

University of Texas at El Paso
African American Studies Program
Fall Term 2023
African American Women and the Black Freedom Movement
Course Numbers: AFST 3302 (CRN: 17018), HIST 3390 (CRN:24215)

I. Professor's Information

Name: Dr. Michael Vinson Williams

Session: Fall (2023)

Course Location: **Online**

Virtual Office hours via the Zoom option in Blackboard: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00-10:30 a.m. and by requests. I will also be reading Blackboard and email messages daily and will respond within a 24-hour period. **However, I prefer students contact me via my UTEP email account.**

Phone number: 915-747-7822

E-mail: mwilliams@utep.edu

UTEP Technology Support: <https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/>

II. Technology Requirements:

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

To access the professor's virtual office hours, students will need access to a computer/laptop, with a camera and a microphone. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.

If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about [Microsoft Office 365](#) and follow the instructions.

IMPORTANT: If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your ability to solve, please contact the UTEP [Help Desk](#) who have trained individuals who can assist you with any technological needs. However, please let me know of any problems you are having accessing the course.

III. Course Description:

The study of the role that African American women played during the Civil Rights movement demands academic focus if we are truly to understand what the Movement meant, how it was organized and carried out and what sacrifice represented for all involved in social activism. By

focusing on African American women activists, this course provides for a greater understanding of the overall struggle black people waged to change the fabric of this nation and to place the moral compass of civil and human rights on a global scale. Through this course, students will come to know the tenacity and dogged perseverance African American women displayed and the influence they had on the actions of their male counterparts. Yet, this course also examines the problems women experienced within the movement regarding their “roles” which were often colored by ideals concerning women’s perceived “limitations” and proper “place” within the male/female dichotomy. By focusing on the ideas and thoughts of African American women, students will gain a more comprehensive understanding of the encompassing nature and power of activism and the necessity of understanding history and the work of those who came before us as strength for our current struggles. As poet and writer, Alice Walker’s words epitomize the internal power of Civil Rights activists in general and African American women in particular, ***“We will be ourselves and free, or die in the attempt. Harriet Tubman was not our great-grandmother for nothing.”***

Course Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes

As students, by the conclusion of the course you will:

- A. Have a sound grasp of the social, cultural, ideological and political aspects associated with African American women’s activism from the late 19th century through the 20th century and their impact upon the development of this country.
- B. Identify pertinent African American women leaders and activists, describe their specific philosophies, leadership styles and discern the success, failure and opposition resulting from their ideas and methodologies.
- C. Apply critical analysis to required reading and writing assignments and to utilize the same skills for dissecting presented social and historical problems.
- D. Learn research methodologies and proper citation skills.
- E. Write a research paper that address a specific civil rights activist and present a solid argument supported by facts and examples.

Academic Objectives:

- a.) Gain knowledge of the time period and the life experiences of those involved.
- b.) Enhance critical thinking skills and its application towards dissecting and understanding the significance and impact of historical issues, movements and leaders.

The UTEP Edge is our philosophy that acknowledges the many assets our students bring to the University. We provide a variety of high-impact experiences both in and out of the classroom through the work of our faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners that build on these assets and talents. Many of the assignments and discussions in this class will further develop the talents you bring to this class such as developing your communication skills, teamwork, critical thinking, and problem solving.

IV. Required Readings:

Students should purchase the required readings at the very start of the semester to avoid difficulties resulting from availability issues. Any student who has trouble locating the material must notify the professor immediately. Lack of a book, however, does not equal a legitimate excuse for incomplete work.

Required Readings:

- Bettye Collier-Thomas and V.P. Franklin, eds., *Sisters in the Struggle: African American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movement* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2001)
- Belinda Robnett, *How Long? How Long?: African-American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997)
- Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and David Garrow, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women who Started It: the Memoir of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2005)
Daisy Bates and Clayborn Carson, *The Long Shadow of Little Rock: A Memoir* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1986)

For references purposes, please see images of the book covers at the end of the syllabus.

The required books above are available at the UTEP Bookstore. If you are unable to acquire your textbooks through UTEP, feel free to consult an internet provider such as Amazon or Barnes and Noble. Make sure, however, that the editions are the same as those listed above.

