

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM
INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & STUDIES
AFST 2300 (16800) and HIST 3329 (16826)

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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 social relations of power affecting Black individuals. 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.

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:

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Mid-term examination	30%
Final examination	30%
Homework and in-class quizzes	20%
Team presentation	10%
Participation in classroom discussions	5%
Attendance to an extra-curricular event	5%

Homework assignments and in-class quizzes will not be accepted after the dateline. When our class meets outside of our regular classroom to attend a lecture by a guest speaker, students will submit a question for our guest speaker. In addition, students will submit a report describing the event and its relevance to our class.

Team presentations will take a maximum of five minutes. A power point presentation with graphics is required and will be presented to your professor at least two weeks before scheduled time. It is your team’s responsibility to submit the proposed presentation for review. Your last slide will contain a question for the group. Submit your power point through Blackboard to receive your grade. Grade will be assigned until the end of the term, once I receive all power points from the class. PPT file must be free of grammatical errors, and the text must be original (not just a copy-and-paste paragraph). Citation of sources must be provided in a separate slide. Sources must be academic considered reliable by your professor (not Wikipedia, ask.com). Please, consult with your professor if you find information in internet

that is important, and no other academic source is validating it. Select persons, communities or events that are rarely included in K-12 textbooks. When designing your PPT list main ideas in very few words that can be read from the last row of the classroom, with a maximum of five slides. Videos should not exceed two minutes. As part of our **in-class quizzes**, at the end of the class, all students will submit with the following information: name of the presenter, title of the presentation, answer to the question and the fact that they consider the most important. It is the presenters' responsibility to make sure they complete this assignment as scheduled. If postponed, due to changes in our syllabus, students will reschedule with their professor to present before the final exam date.

Exams. Two exams will be provided. Students must submit a response that includes the historical significance of the event, persons, communities described. Responses must be formulated in the student's own words. Significance of each event, process or person must be provided to obtain full credit for the answer. The objective is to reflect on the information learned, to establish connections with contemporary social processes.

Participation in class discussions must generate respectful conversations. Avoid replying directly to other students and wait until all other students speak to take again your turn, even if the conversation takes a different direction. 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. Participation points will not be accrued when students are absent.

The grading scale is:

A=90-100

B=80-89

C=70-79

D=60-69

F=59 or less

Absences will result in a deduction of 5% points from the student's final grade, with the exception of the first absence. Lateness, or leaving the classroom for more than 5 minutes, or leaving the class early, will cause a loss of 2.5% points from the final grade, per instance, after the first event. It is particularly important to attend our special guest lectures punctually. Jury duty, UTEP official representation in sports or academic events, and military orders to leave the city are the only instances in which absences are excused. Four or more unexcused absences can result in the student receiving a failing grade for the course, and only if they are not excessive or limit the ability of the student to submit homework and demonstrate mastering the content of our texts and lectures. Please review your student handbook for policies pertaining to plagiarism. The policies will be adhered to strictly. The assignments and format for the tests will be discussed more thoroughly within the first week of the semester. Welcome!

Week 1 Introduction. Chapter 1: Africa and Black Americans

Week 2 Chapter 2: Captives Transported
Video "A Son of Africa"

Week 3 Chapter 3: A Diasporic People
Student Presentations start.

Week 4 Chapter 4. Those Who Were Free

Week 5	Chapter 5: Those Who Were Enslaved
Week 6	Chapter 6: Civil War and Emancipation
Week 7	Chapter 7: The Larger Reconstruction
Week 8	Chapter 8: Hard-working People in the Depths of Segregation
Week 9	Chapter 9: The New Negro
Week 10	Chapter 10: Radicals and Democrats
Week 11	Chapter 11: The Second World War and the Promise of Internationalism
Week 12	Chapter 12: Cold War Civil Rights
Week 13	Chapter 13: Protest Makes a Civil Rights Revolution Video “Brother Outsider: Bayard Rustin”
Week 14	Chapter 14 Black Power Video “The Black Power Mixtape” Audio “Dr. Martin Luther King. Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence.”
Week 15	Chapter 15: Authenticity and Diversity in the Era of Hip-Hop
Week 16	Final Exam. Thursday, May 12 th . 1:00 – 3:45 PM

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