

## AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

### THEORIES IN AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

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Session	Fall 2016
<b>Classroom:</b>	Online via Blackboard.
Office Hours:	M & W: <b>8:00 – 9:30 AM.</b>
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### SYLLABUS

The quest for theoretical understanding of the African American experience has preoccupied many significant intellectuals, general thinkers, and activists in the American community. The nature of race relations in the United States, its impact on African Americans and their development endeavors have produced a large body of analysis and interpretation. Diagnosis and prognosis continue to intrigue activists and intellectuals and point to praxis as African Americans face social disparities in need of explanation and rectification. Since African American men and women have produced a strong corpus of critical theory, confident that educational development and theory mastery are inextricably linked to progress, those thinkers and intellectuals will be at the center of this course.

Welcome to the course and let's make it meaningful and enjoyable as we engage in the great exercises of learning, knowledge-gathering, and critical thinking!

Course requirements are:

Journal	50%
Participation in forums	20%
Definitions	10%
Quizzes (tests)	10%
Final Paper	10%

#### Required Textbooks

- 1. *The Black Studies Reader*. Edited by Jacqueline Bobo, Cynthia Hudley, & Claudine Michel. Publisher: Routledge, 2004. ISBN-10: 0415945542.
- 2. *Black Bourgeoisie*, by E. Franklin Frazier. Publisher: Free Press, 1997. ISBN-10: 0684832410
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Objectives are:

- To identify social theories applicable to African American Studies.
- To **critically** analyze the social, cultural, and political development of the African American communities.
- To establish connections between the past of the African American communities and their present.
- To read 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.
- Become familiar with the intellectual work of African American scholars and activists.

- Understand that “race” is a social construction.
- Determine collective and individual responsibilities in the democratization of our social environments.
- Develop strategies to improve independent study skills in preparation for a graduate program.
- Become familiar with social science terminology.

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 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 this course. Material explaining concepts and theories that are integrated by Black scholars is also presented to students. Hegemony is an example of the ideas we must grasp to understand some texts in this course.

Our study of African American Studies Theories will be guided by 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 theories and their contexts. As new material is emerging, our list of this type of resources may change, but you are encouraged to still review them at home to enhance your analysis of our topics.

**How to start:** 1) Click on the tab titled “Week 1.” 2) Click on each assignment tab to see the instructions and submit your homework. You will follow the same steps on subsequent class days. If you need technical help, please call 915 747 4357, or <http://helpdesk.utep.edu>

### **Late work policy:**

- **This is not a self-paced course. Assignments must be posted through Blackboard on or before the assigned time (midnight). Late submissions will have a deduction of 10% per day. Total points do not reflect your grade. Each type of assignment carries a different weight.**

### ***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 as scheduled.
- 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, or a community, instead of against the opponent’s argument), points will be deducted from the assignment. If behavior is repeated, students may be dropped from the course.
- Students will not hold other students directly responsible for historical processes or instances of social injustice. They will avoid generalizations and accusations that are not conducive to our acquisition of knowledge. Avoid addressing other students as “You” or “Your people” when discussing social processes. Instead, refer to a specific type of persons or communities, in a specific period of time and region. Asking questions in a

respectful tone, instead of making an aggressive statement, helps us share information and views that will contribute to our growth as intellectuals.

- Students must notify instructor of behavior they consider disrespectful immediately, meeting with instructor to address corrective measures.
- Students will discuss 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 African American Studies theories and the historical context.
- 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 the assignment through e-mail. Except for the final paper, all homework will be submitted as in-box text, not as attachments through Blackboard.
- All students should be supportive of a cooperative learning environment in the classrooms.

### **Blackboard Journal Entries:**

Journal entries are the backbone of our course. They will be submitted as an in-box text, not as attachment. Late submissions will carry 10% deduction per day. Journal entries consist of one summary per text assigned (documentaries are considered texts). The extension required is **at least** ten sentences **per text** or film analyzed, if that covers the main points and argument. Some students will need larger paragraphs to state the main ideas an argument. In addition to the summaries (depending on the number of texts and films assigned), students will add one paragraph with comments about the texts, establishing their relationship with other texts read in our class or in other classes, or with personal experiences.

