

**University of Texas at El Paso**  
**African American Studies Program**  
**Spring Term 2020**  
**African American History To 1865**  
**Course Numbers: AFST 3390/HIST 3390 CRN's: 23583/25439**

**I. Professor's Information**

Name: Dr. Michael Williams

Course Location: **LART 207**

Course Meeting Times: Tues/Thur. 1:30-2:50 p.m.

Office Location: **LART, Rm 401**

Office Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays 12:00-1:30 a.m. and by appointment

Phone number: 915-747-7822

E-mail: [mvwilliams@utep.edu](mailto:mvwilliams@utep.edu)

**II. Course Description:**

This course focuses on the diverse experiences of African Americans beginning in West Africa (1400s) and ending with the conclusion of the American Civil War. Although an extensive time period, central themes help connect the parts to the whole revealing an overall picture of African American culture, life experiences, organized struggle, leadership and impact on the social and political development of the United States. Themes treated in this course include: early West African civilizations and cultural expressions; the Atlantic Slave Trade and its social, political, and cultural impact; colonial slavery; black participation in the American Revolution; revolts of enslaved men and women; the slave auction; antebellum slavery; the abolitionist movement; intersectional strife; and the role of African Americans during the Civil War.

By the end of the course, students should have a sound grasp of the social, cultural, and political history of African Americans to 1865 and be able to think critically about significant historical issues regarding African American life and history.

**Academic Objectives:**

- a.) Gain basic 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

**The UTEP EDGE:**

**The UTEP EDGE** is a 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.

### III. 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 me immediately. Lack of a book, however, does not equal a legitimate excuse for incomplete work.

#### Required Readings:

- John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition (Text)
- Deborah Gray White, *Ar'n't I a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South*, Revised Edition (1999)
- David Blight, editor, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave, Written by Himself* (2003)
- Thomas C. Holt and Elsa Barkley Brown, editors, *Major Problems in African-American History, Volume I: From Slavery to Freedom, 1619-1877* (Secondary Text)

**\*\*\*\*Reserve readings (if assigned) will be available at the circulation desk of the University Library; electronic document access will also be available. \*\*\*\***

**Exam Booklets:** Three Blue Books must be turned in to the professor by February 6<sup>th</sup>. Blue books can be purchased at the UTEP Bookstore, the UTEP Post Office and several other venues around campus.

Students are required to attend each class meeting, read all assignments with a critical eye and complete all written work when given. Students can expect absences to negatively affect their overall grade. If a student **has** to miss a class, she or he must present an official document of excuse; all excuses will be filed away and reexamined at the end of the Semester. It is important that students (if at all possible) avoid missing any classes. Students with disabilities, **verified through The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS)**, should notify the professor immediately of any required classroom accommodations.

#### Grades:

There will be a total of **three major written exams including the Final worth 100 points each, two book exams worth 100 points total, a series of course quizzes worth 50 points and an attendance/participation grade worth 50 points total.** Students have a total of **500 possible points** over the course of the semester.

#### Total Points earned:

**500-450  
449-400  
399-350  
349-300  
299-0**

#### Final Grade:

**A  
B  
C  
D  
F**

**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.

#### **Examination Makeup Policy:**

If you miss an assignment because of a legitimate excuse (supported by documentation) you must contact the professor immediately to schedule a makeup test. **Students have one day after the day of the missed exam to make it up**, after that he or she will earn a zero on the assignment unless an extended rescheduling period has been agreed upon. **If a student has a problem with an earned grade on an assignment, she or he must wait 24 hours before meeting with the professor to discuss it.**

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact **The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS)** at **915-747-5148**, or by email to [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at [www.sa.utep.edu/cass](http://www.sa.utep.edu/cass).

#### **IV. Class Behavior:**

##### **Absence and Tardiness:**

When you enroll in this course you are, in effect, agreeing to attend scheduled meeting times. Be forewarned that attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class meeting and one can expect absences to have a negative impact on your overall grade. If you are absent for a class meeting it is your responsibility to makeup any work, acquire any missed information from your fellow classmates, and provide documentation to the professor. Tardiness will not be tolerated and habitual lateness can also hurt your grade so do not make a habit of arriving late for class. **Students acquiring three or more unexcused absences will lose 15 points off their attendance grade.**

##### **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 scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes 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; taking an examination for another person; and 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) and available in the Office of Student Life and the homepage of the Office of Student Life at <http://catalog.utep.edu/grad/academic-regulations/curriculum-and-classroom-policies/>, 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 dismissal, among others.”

Under no circumstance will cheating of any kind be tolerated. Cheating on an assignment will result in an automatic **F** followed by appropriate university actions, so refrain from engaging in any unethical behavior as your work will be monitored.

**Cell Phones and other Electronic Forms of Communication:**

Cell phones and such are not allowed in operation mode at any time during the class period unless authorized for use during the course. If a cell phone or any other unauthorized electronic device interrupts class, the offending student(s) may be asked to leave the classroom and recorded absent for the day regardless of the time of the infraction.

