

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

THEORIES IN AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES AFST 2301 AND SOCI 3341

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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 Black men and women have produced a strong corpus of critical theory, confident that educational development and theory mastery are inextricably linked to progress, a selection of the work of 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	55%
Quizzes	10%
Participation in forums	15%
Final Paper	20%

Required Textbooks

- *The Black Studies Reader*. Edited by Jacqueline Bobo, Cynthia Hudley, & Claudine Michel. Publisher: Routledge; 1st Paperback edition (March 20, 2004). ISBN-10: 0415945542. ISBN-13: 978-0415945547
- *The Black Bourgeoisie*. E. Franklin Frazier. Publisher: Free Press (February 13, 1997). ISBN-10: 0684832410
- ISBN-13: 978-0684832418
- *The Racial Contract*. Charles Mills. Publisher: Cornell University Press (June 25, 1999). ISBN-10: 0801484634
- ISBN-13: 978-0801484636
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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 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 Black scholars and activists.
- Understand that “race” is a social construction affecting the quality of life of racialized individuals.

- 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.

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 class discussion forums as scheduled.
- 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). In the case of books, each section is considered a separate text. Extension: **at least** fifteen original complete 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 two or three summaries (depending on the number of texts and films assigned), students will add one paragraph with comments about the texts. All journal entries must be original. Only one quote is allowed by summary, indicating in the footnote the source (author, page number, etc.) following the Chicago/Turabian citing system.

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 (documents, data or observations), 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 material. 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/Turabian style). Not sending your journal entries by the due date 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.

Participation in forums must generate respectful conversations and will take a week to complete. On the first day of the week, click on the forum tab, then click on the "Create Thread" tab. Instructions for the scheduled forum will appear. Read the instructions carefully as the length of the text and the number of replies may vary and also the maximum number of points. Prompts may differ also. Students are expected to demonstrate their mastery of the texts content, citing specific pages to support their argument in a footnote. The first posting must have footnotes with bibliographical references when citing the information contained in the articles, although quotes must be kept at a minimum. Students must submit two replies to two other students. Select postings with 0 – 1 replies unless the due date is approaching and there is no other posting left without response. A minimum of 150 words is required for the original posting and 100 words when replying to your peers. Students must submit an original posting before having

access to other texts. 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. Your name should appear in the subject field. Please, address your peers by name when submitting your reply.

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.

Date	Text or documentary assigned
Week 1 January 17 – 21	<p style="text-align: center;">Documentaries: <i>13th</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">This documentary (13th) must be accessed through Netflix. 100 minutes. (13th is the only documentary that will be available exclusively through Netflix. All others are included in our UTEP system or youtube.com)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Race, the Power of an Illusion.</i> (Located at our UTEP data base, streamline). 56 minutes. http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb2964920</p> <p>Note: If you don’t have access to Netflix, an option is to watch the lecture presented by Dr. Michelle Alexander <i>The New Jim Crow, Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness.</i> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eH0EcN-Sln0</p> <p><i>13th</i> will also be screened on January 23, 2017 from 1:30-3:00 p.m. in the Union Cinema (UTEP). A panel will follow the film presentation. Submission of a one-page report describing the panel discussion and comments will earn you 2 points over your entire course grade.</p>
Week 2 January 23 - 28	<p style="text-align: center;">Documentary: <i>W. E. B. Du Bois: A Biography in Four Voices</i> (Located at our UTEP data base, streamline). Director: Louis Massiah. 115 minutes http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3296700</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> by W. E. B. Du Bois: Only sections I and II Link to the HTM file: http://www.gutenberg.org/files/408/408-h/408-h.htm</p>

