

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM
INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & STUDIES
AFST 2300 and HIST 3329

Instructor: Selfa A. Chew-Meléndez, PhD.
Office: LART 401
Office hours: T & Th: **9:30 – 12:30 AM.**
Schedule a face-to-face meeting by e-mail.
Conversations can also take place through e-mail.
Expect a response to your message within 24 hours.

E-mail: sachewsmithart@utep.edu
Class Time: On-line, M-F
Phone: 915 747 8650

Syllabus

This course is an introduction to African American Studies and includes the study of the history, literature, arts, and material culture of people of African descent in the United States. Textbook, articles, and films will assist us to understand the role that African American men and women have in the history of the United States. Our analysis will center on the political, cultural, social, and economic strategies developed to challenge racism and other relations of power. Texts, audiovisual material and activities are selected to examine persisting inequalities affecting African Americans as well as accomplishments in the struggle for equality. Prominent themes include the Reconstruction; African Americans' migration; the development of the modern civil rights movement and its aftermath; African American intellectuals; deindustrialization; and contemporary struggles. The intersections of gender, race, and class will be repeatedly visited in our analysis of African American History. Students will read assigned texts to understand core concepts; view-supporting materials for daily online assignments about key topics, and use related web sites for online discussions, with specific deadlines.

This is an on-line course, with specific date lines, daily work and reading assignments. Our platform is Blackboard. Comments will be provided through the grading feature and UTEP system messages.

Objectives are:

- To **critically** analyze the social, cultural, and political development of the African American communities.
- To identify the African American contributions to the history, economy, and culture of the United States.
- To establish connections between the past of the African American communities and their present.
- To read historical texts and documents in order to use them as sources for clear, accurate, and informed discussion (in class and in your written reports);
- To learn in a cooperative environment the *relationship* and *significance* of historical persons, events, ideas, and concepts.

At the end of this course I would like my students to be able to:

- Think critically about the social, cultural, and political development of the African American communities.
- Understand that “race” is a social construction and racism is a real social structure that determines the quality of life of residents of the United States.
- Determine social and individual responsibilities in the democratization of society.
- Understand the difference between structural racism and prejudice.
- Evaluate past events and social processes as factors that shape our present.
- Develop strategies to improve independent study and academic writing skills.
- Become familiar with social science terminology.

Timely Submission of assignments and participation in group discussions via Blackboard are compulsory to pass this course.

Students are responsible for all information provided in their textbook and documentaries. Students would be well advised to read several topics in advance of lectures and discussions. The primary textbook for the course is:

Nell Irvin Painter: *Creating Black Americans: African American History And Its Meaning, 1619 to the Present*, Oxford University Press, 2006.

In addition to this book, secondary scholarly essays will be provided through our UTEP virtual data base and other media. The reading assignments are by no means exhaustive; they will, however, provide clues to more detailed treatments of the great majority of issues and questions to be raised in the introductory course in African American Studies and History.

Our study of African American history necessitates an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on paradigms and critical theories, and understanding the humanizing nature of learning about and eradicating racism and other “isms” damaging to people.

Note also that films and sections of videos will be used to heighten our appreciation of historical eras and issues. As new material is emerging, our list of this type of resources may change. Course requirements are:

Daily chapter assessments	40%
Participation in forums	35%
Quizzes (tests)	10%
Final Paper	15%

How to start: 1) Click on the tab titled “Week 1.” 2) Click on the tab titled “July 5.” 3) Click on the texts tab and read your assigned chapters or articles. 4) Click on each assignment tab to see the instructions and submit your homework. You will follow the same steps on subsequent class days. All assignments and tests are due on the same date, by midnight.

Late work policy:

- **This is not a self-paced course. Daily assignments must be posted through Blackboard on or before the assigned time (midnight). Late submissions will have a deduction of 10% per day.**

Students' responsibilities

Your instructor will provide structure, content, guidance, and assessment. Most learning, however, will occur through students' active participation in their own acquisition of knowledge.