Summaries will include the name of the author, the title of the text, and the author's argument within the first lines. This information will be followed (in the same paragraph) by the sources used by the author to support the argument, and main points or concepts.

Summaries are the "objective part of the journal entry." Comments are the "subjective" area in which you can critique, evaluate, or express other thoughts in relation to the topic in this course. Keep in mind that, for the purposes of this class, the term "race" will not be used unless it is applied as a category of analysis. Racism is very real and structural; however, racial classifications are arbitrary, socially constructed, and are not directly related to intellectual abilities or moral systems.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and journal entries with patchwork (pasting sentences which are directly copied from the texts) will earn zero points, whether intelligible or unclear. Cite the author, work title and page in a footnote. Journal entries must be coherent and demonstrate understanding of the text as a whole. Make sure you comprehend every term included in your texts; if it is a complex notion, explain it in your own words. Each journal entry must have footnotes and bibliography (Chicago style). Not sending your journal entries by the date line five times results automatically in an F. Review constantly your journal grades and read my comments. Replying to my notes will generate one or two extra points. If a problem in your journal persists your grade will progressively decrease. It is important, then, to correct your journals according to instructions specifically addressing your journal entries.

**Wiki Definitions:** Each week, students will post a definition of a term and expand on, or correct, another definition posted by a different student. This activity will take place using the tab "Dictionary Wikis" in Blackboard. Our class will create a dictionary useful to comprehend the theories we are learning in this course. Hegemony, coloniality and intersectionality are examples of words that students may need to define to grasp the content of certain articles. Please, consult the definitions that are already posted by other students to avoid repetition, and to earn full points. In addition to the definition, students will provide an example of usage, a sentence containing the defined term. Level of activity and accuracy will be graded at the end of the term. Since intellectual growth will take place thanks to the accumulative effect of our readings and reflection, students will have the opportunity to return to their own definitions and modify them.

**Participation** in forums must generate respectful conversations. Click on the forum tab, then click on the “Create Thread” tab. Instructions for the specific forum will appear. Read the instructions carefully as prompts differ. Students are expected to demonstrate their mastery of the texts content, citing specific pages to support their argument in a footnote. Students must submit an original posting before having access to their peers’ responses. The first posting must have footnotes with bibliographical references when citing the information contained in the articles. After the initial response, students will submit a reply to another student. A minimum of 150 words is required for the original posting and 100 words when replying to a peer. It is highly recommended to submit your original posting at least two days before the due date so you can submit responses to other students by the dateline. Superficial postings, such as “I agree with you,” will not earn points. Replies must advance our knowledge and integrate information from the texts read. 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 as scheduled. 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 is very short.

**Final Paper:** Students will write an essay explaining in detail at least five major theories learned in this course, its relevance to our understanding of the African American experience, and its applicability to current issues. **Minimum length:** 7 pages, 12 Times Roman, double space, 1” margins. Six pages will be devoted to the discussion of theories, one page to the conclusion. In the conclusion, students will explain how the theoreticians studied contributed to their awareness of social issues and intellectual growth, and how this set of theories will help them in their career/graduate/studies employment. Final papers must be original, using the Chicago Style citation format (footnotes and bibliography). Documents will be submitted in Microsoft Word Format through Blackboard (no other format will be accepted) as attachment. If problems arise, submit it as in-box.

The grading scale is:

A=90-100

B=80-89

C=70-79

D=60-69

F=59 or less

#### **Schedule:**

This schedule is for your mandatory readings mainly. Our readings are not following a strict chronological order in the treatment of topics. All texts in this schedule must be included in the submission of journals. Students must read the texts before their discussion in forums. I will provide other texts through Blackboard. Check your Blackboard Calendar for specific datelines.