- Please visit [UTEP Bookstore](#)

Course Requirements:

Students are required to log in each day, read all assignments with a critical eye and complete and submit all assigned work by the given deadline. Students who do not log in can expect such an absence to negatively affect their overall grade. If a student **has** a problem with logging in for whatever reason, she or he must contact the professor immediately to explain the issue.

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Students with disabilities, **verified through The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS)**, should notify the professor immediately of any required accommodations. See, [Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#)

Submission of and participation in group discussions via Blackboard are required to pass this course. Assignments include **book exams, course quizzes, discussion boards, exams, and a research paper.**

Grades:

There will be a total of two major essay exams: a Midterm and a Final worth 100 points each. Each student will complete a book exam on Daisy Bates’s *The Long Shadow of Little Rock: A Memoir* and Jo Ann Gibson Robinson’s *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started it*: worth 50 points each (100 points total) and an 5-7-page research synopsis paper on a specific African American female activist approved by the professor; the paper is worth 85 points. **Neither the coversheet or reference pages can be counted towards satisfying the 5-7-page requirement.** There will also be five quizzes presented throughout the term via Blackboard comprised of identification/short answer and fill in the blank questions from the readings worth 50 points total and discussion board submissions worth (15 points total). Students have a total of 450 possible points over the semester. Please see below for the point to grade equivalency:

Total Points earned:	Final Grade:
405-450	A
360-404	B
315-359	C
270-314	D
269-0	F

Evaluation Values:

Midterm Exam: 100 points	Book exam #1: 50 points
Final Exam: 100 points	Book exam # 2: 50 points
Research Paper: 85 points	Discussion Board Submissions (15 points total)
Five quizzes: 10 points each	

The grading scale used for this course reflects the standard A through F scale: 100-90 = A; 89-80 = B; 79-70 = C; 69-60 = D; 59 and below = F. To calculate your final grade, I will add the total number of points scored on all assignments and divide that number by the total number of points possible. I will not percentage anything as everything is weighted the same.

It is highly recommended that students visit Blackboard on a daily basis. Students will find their grades, be able to post messages, participate in discussion groups and find test and assignment reminders. Blackboard provides you with access to course materials and the ability to engage with both the professor and your classmates.

Late work policy:

Late work will not be accepted unless the professor is provided a legitimate excuse; it is the right of the professor to accept or reject presented excuses. Once assessments windows open, daily assignments must be posted through Blackboard on or before stated deadlines. **The Research Paper, however, must be submitted to the professor via email.** **All time-based submission deadlines are on Mountain Daylight Time (MDT).** Thus, I strongly recommend that you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have a technical issue with

the course website, network, and/or your computer. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through the course website, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. You can email me your back-up document as a last resort.

Below please find computer lab hours for the Liberal Arts Center for Instructional Technology (LACIT) and additional computer labs (**Due to the current coronavirus pandemic, computer lab hours may be altered**):

[LACIT](#)

[Additional Labs and Facilities](#)

Expectations for Examinations and Additional Assessments:

Discussion Boards (15 points):

Blackboard Forums are sites where the entire group meets for conversations on topics related to the readings. Read the instructions and prompts for each forum discussion before posting your reflection. The original posting must indicate (with footnotes when applicable) the sources of any information that supports your perspective. Write your posting in a word document before pasting it into the forum. After posting a reflection of at least 300 words, students will reply to two classmates (preferably two students without two or more replies so as to expand the conversation) in at least 150 words. Students must submit their original text before reading their peers' assignments. **Opening discussion boards before posting your first entry will result in a cancellation of your grade. You must read the instructions provided for each discussion and respond directly to the prompt.**

All answers must integrate the knowledge acquired through the readings and/or video clips. Pay close attention to any feedback provided by the professor so that you can improve future forum reflections. Late postings will not be factored into the final discussion board grade. **Failure to participate in five forums, or recurrent late submissions, will result in an F in this course.**

Midterm Exam: 100 points

The Midterm Exam will be comprised of an identification section where students are required to provide the (who or what, when, where and why important) for five identifications out of 15 provided. The second part of the exam will be an essay. **Students will submit their completed exam via Blackboard by the stated deadline. Exam date: September 28th from 1:30 p.m. to 2:50 p.m.** Students must submit their completed exam by **2:50 p.m. (MDT)**.

