deepen their knowledge and articulate the significance of this body of knowledge particularly as it relates to racialization and other forms of difference and social inequality that operate in conjunction with processes of race making
- To provide students with a basic introduction to African American socio-cultural and intellectual history and critical analysis
- To promote creative and self-directed learning through the research, reading, and writing processes
- To provide the skills needed to complete a substantial research paper.

### **General Education Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Explain how historical knowledge affects community and culture, including chronological thinking, by examining primary sources and secondary sources, for the purposes of comprehension, historical analysis and interpretation.
2. Evaluate historical events through the examination of various human endeavors, such as social, political, economic, and philosophical/religious/aesthetic activities.
3. Explain historical trajectories and consequences, through world-views, politics, race and gender and the ways diverse cultures exist within the United States.
4. Explain how slavery, reconstruction, civil rights and social constructions of ethnicity/race and gender became challenges that helped to shape group and individual identities: gender, class, abilities, age, sexual orientation, religion, or common history.
5. Written Communication – write effectively for multiple purposes and audiences. Develop content that is appropriate to a specific disciplinary or professional context, drawing upon relevant sources. Organize and express written material and ideas to suit the purposes of the document and meet the needs of the intended audience. Use conventions of grammar, punctuation, formatting, and citation appropriate to the specific writing situation.
6. Ethical Reasoning – use a decision -making process based on defining systems of value. Recognize ethical issues when presented in a complex situation. Demonstrate understanding of key concepts and principles underlying various systems of reasoning. Accurately apply ethical theories and terms to situations. Demonstrate the ability to deal constructively with ambiguity and disagreement.

### **Writing Requirement Rubric**

The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures that students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning scholarship production.

Course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory evaluation on the writing requirements of the course. The

instructor will evaluate and provide feedback, on all written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.

Successful completion of these requirements will result in the student learning outcomes listed below.

	<b>SATISFACTORY (Y)</b>	<b>UNSATISFACTORY (N)</b>
<b>CONTENT</b>	Papers exhibit at least some evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provides at least an adequate discussion with a basic understanding of the sources.	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off-topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.
<b>ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE</b>	Documents should include an outline. The paragraphs should exhibit at least some identifiable structure for topics. In the introduction, a clear thesis statement and research question(s) must be included. Each section of the paper should address the research question(s) and thesis statement. The conclusion should tie the previous information together and offer further research ideas.	Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, a thesis statement, and clear research questions. Sections of the paper fail to adequately answer the research question(s) and thesis statement.
<b>ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT</b>	Other scholarly sources, papers and written data should support the student's argument(s).	Assignments include less credible (non-academic) sources. Student fails to include references to sources to support his/her argument.
<b>STYLE</b>	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical sentence structure.	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction.
<b>MECHANICS</b>	Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas with few or no spelling, grammatical, and punctuation errors.	Papers contain many mechanical or grammatical errors and is poorly written.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY & CITATIONS

Should follow MLA or Chicago Style citations. See Kate Turabian for instructions.

### Required Text

Thomas C. Holt and Elsa Barkley Brown, Major Problems in African-American History, Volume 1: From Slavery To Freedom, 1619-1877, The University of Maryland, College Park, 2000

Leon Litwack and August Meier, Black Leaders of the Nineteenth Century, The University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 1991

**Supplemental Readings will be announced:**

### Assignment Evaluation and Descriptions

Assignment	Percent of Grade
1) Attendance /Participation	30%
Classroom verbal participation	15%
Research paper presentation	15%
2) 5 Short Papers (worth 5% each)	25%
3) Content Analysis & Oral History Presentation	10%
4) Research Paper	35%

### Attendance Policy and Missed Work

After three unexcused classes are missed, you will not receive the percentage points for class participation (and will not have the option of submitting an optional paper). It is your responsibility to sign the attendance roster that will be given out at the beginning of each class session. If you forget to, sign it during the next class. Also, try to get to class on time. The policy for missed work in this class is consistent with the university's policy (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>).