Journals must be submitted on the date they are assigned by midnight.

Date	Text or documentary assigned	Assignments Due dates
Week 1 August 22-26	Documentary: <i>Race, the Power of an Illusion</i> . (Located at our UTEP data base, streamline). <a href="http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb2964920">http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb2964920</a> W. E. B. Dubois: <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> . Only Sections I , II, and III, Link to the HTM file: <a href="http://www.gutenberg.org/files/408/408-h/408-h.htm">http://www.gutenberg.org/files/408/408-h/408-h.htm</a>	Journal entry, assessment and definitions (August 24) Forum (August 24-26)
Week 2 August 29 – September 2	Introduction. <i>The Black Studies Reader</i> (BSR), pp. 1-14. “The Intellectual and Institutional Development of Africana Studies.” Robert L. Harris, Jr. (BSR), pp. 15-20. “Black Studies in Liberal Arts Education.” Johnetta B. Cole. (BSR), pp. 21-34. <i>An Overview of Critical Race Theory</i> by Evelyn Collins <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-SffJkUt_U">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-SffJkUt_U</a>	Journal entry, assessment and definitions (August 31) Forum (August 31-September 2)
Week 3 September 5 - 9	September 5: Labor Day. “Theorizing Black Studies. The Continuing Role of Community Service in the Study of Race and Class,” James Jennings. (BSR), pp. 35-40.  “Womanist Consciousness. Maggie Lena Walker and the Independent Order of Saint Luke” Elsa Barkley Brown. (BSR), pp. 47-64.  “A Message To Black Youth” by James Baldwin <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69pi63RgeJ4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69pi63RgeJ4</a>	Journal entry, assessment and definitions (September 7) Forum (September 7 - 9)
Week 4 September 12 - 16	“The Evolution of Doxey A. Wilkerson 1935-1945,” Maceo C. Dailey and Ernie Washington. Freedomways, Volume 24, Summer 1985, pp. 101-116.  W.E.B. DuBois Speaks! Socialism and the American Negro For the audio: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKXgIS90qn4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKXgIS90qn4</a> If you prefer to read the speech, here is the PDF File: <a href="http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner_notes/folkways/FW05514.pdf">http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner_notes/folkways/FW05514.pdf</a>	Journal entry, assessment and definitions (September 14) Forum (September 14-16)
Week 5 September 19 - 23	“Discontented Black Feminists. Prelude and Postscript to the Passage of the Nineteenth Amendment,” Rosalyn Terborg-Penn. (BSR), pp. 65-78.  “Ella Baker and the Origins of Participatory Democracy,” Carol Mueller. (BSR), pp. 79-90. “Black Women and the Academy,” Angela Y. Davis. (BSR), pp. 91-100.	Journal entry, assessment and definitions (September 21) Forum (September 21-23)