Final Exam: 100 points

The Final Exam will not be comprehensive but rather will cover the material from the midterm exam forward and will follow the same format as the midterm. **Exam date: December 14th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.** Students must submit their completed exam by **3:45 p.m. (MDT)**.

Book Exams: 100 points (Total)

Each student will complete two book exams on the following works:

The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started it: Exam date: October 5th from 1:30 p.m. to 2:50 p.m. Students must submit their completed exam by 2:50 p.m. (MDT).

The Long Shadow of Little Rock: A Memoir: Exam date: October 31st from 1:30 p.m. to 2:50 p.m. Students must submit their completed exam by 2:50 p.m. (MDT).

Research Paper:

Each student is required to write an 5-7-page research synopsis paper of your choice on an African American leader (**with professor approval**). Again, please note that neither the coversheet or reference pages can be counted towards satisfying the 5-7-page requirement. **Students must get approval from the professor regarding their selected leader no later than September 8th.** Each paper must discuss the ideology of the leader chosen, their impact upon America or their community, as a whole, and the African American struggle for social and political equality in particular. One must consider certain questions: Was the individual successful in his or her overall goals and objectives? If successful in their areas of struggle/leadership, in what ways were they successful? If they were not successful, why did they fail? If you believe it is not as cut and dry as this, explain why. Also, what is the individual's overall legacy and how did they alter American history? **I do not want you to take a book report approach;** you should provide a critical analysis of the individual's leadership style and ideology along with a clear and supported thesis. The sources used, primary and secondary, will be extremely important regarding the strength of your research analyses. **Students should use a minimum of 7 primary and 7 secondary sources.**

At all cost, students **MUST** avoid generalizations and support your position with a liberal use of examples (documented) and facts to support any conclusions made and any arguments presented. All papers must be typed double-spaced, clearly written, and use **12-point font and Times New Roman Script**. Grammatical errors and misspelled words will hurt your overall grade. Be sure to look over your work and correct any mistakes before submitting the final paper. **All papers must contain a coversheet with the student's name clearly visible, as well as a statement acknowledging it as the student's work or it will not be accepted.** By providing a statement of verification, each student is acknowledging that the work is his or her own and that they have not engaged in any unethical practices concerning the research and writing of the work. Please feel free to consult with the professor at any point during the term. I also encourage students to take advantage of the services offered by the writing center regarding this assignment if so available.

Plagiarism and Citation: In this course, **you are required to cite sources for any material quoted or paraphrased in any written work or assignment.** Please use the citation style relevant to your academic major. Those using footnotes, please use the *Chicago* style manual for citations. **Again, this course operates under an established and ENFORCED system of ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.** Please feel free to contact the professor if you have any questions.

For further discussions regarding the *Chicago* style citation methods, see [Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide](#).

V. Course Behavior:

Absences:

When you enroll in this course you are, in effect, agreeing to log in and fully participate. Although this is an online class, your attendance and participation are expected in the same manner as would be in a Face-to-Face course. Be forewarned that individual logins will be monitored as will participation and a lack of either will negatively impact your overall grade.

COVID-19 Protocols:

Any student who contracts COVID-19, or who must care for someone who has contracted the COVID-19 virus, must let me know immediately so that I can plan with the impacted student regarding the class and coursework. As a means of protecting your privacy, and that of your family, please do not email me any health-related information. Instead, I am asking that students send me an email with a viable phone number and a request that I call you back.

You must **STAY AT HOME** and let your Professor know if you (1) have been diagnosed with COVID- 19, (2) are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or (3) have had recent contact with a person who has received a positive coronavirus test.

Cheating:

University of Texas at El PASO has an approved Academic Integrity Policy that applies to all students. The policy states: “Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person without giving sufficient credit, taking an examination for another person, or any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.” Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the *Handbook of Operating Procedures* (HOP) [[Scholastic Dishonesty](#)], can result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to failing a grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or expulsion, among others.

Under no circumstance will cheating of any kind be tolerated. Cheating on an assignment will result in an automatic **F** and may result in university actions, so refrain from engaging in any unethical behavior as your work will be monitored. For further information regarding UTEP’S Academic Integrity policy. Again, please see [UTEP’s Handbook of Operating Procedures](#). Students please be aware that **ALL** suspected violations of academic integrity will be addressed and may also be reported to the [Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution \(OSCCR\)](#).