<p>Week 3 January 30 – February 4</p>	<p>“The Intellectual and Institutional Development of Africana Studies.” Robert L. Harris, Jr. (BSR), pp. 15-20.</p> <p>“Theorizing Black Studies. The Continuing Role of Community Service in the Study of Race and Class,” James Jennings. (BSR), pp. 35-40.</p> <p>Documentary: <i>Herskovits: at the Heart of Blackness</i>. (Located at our UTEP data base, streamline). 57 minutes http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3266638</p>
<p>Week 4 February 6 - 11</p>	<p>“Ella Baker and the Origins of Participatory Democracy,” Carol Mueller. (BSR), pp. 79-90.</p> <p>“Black Women and the Academy,” Angela Y. Davis. (BSR), pp. 91-100.</p> <p>Documentary: <i>Zora Neale Hurston: Jump at the Sun</i>. (Located at our UTEP data base, streamline). 1: 23. http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3265868</p>
<p>Week 5 February 13 - 18</p>	<p>“Military Rites and Wrongs. African Americans in the U.S. Armed Forces,” Phyllis R. Klotman. (BSR), pp.113-138.</p> <p>“Justifiable Homicide, Police Brutality, or Governmental Repression?” Frederick Knight. (BSR), pp. 139- 152.</p> <p>“A Message To Black Youth” by James Baldwin https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69pi63RgeJ4</p>
<p>Week 6 February 20 - 25</p>	<p><i>Black Skin White Masks</i> by Frantz Fanon pp. vi – 27 (Foreword to both editions, Introduction and Chapter 1)</p> <p><i>James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket</i>. A documentary at UTEP library streaming section. http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3266564</p>
<p>Week 7 February 27 – March 4</p>	<p>“Black Women as Cultural Readers. The Color Purple,” Jacqueline Bobo. (BSR), pp.177-192.</p> <p>T'Ain't Nobody's Bizness: Queer Blues Divas of the 1920s. A documentary at UTEP library streaming section. http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3286155</p>
<p>Week 8 March 6 - 11</p>	<p>“Dreadpath/Lockspirit,” Akasha Gloria Hull. (BSR), pp. 225-228.</p> <p>“Multicultural Barbie and the Merchandise of Difference,” Ann duCille. (BSR), pp. 265-280.</p> <p>Spring Break March 13 – 17</p> <p>Acquire your books <i>The Racial Contract</i> by Charles Mills and <i>The Black Bourgeoisie</i></p>

<p>Week 9 March 18</p>	<p>Documentary: <i>Ethnic Notions</i> (by Marlon Riggs). 56 minutes Located at UTEP library, streaming video. http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3265799</p>
<p>Week 10 March 20 - 25</p>	<p>Book: <i>The Racial Contract</i> Introduction, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 (up to page 90)</p> <p>Robin Kelly on Aime Cesaire (1913-2008) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dG8rvp0BmOg</p>
<p>Week 11 March 27 – April 1</p>	<p><i>The Racial Contract</i> Chapter 3</p> <p><i>P.S. I Can't Breathe (Black Lives Matter)</i>. Documentary http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3187964</p>
<p>Week 12 April 3 - 8</p>	<p><i>The Black Bourgeoisie</i>. Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, and 3</p> <p>Oakland Community Learning Center https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9dYsjDgUdr0</p>
<p>Week 13 April 9- 15</p>	<p><i>The Black Bourgeoisie</i>. Chapters 4 - 7.</p> <p>Bobby Seale: The Black Panther Party Ten Point Program (6 minutes) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1EZ3qS4vTYs</p>
<p>Week 14 April 17 - 22</p>	<p><i>The Black Bourgeoisie</i>. Chapters 8 - 10</p> <p>Dr. Martin Luther King speech on the Vietnam War (22 minutes) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b80Bsw0UG-U&t=3s</p>
<p>Week 15 April 24 - 29</p>	<p>“Racial Socialization Strategies of Parents in Three Black Private Schools,” Deborah J. Johnson. (BSR), pp. 379-388.</p> <p>“Talking about Race, Learning About Racism.” Beverly D. Tatum, (BSR), pp. 389-412.</p> <p><i>Movement with a Meaning: The Lula Washington Dance Theatre (J.C. Productions)</i> A documentary at UTEP library streaming section. http://encore.utep.edu/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3273197</p>
<p>Week 16 May 1 - 4</p>	<p>“Teaching Haitian Vodou.” Claudine Michel, pp. 435-444</p> <p>“Islam in the African American Experience.” Richard Brent Turner, pp. 445-472</p> <p>Submit quiz, journal and forum entries by May 4</p> <p>Submit final paper by May 12.</p>

Final Paper: Students will write a seven-page paper (footnotes and bibliography don't count towards this length) explaining in detail at least five major **theories** (not events or topics) learned in this course, its relevance to our understanding of the African American experience, and its applicability to current issues. When citing, footnotes must include author's name, title of chapter, article or book, and pages. In the conclusion, students will explain how the theoreticians studied contributed to your growth as a citizen and a human being; and, how it will help you in your career/graduate/ studies employment. Final papers must be original, using the Chicago Style citation format (footnotes and bibliography). They will be submitted in Microsoft Word Format through Blackboard (no other format will be accepted). If problems arise, submit it as in-box.

Our 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.

This syllabus is subject to changes.

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