### Class Participation and Teaching Methodology

Effective teachers are persons who teach for transformation as well as education. The second key to effective transformative education is, don't do for students what they can learn to do for themselves. Risk, failure, and critical inquiry are key components to academic growth. By introducing a dialogical structure into the learning process the student gains opportunities to engage in conversations with one another which also creates a camaraderie among colleagues. This approach to learning is known as or often referred to as "Critical Pedagogy". Critical pedagogy requires educators to *provoke* dialogue, debate and critical analysis within the classroom setting. In so doing we are creating persons who are good listeners unafraid, of failure and they learn to reach beyond their comfort zones independently. Therefore, We will discuss a number of issues pertaining to non-violent, armed social activism, the Second Amendment and why traditional scholarship has neglected to introduce these concepts in the prominent historiography. I understand that some students are more comfortable participating in class discussions than others but we will all have an opportunity to offer input. However, students are **expected** to come to class prepared having completed the readings and being ready to contribute their critical analysis of the reading to the course discussions. Participation is graded by the student's contribution to discussion, group work, and class exercises and not right or wrong answers.

**Please read your text books and watch the videos carefully and exegetically.**

### **Five Short Papers**

Write a two page paper on the four topics below. In the paper summarize the main points the paper. Critique the methodology and explain why you think this method was successful. Your paper will be graded on the basis of your knowledge of the video the author(s) support his/her arguments well? Your analysis should examine how these data have affected African American Studies and people of African descent socially.

**The first paper is due 1/14/20.** Write a 1 page paper on Film "Timbuktu Saving the World's Oldest Library." ( <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pJTaiev8k&t=5s>)

**The second paper is due 1/28/20.** Write a 1 page paper on "Black History before Slavery." (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LRZjwCINY>)

**The third paper is due 2/4/20 .** Write a 1 page paper on Film " The Reason Education sucks". ( <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILQepXUhJ98> )

**The fourth is due 2/25/20 .** Write a 1 page paper "RECONSTRUCTION: America After The Civil War, Reconstruction Part 1." (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TiXxQpBLMuk>) Please

emphasize how The Reconstruction affected the way history has been written and how it must now be written.

**The Fifth paper is due 4/16/20.** Write a paper on The Rodney King beating, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zLA2gzQQ0g&t=59s>)

## One Oral History Assignment

Select from one of three topics: Colin Kaepernick, The Me Too Movement, and/or Black Lives Matter and present a 2-3 page typed, double-spaced paper. In the paper, analyze the topic and explain the benefits of African American studies in today's context. Explain what you learned from the exercise? **The assignment is due on 3/17/20.**

## Final Research Paper

Your paper must be an original research project and be a minimum of 8-12 pages of text, and a bibliography page. During each class session, we will discuss articles and book chapters that address a number of issues of concern to African Americans and the manner in which they are historically represented. These readings and lectures will give you ideas about possible topics, research questions, theoretical frameworks, outlines and methods for writing your paper. **The final paper is due 4/21/20.**

## Presentations

Beginning on, each student must give an approximately 3-5 minute power-point presentation. In the presentation, describe your research topic, explain its significance to the discipline of African American Studies, provide a literature review, and explain the methods you used to acquire and analyze your sources. We will go in alphabetical order and you will receive a zero if you are not prepared to give your presentation when your name is called. There will be three presentations per class until all have presented.

### Grading Scale:

94-100 A	90-93 A-	87-89 B+	84-86 B	80-83 B-	77-79 C+
74-76 C	70-73 C-	67-69 D+	64-66 D	60-63 D-	Below 60 E

A to C- will be a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, Gordon Rule or College Basic Distribution credit.

### Academic

### Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism and cheating on examinations. The penalty for cheating is a grade of 0 on the assignment. In addition, the Dean of Student's office may choose to

administer a harsher punishment such as a temporary suspension from this class or a permanent expulsion from the university.

### **Classroom Behavior (Cell Phones and Laptops):**

In the past, several of my students have forgotten to turn off their cell phones in class. *I am asking you to please turn off your phones before our class begins.* Remember, a student who takes his/her work seriously will make sure that his/her phone is off during class meetings.

Also, if you engage in behavior such as texting, browsing the internet, sleeping, loud yawning, or any other behavior that I consider to be disrespectful to me or to your classmates, you may not receive all of the percentage points for class participation. I expect you to pay attention at all times in class especially when films are shown. You do not have my permission to do the work in your other classes when films are shown. If I find out that you're doing this, I reserve the right to deduct points from your participation grade.