Copyright and Fair Use:

Regarding research and written work, students must avoid infringing upon the rights of others by violating the use and presentation of copyrighted materials. Please view the following from Stanford University Libraries regarding issues of Copyright and Fair Use to avoid plagiarism:

Copyright and Fair Use

Classroom Etiquette and Expectations:

1. Each student **MUST** demonstrate respect for their classmates at all time. One does not have to agree with all points presented, but students are expected to refrain from personal attacks or harsh language designed to degrade, denigrate or hurt any person. Criticizing the ideas of an individual by way of personal attacks will not be tolerated. See, [10 rules of netiquette for students](#).
2. Participate fully in course discussions.
3. Engage in discussions and analyze different perspectives and ideas.
4. Submit your assignments on time, participate in forums and complete your assessments before all deadlines.

Students should know that the syllabus is subject to changes or modifications but students will always be notified before any changes. **Keep in mind that failure to submit more than five assignments (including forums and quizzes) will result in a failing grade in this course.**

Procedures for Dropping a Course:

I will not drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please let me know and then contact the [Registrar's Office](#) to initiate the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an "F" for the course. Below, you will also find links that will be helpful as you navigate the course drop process:

[Course Drop Procedures for Fully Online Students](#)

[Course Drop Procedures](#)

Office Hours: Stay in contact with your professor via e-mail or Blackboard (email preferred). Use the Help Forum to ask questions and get feedback. Make sure you have all software needed on your computer to use the chat feature. If chat doesn't work, contact your instructor by e-mail. All software related to UTEP sites for online courses will be provided by UTEP; contact the helpdesk/IT office if you have any problems using any Blackboard feature.

UTEP Library Room 300 (Helpdesk/IT technicians can assist you during person-to-person meetings.) Phone: 915-747-4357 or email: Helpdesk@utep.edu **Be sure to call for hours due to the coronavirus pandemic as available times or the ability to visit offices may be affected.**

How to use Blackboard:

https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/ServiceCatalog/BB_Students.html

Available Student Resources:

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support. Familiarize yourself with the bookmarks on the left-hand side of the Blackboard student portal (visible before entering into a course) as well as the resources below.

- [UTEP Library](#): Access a wide range of resources including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- [Chicago Manual of Style](#): A bibliographic citation tool.
- [University Writing Center \(UWC\)](#): Please use this resource for your research paper assignment and for assistance with writing style and formatting.
- The History Tutoring Center (HTC) @ <https://www.utep.edu/liberalarts/history/resources/student-resource/history-tutoring-center.html> : Receive assistance with writing history papers, get help from a tutor and explore other history-based resources. **Due to the ongoing pandemic, please check to see if this service is available during this term.**

Discussion of Classroom Topics:

Due to the nature of this course, student participation is paramount. As a result, the course is structured to initiate student participation and to provide opportunities to engage in meaningful dialog regarding specific historical circumstances and events related to African American history, leadership and activism. The overall objective is to create and connect an online environment conducive to the expansion of ideas, arguments and to the development of individual perspectives regarding the period outlined. Thus, students who actively read all materials and participate in course discussion boards and discussion groups will benefit the most from this course.

Important Dates:

Exam # 1.....	September 28, 2023 @ 1:30-2:50 p.m. via Blackboard
Book Exam # 1 (Robinson).....	October 5, 2023 @ 1:30-2:50 p.m. via Blackboard
Book Exam # 2 (Bates).....	October 31, 2023 @ 1:30-2:50 p.m. via Blackboard
Research Synopsis Paper	November 16, 2023 by 11:59 p.m.
Holiday (Labor Day).....	September 4, 2023
Holiday	November 23-24, 2023
Final Exam.....	December 14, 2023 @ 1:00-3:45 via Blackboard

VI. Class Schedule for Required Readings and Assignments: (Schedule subject to changes.)

The class course map is a separate document which outlines the completion dates for all assignments so that students are prepared to participate in course discussions and complete all assignments when due. Below you will find pictorial representations of the required readings for this course.