- Students will submit journal entries and complete assessments on daily basis.
- Students will participate in daily class discussion forums.
- Students will complete all procedures required to drop the course when failing this course if they desire to obtain a "W."
- Students will be responsible for obtaining a syllabus, access to Blackboard, acquiring the reading material and following the course schedule.
- Students will reach their professor when in doubt before datelines.
- Students will be active in their own learning process.
- Students are expected to show respect for the instructor and one another regardless of opinion, cultural values and other group differences. When students show disrespect, use demeaning adjectives, make malicious comments, and "ad hominem" arguments (made personally against an opponent, instead of against the opponent's argument), points will be deducted from assignment. If behavior is repeated, students may be dropped from the course.
- Students must notify instructor of behavior they consider disrespectful immediately, meeting with instructor to address corrective measures.
- Students will correct terminology and concepts that have been learned in other contexts but is not acceptable in academia, or in respectful social forums.
- Students will consider perspectives that are originated in disfranchised social sectors, recognizing that this course intends to provide the views and knowledge of communities largely excluded from main stream narratives.
- Students will establish connections among all readings in this class, to increase their ability to examine Black feminism and the historical context producing it from non-Eurocentric perspectives.
- Communications with your peers and your professor must follow the protocol you will read at <http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>. Assignment points will be deducted when your messages do not follow the conventions listed in the site referenced. Assignments sent through UTEP e-mail will not be read or graded without a proper polite message, with salutation, the reason for sending it the assignment through e-mail. All homework will be submitted as in-box text, not as attachments.
- All students should be supportive of a cooperative learning environment in the classrooms.

Daily chapter assessments will be completed to review the content of each chapter. They will be closed at the end of the day. Answers must not be limited to information but they must include an assessment of the relevance of the topic explored. Text must be original. Direct copy of the text will not earn points.

Participation in forums must generate respectful conversations. Read the instructions carefully as the length of the text and the number of replies changes and also the points earned. Conversations will always be unfinished, hopefully, as our aim is to generate permanent reflection on the topics at hand and to

reflect as we are learning through our readings, lectures, and documentaries. We may disagree with other person's opinion but the objective is to ponder other perspectives.

Quizzes are meant to direct students to important ideas in the articles and videos provided. They will be closed at the end of the day. Should you find a glitch or mistake, please, e-mail your professor.

Course evaluation. It is important to receive your feedback. You will receive a link in your student e-mail box to access your course evaluation. Submit it promptly as the window during summer courses is very short.

Final Paper: Students will write a three-page paper explaining why learning African American history is important, what are the events and persons you consider necessary to integrate in a US course; how this course can contribute to your growth as a citizen and a human being; and, how it will help you in your career/employment.

The grading scale is:

- A=90-100
- B=80-89
- C=70-79
- D=60-69
- F=59 or less

July 5	Chapter 1: Africa and Black Americans.	Chapter assessment and forums
	Article: "Talking About Race, Learning About Racism, by Dr. Beverly Tatum."	Quiz and forum
July 6	Chapter 2: Captives Transported.	Chapter assessment and forum
	Video on Equiano: "A Son of Africa." http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb2971654 Ayuba Suleiman Diallo	Forum
July 7	Chapter 3: A Diasporic People	Chapter assessment and forum
	<i>Ghosts of Amistad: In the Footsteps of the Rebels</i> (Search in our UTEP library if the link does not function) http://0-search.alexanderstreet.com.lib.utep.edu/view/work/2748533	Forum
July 8	Chapter 4. Those Who Were Free	Chapter assessment and forum

	<i>African Americans Many Rivers to Cross. Part II.</i> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ktWWX6j51A	Forum
July 11	Chapter 5: Those Who Were Enslaved	Chapter assessment and forum
	<i>The Difference Between Us: Race, the Power of an Illusion</i> http://0-fod.infobase.com.lib.utep.edu/p_ViewVideo.aspx?xtid=49734	Forum
July 12	Chapter 6: Civil War and Emancipation	Chapter assessment and forum
	<i>The African Americans Many Rivers to Cross Episode 3 Into the Fire 1861 1896</i> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdu7BigeEZ0	Forum
July 13	Chapter 7: The Larger Reconstruction	Chapter assessment and forum
	The African Americans Many Rivers to Cross Episode 4- Making a way Out of no way 1897 1940	Forum
July 14	Chapter 8: Hard-working People in the Depths of Segregation	Chapter assessment and forum
	<i>Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Black Johnson</i> , directed by Ken Burns, (Arlington, VA: Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), 2004) First 60 minutes	Forum
July 15	<i>Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Black Johnson</i> , directed by Ken Burns, (Arlington, VA: Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), 2004), 4 hours 18 mins Next 3 hours and 18 minutes.	Forum (30 points)
July 18	Chapter 9: The New Negro	Chapter assessment and forum
	Robin D. G. Kelley. "'We Are Not What We Seem': Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South." <i>The Journal of American History</i> 80, no. 1 (1993): 75-112.	Assessment and forum
July 19	Chapter 10: Radicals and Democrats	Chapter assessment and forum
	Video: Speak of Me as I Am: The Story of Paul Robeson UTEP library link: http://0-fod.infobase.com.lib.utep.edu/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=104347&xtid=8755	Forum
July 20	Chapter 11: The Second World War and the Promise of Internationalism	Chapter assessment and forum