### **Disabilities Statement:**

Students requiring accommodations must first register with the Dean of Student's office, Disability Resource Center. The Dean of Student's office will provide documentation, which the student will then give to the instructor. For more information, see [HTTP://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc)

### **Class Schedule:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lecture Topic</b>	<b>Flash Assignment</b>	<b>Vocabulary</b>	<b>Reading Assignment</b>	<b>Written Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
1/7/20	Introduction to class & each other & why we do African American Studies.			Ch. 1 <u>Major Problems in African American History:</u> By: Holt & Brown		
1/9/20	Interpreting African American History: Woodson, Dubois, Cookman, & Franklin	See Timbuktu Video.		<u>Major Problems in African American History.</u> Review Ch. 1.		

Date	Lecture Topic	Flash Assignment	Vocabulary	Reading Assignment	Written Assignment	Due Date
1/14/20	Timbuktu: Saving the worlds oldest Library	Timbuktu Video. Paper Due		Ch. 2 Holt & Brown		
1/16/20	Review of Ch. 2					
1/21/20	Review of Ch. 2	Black History before Slavery Video				
1/23/20	From Land to Sea			No reading Assignment		
1/28/20	The Origins of North American Slavery & Racism	Black History before Slavery Video Paper Due		Ch 3 Holt & Brown		
1/30/20	Review: The Origins of North American Slavery & Racism			Ch 3 Holt & Brown cont'd.		
2/4/20	The Origins of African America & the continuity of African Culture	The reason Education Sucks Video Paper Due				
2/6/20	Review: The Origins of African America & the continuity of African Culture			<u>Black Leaders of the 19th Century</u> By: Litwack & Meier Ch. 1		

Date	Lecture Topic	Flash Assignment	Vocabulary	Reading Assignment	Written Assignment	Due Date
2/11/20	The Black Church & Education			Ch. 2 Litwack & Meier		
2/13/20	Nat Turner: The Unknown Slave & Visionary Leader			No reading Assignment		
2/18/20	Harriet Tubman's Unlikely Leadership			Ch. 3 Litwack & Meier		
2/20/20	In class video/discussion: RECONSTRUCTION: America After The Civil War, Reconstruction Part 1			No reading Assignment		
2/25/20	Fredrick Douglas: Humanists as Race Leader.	"RECONSTRUCTION: America After The Civil War, Reconstruction Paper Due		Ch 4. Litwack & Meier		

Date	Lecture Topic	Flash Assignment	Vocabulary	Reading Assignment	Written Assignment	Due Date
2/27/20	In Class video: "Without Sanctuary".  "The History of Lynching" Video. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPdh46k7b38">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPdh46k7b38</a>	No video paper due.				
3/10/20	Free Blacks Confront the Slave Power: The meaning of Freedom in a Slave Society.			CH 8 Holt & Brown		
3/12/20	Ida B Wells, Pauli Murray & Ella Baker			Prepare for: Research Colin Kapernick, The Me Too Movement, or Black Lives Matter		
3/17/20	Student Research Presentations					
3/19/20	John Mercer Langston			Ch 6. Litwack & Meier		

Date	Lecture Topic	Flash Assignment	Vocabulary	Reading Assignment	Written Assignment	Due Date
3/24/20	The Compromise of 1877: The Republicans sell out Free Blacks			Read the 13th & 14th Amendments to the Constitution		
3/26/20	Martin & Malcolm: The politics of Social Change			No reading Assignment		
3/31/20	Review: Martin & Malcolm: The politics of Social Change			No reading Assignment		
4/2/20	The Black Panther Party: The 10 Point Program			No reading Assignment		
4/7/20	In Class Assignment: Now that I know what I know...			TBA		
4/9/20	Lowndes County Freedom Organization			TBA		
4/14/20	Stokely Carmichael, Huey P Newton, & Maulana Kerenga			No reading Assignment		

Date	Lecture Topic	Flash Assignment	Vocabulary	Reading Assignment	Written Assignment	Due Date
4/16/20	In Class Video: The Rodney King beating. ( <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zLA2gzQQ0g&amp;t=59s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zLA2gzQQ0g&amp;t=59s</a> )					
4/21/20	Rodney King Video Final Paper Due					
4/23/20	Last Day of Class: What have we learned Semester Summary					