**Discussion of Classroom Topics:**

Due to the nature of this course, student participation is paramount. As a result, the class 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. Although lectures make up a large part of the class structure, the overall objective is to create an environment conducive to the expansion of ideas, arguments, and subjects introduced in lecture and to the development of individual perspectives regarding the period outlined. Thus, individuals who actively participate in course discussions will benefit the most from this course.

**Sleeping and Newspapers:**

It is a known and accepted fact that we all get tired at some point in time, sleeping in class however, is not an accepted remedy. Napping in class is not only rude to the professor and all those assembled, it also reflects poorly upon the offending individual. Reading of newspapers, magazines or any other unauthorized materials in class is simply rude behavior and will not be tolerated. Infractions of either sort will result in the student being asked to leave the class and awarded an absence for the day regardless of the time of the infraction.

**Important Dates:**

Exam # 1.....	February 18 <sup>th</sup>
Exam # 2.....	March 12 <sup>th</sup>
Reading Exam # 1 ( <i>Ar'n't I a Woman</i> ) .....	March 26 <sup>th</sup>
Reading Exam # 2 (Frederick Douglass).....	April 16 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Holiday (Spring Break).....</b>	<b>March 16-20, 2020</b>
<b>Holiday (Cesar Chavez Day).....</b>	<b>March 27, 2020</b>
<b>Final Exam.....</b>	<b>May 14<sup>th</sup> 1:00-3:45 pm</b>

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

The following outlines the completion dates for each reading assignment so that students are prepared to participate in class discussions and follow the course of the lectures.

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Week I: Jan. 21-23: **Course Introduction/Ancestral Africa and the Coming of the Atlantic Slave Trade (Guest Lecture, Dr. DeLisa Hawkes)**  
Franklin (Ch. 1)

Week II: Jan. 28-30: **Ancestral Africa and the Coming of the Atlantic Slave Trade Continued,** Franklin (Ch. 1-2)

- Week III: Feb. 4-6: **“Establishing North American Slavery”**  
Franklin (Ch. 3), Holt & Brown, “African Societies were Transformed by the Slave Trade,” pgs. 52-65
- Week IV: Feb. 11-13: **The Slave Society**  
Franklin (Ch. 4), Holt & Brown, “How Africans Became African Americans,” pgs. 182-94
- Week V: Feb. 18-20: **The Slave Society Continued: Geographical Variations of Slavery and Resistance Tactics and Strategies of the Enslaved**  
Franklin (Ch. 4) and Holt & Brown, “Margaret Garner, a Slave Mother, Kills her Child to Prevent Enslavement, 1856,” pgs. 246-249
- Week VI: Feb. 25-27: **“That All May be Free”: Slavery and the Revolutionary Philosophy**  
Franklin (Ch. 5) Various Calls for Resistance, Holt & Brown, pgs. 295-300, 304-05
- Week VII: Mar. 3-5: **“Blacks in the New Republic”: Establishing Communities**  
Franklin (Ch. 6)
- Week VIII: Mar. 10-12: **African Americans, the Meaning of Expansionism and Southern Slavery**  
Franklin (Ch. 7)
- Week IX: Mar. 17-19: **“Quasi-Free Blacks” and the Overall Struggle for Freedom**  
Franklin (Ch. 8) **SPRING BREAK WEEK**
- Week X: Mar. 24-26: **Abolitionism, the Enslavement Argument, Resistance and the Struggle for Definition**  
Franklin (Ch. 9) and Holt & Brown, “The Roots of Resistance in Free Black Communities,” 308-321 and *Reading Exam #1 (Ar’n’t I a Woman)*
- Week XI: Mar/Apr. 31-2: **Female Slaves and the World they Made: Slavery and the Gender Issue**  
Nell Irvine Painter, “Soul Murder” (document will be provided)  
Holt & Brown “Slave Communities Are Grounded in Family Kinship,” 264-268 and “Gender Roles and Gender Identity in Slave Communities,” 268-277
- Week XII: Apr. 7-9: **Cultural Resistance**  
Discussion of White’s *Ar’n’t I a Woman* and Holt and Brown, “The Slaves’ World-View Revealed in Their Stories,” 277-292
- Week XIII: Apr. 14-16: **“And Black People Were at the Heart of it” The Civil War**  
Franklin (Ch. 10)  
*Reading Exam #2 (Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass)*

Week XIV: Apr. 21-23: **“And Black People Were at the Heart of it” The Civil War Continued**

Franklin (Ch. 10) and Holt & Brown, “Soldiers of God’s Wrath,” pgs. 343-356

Week XV: Apr. 28-30: **What Now? African Americans’ Adjustment in a Changed Society: The Question of Labor:**

Holt & Brown, “Defining Free Labor,” pgs. 401- 406; “The labor of Politics”: Holt & Brown pgs., 407-417

Week XVI: May. 5-7: **“The Work of Reconstruction”**

Holt & Brown, “The Slaves Strike for Freedom,” pgs. 356-367; “Schools for Freedom,” Holt & Brown pgs., 388-401 and **Review and Course Wrap-up**

**\*\*\*\*FINAL EXAM: May 14, 2020 @ 1:00-3:45 p.m. \*\*\*\***