<p>Week 6 September 25 -29</p>	<p>“Justifiable Homicide, Police Brutality, or Governmental Repression?” Frederick Knight. (BSR), pp. 139- 152.</p> <p>“Race, Same-Sex Desire, and Cultural Belonging,” Marlon B. Ross. (BSR), pp. 153 – 176.</p>	<p>Journal entry, assessment and definitions (September 27) Forum (September 27- 29)</p>
<p>Week 7 October 3- 7</p>	<p>“Black Women as Cultural Readers. The Color Purple,” Jacqueline Bobo. (BSR), pp.177-192.</p> <p>“The Watermelon Woman and Black Lesbian Possibility.” Laura L. Sullivan. (BSR), pp. 211-224.</p> <p><i>T’Ain’t Nobody’s Bizness: Queer Blues Divas of the 1920s.</i> At UTEP library streaming. <a href="http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3187961">http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3187961</a></p>	<p>Journal entry, assessment and definitions (October 5) Forum (October 5 - 7)</p>
<p>Week 8 October 10 - 14</p>	<p>“Dreadpath/Lockspirit,” Akasha Gloria Hull. (BSR), pp. 225-228.</p> <p>(Notice the sequence of our readings) “Multicultural Barbie and the Merchandise of Difference,” Ann duCille. (BSR), pp. 265-280.</p>	<p>Journal entry, assessment and definitions (October 12) Forum (October 12 - 14)</p>
<p>Week 9 October 17 - 21</p>	<p>“D. W. Griffith and the Whitening of America,” Cedric J. Robinson. (BSR), pp.229-254.</p> <p>“What is this “Black” in Black Popular Culture?” Stuart Hall. (BSR), pp. 255-264.</p> <p>“Gender and Race in D. W. Griffith’s Birth of a Nation,” by Brian Noell <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyXRb3YTDUU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyXRb3YTDUU</a></p>	<p>Journal entry, assessment and definitions (October 19) Forum (October 19 - 21)</p>
<p>Week 10 October 24 - 28</p>	<p>“How Deep, How Wide? Perspectives on the Making of The Massachusetts 54th Colored Infantry,” Jacqueline Shearer. (BSR), pp. 101-112.</p> <p>“Military Rites and Wrongs. African Americans in the U.S. Armed Forces,” Phyllis R. Klotman. (BSR), pp.113-138.</p>	<p>Journal entry, assessment and definitions (October 26) Forum (October 26 - 28)</p>
<p>Week 11 October 31 – November 4</p>	<p>“Can the Queen Speak?: Racial Essentialism, Sexuality, and the Problem of Authority,” Dwight A. McBride. (BSR), pp. 343-358.</p> <p>“Home –School Partnership Through the Eyes of Parents.” Cynthia Hudley and Rhoda Barnes, (BSR), pp. 359-366.</p> <p>“Adolescent Coping Strategies in Five Connecticut High Schools.” Randi L. Miller. (BSR), pp. 367-378.</p>	<p>Journal entry, assessment and definitions (November 2) Forum (November 2 - 4)</p>

<p>Week 12 November 7 - 11</p>	<p>“Racial Socialization Strategies of Parents in Three Black Private Schools,” Deborah J. Johnson. (BSR), pp. 379-388. “Talking about Race, Learning About Racism.” Beverly D. Tatum, (BSR), pp. 389-412. <i>Movement with a Meaning: The Lula Washington Dance Theatre (J.C. Productions)</i> <a href="https://www.kanopystreaming.com/product/taint-nobodys-bizness-queer-blues-divas-19">https://www.kanopystreaming.com/product/taint-nobodys-bizness-queer-blues-divas-19</a></p>	<p>Journal entry, assessment and definitions (November 9) Forum (November 9 - 11)</p>
<p>Week 13 November 14 - 18</p>	<p><i>Black Bourgeoisie</i>, by E. Franklin Frazier, Free Press, 1997.</p>	<p>Journal entry, assessment and definitions (November 16) Forum (November 16–18)</p>
<p>Week 14 November 21 - 23</p>	<p>Thanksgiving Holiday 24 – 25  Notice dates of submission of assignments  UTEP streamline section  <i>P.S. I Can't Breathe (Black Lives Matter)</i>. Documentary <a href="http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3187964">http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3187964</a> <i>Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin</i>. Documentary. <a href="http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb2973855">http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb2973855</a></p>	<p>Journal entry, assessment and definitions (November 23) <b>This forum carries a larger weight (November 21-27)</b></p>
<p>Week 15 November 28 - 30</p>	<p>“Teaching Haitian Vudu.” Claudine Michel, pp. 435-444 “Islam in the African American Experience.” Richard Brent Turner, pp. 445-472 Last Day Class, December 1<sup>st</sup>.</p>	<p>Journal entry, assessment and definitions (November 30) Forum (November 30)  <b>Submit final paper on Final Exam Day. December 5.</b></p>

This syllabus is subject to changes.