	Giles, Mark S. "Special Focus: Dr. Anna Julia Cooper, 1858-1964: Teacher, Scholar, and Timeless Womanist." <i>The Journal of Negro Education</i> 75, no. 4 (2006): 621-34. http://0-www.jstor.org.lib.utep.edu/stable/40034662 .	Assessment and forum
July 21	Chapter 12: Cold War Civil Rights	Chapter assessment and forum
	Video "The African Americans Many Rivers To Cross" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aN1dxdmeaTI	Forum
July 22	Video "Brother Outsider: Bayard Rustin" UTEP link: http://0-fod.infobase.com.lib.utep.edu/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=104347&xtid=57866	Forum
	Audio "Dr. Martin Luther King. Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence."	Forum
July 25	Chapter 13: Protest Makes a Civil Rights Revolution	Chapter assessment and forum
	McGuire, Danielle L. "'It Was like All of Us Had Been Raped': Sexual Violence, Community Mobilization, and the African American Freedom Struggle." <i>The Journal of American History</i> 91, no. 3 (2004): 906-31.	Assessment and forum
July 26	Chapter 14 Black Power	Chapter assessment and forum
	Davis, Angela Y. "Rape, Racism and the Capitalist Setting." <i>The Black Scholar</i> 9, no. 7 (1978): 24-30.	Assessment and forum
July 27	Chapter 15: Authenticity and Diversity in the Era of Hip-Hop.	Chapter assessment and forum
	Dr. Michelle Alexander: The New Jim Crow. Mass Incarceration in the Era of Colorblindness https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WX6G0ICwJ1Q	Forum
July 28	Epilogue	Chapter assessment and forum
	The House We Live In: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mW764dXEI_8 and "There Goes the Neighborhood" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzsOl5zVw-8	Forum
July 29	Final Paper	

This syllabus is subject to modifications. If videos are not available they will be substituted or omitted.

Frequent Q and A:

Q. Where can I buy my book?

A. Your UTEP library is the place to start. Amazon is also a good vendor.

Q. Will I be able to meet with my professor?

A. Yes. You can arrange a face to face meeting or a phone conference. Call her at 915 747 8650 or send an e-mail (sachewsmithart@utep.edu).

Q. What should I expect from this course beyond learning about African American history and culture?

A. Expect to polish your skills to excel in a graduate program and to be competitive in a job market that increasingly requires critical thinking, interdisciplinary perspectives, independent research, and collaborative projects.

Q. How do I start this course?

A. Access your Blackboard platform, search our course. Open it. Click on the “Home Page” tab at the navigation area. Click on Week 1, then July 5. There you will find each task with instructions for that date. Follow the same procedure for each subsequent date.

Q. Where do I find the articles and videos I need to complete my assignments?

A. Click on the folder with the title that describes the day of assignments you will be working on. The folder contains everything you need except your textbook. If you can't access the videos or articles needed using Blackboard links, you can use our UTEP virtual library and search them through JSTOR or EBSCO. Videos will be located the same way, or through youtube.com

Q. Why isn't the material strictly arranged in a chronological order in our syllabus?

A. History is not lineal. Having a strict chronological perspective slows our understanding of the uneven or minimal progress made in terms of rights accorded to African Americans. We can think in broader terms and make connections between historical roots of oppression and current issues and activism.

Q. What if a text is difficult because of the terms used?

A. You can always use a dictionary and other texts that deal with the topic. Or you can make an appointment with your professor, which can take place by phone or face to face. Her phone number is 915 747 8650.