INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND STUDIES

HIS 3329 (CRN 26229) – AFST 2300 (CRN 28441) - POLS 3314 (CRN 28059)– SOCI 3341 (CRN 25814)

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Session: Spring 2021
Class: On-line. Asynchronous
Zoom office link: https://utep-
edu.zoom.us/j/81245467153?pwd=WDBFMXpoNDlGai8zSnIvVjZVY3ZsZz09
            Meeting ID: 812 4546 7153
            Passcode: ZmP#7yd9
Office Hours: 10:00 - 11:30 T-F
            19:00 - 20:00 M and F
            Or by appointment.

Syllabus

This course is an introduction to African American Studies focusing on 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. Your instructor has selected activities to examine persisting inequalities affecting African Americans as well as accomplishments in the struggle for equality. Prominent themes include the origins of the African Diasporas; African civilizations; the African Diasporas; the Civil War; Reconstruction; migration; the development of the modern civil rights movement and its aftermath; intellectual and artistic developments; deindustrialization; and, contemporary struggles. The intersections of gender, race, and class will be repeatedly visited in our analysis of African American History with an emphasis on the intellectual production of Black feminists.

Our course requires discipline and dedication: finding time for your weekly reading and writing will help you gain a deeper understanding of Black feminisms and earn you the highest marks. Keep in mind that we will not meet as a class but we will stay in contact through our group assignments and that you will have personal meetings with your professor through Zoom as needed. These dynamics allow you manage your time and work at your own pace every day, submitting the required work by the due date and time.

All materials are accessible through our UTEP virtual library, Blackboard and other internet sites. The only expense you will incur is your subscription to Packback.

Only one section of this course under any department can be taken for credit, regardless of the term in which the enrollment took place. Students are responsible for dropping this course or a section to avoid duplication of credits. Students can retake this course, or another section, when a failing grade for any section was recorded.

Objectives are:
- To **critically** analyze the social, cultural, and political development of the African American communities in a global context.

- To identify the contributions of African American individuals and communities to the history, economy, and culture of the United States.
- To assess the importance of Black feminists in the construction of notions of human and civil rights and intersectional systems of oppression.
- To recognize diversity in experiences derived from gender, race, and economic class differences.
- 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.
- To reflect on strategies to become effective educators.

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.
- Recognize the contributions of the African American community to the economy, culture, and history of the United States.
- Understand that "race" and "gender" are social constructions.
- Understand that racism is a real social structure that determines the quality of life of residents of the United States, intersecting with other relations of power, such as gender.
- 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.
- Determine social and individual responsibilities in the democratization of society.

Learning modules:

This course is designed using a modular format—that is, each week is "packaged" as a single module so that all the materials, lecture notes, submission areas, discussion posts are in one area for a given week.

Timely submission **of Blackboard and Packback assignments and participation in group discussions** are compulsory to pass this course.

All texts assigned for this course will be available through Blackboard, our UTEP library or other internet sites.

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. Material will not be introduced in a strict chronological order. Note 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 resources may change.

Grade distribution

Packback assignments	30%
Blackboard discussion board	40%
Presentation	10%
Quizzes	18%
Course evaluation	2%

90 – 100% = A   80 – 89% = B   70 – 79% = C   60 – 69% = D   59% and below = F

Assignments are designed to support your learning process in this class. When you do not submit your homework, your level of informed participation in the class is not the optimal. Missing more than five assignments, including journal entries and Packback submissions, will result in a failing grade or a withdrawal from the class. Every assignment must be proofread and processed through Microsoft Word Spelling and Grammar review system to ensure a college-level participation.

I will manage our course through Blackboard but a section of your homework will be submitted through our second platform, Packback. You can find your grades, post messages, form discussion groups and be reminded of assignments and events through our Blackboard platform. When your score is not perfect, make sure you read the feedback provided by your instructor in the field titled "my grades." If the same errors in are repeatedly submitted, the rubrics applied to your work will be different, assigning a larger weight to the items in need of improvement. I will be working on a one-to-one basis with you. I develop a personal relationship with each of my students through different channels, and always in their own terms. Your intellectual growth is in your hands, take full advantage of my willingness to assist your educational objectives: reply to my comments, improve your homework according to my feedback, and meet with me through Zoom if you need face-to-face instructions.

Discussion board:

Weekly participation in our Blackboard discussion board is required. Read the instructions and prompt for each discussion before posting your reflection. You must submit your first response before having access to the discussion. Your first posting must indicate the sources of the information that supports your answer(s) and perspective. Students majoring in History must cite their sources following the Chicago/Turabian format, in footnotes. Other students may use any format, as long as the pages (or minutes in video) of the source is included along with other pertinent publication information. After posting your response to the prompts provided in **at least 350,** students will reply to two other postings (preferably they will not answer to previous replies so we can distribute the conversation evenly) in at least **200 words**. Although detailed responses are encouraged and will yield higher quality responses, the 350 **minimum** required for the first posting **is a total that covers all prompts**. Students must submit their original text before reading their peers' assignments. Opening the forum before posting your first entry will result in the cancellation of your grade.

Among the objectives of this type of assignment are practicing your argumentative reasoning skills, polishing your academic language, and sharing your knowledge with your peers. "Good point" or "I agree" type answers will not earn points. All answers, including your peer replies, must be text-

based and address the connections with other areas of the course or texts while examining in depth how your classmates confirm, challenge, or complicate your own argument or interpretation of the texts assigned. If your score is less than perfect, read the feedback provided so you can improve your assignments and grades. I may invite you to resubmit your corrected text so you can raise your score. Follow our discussions protocols: they are basic requests to respect all opinions, use academic language, and keep in mind that ours is a scholarly forum, distant from Facebook, Tweeter and other media in scope and purpose. Late postings, when authorized, carry a 10% deduction per day, registered at the end of the course.

Presentation. As part of the course requirement, you will propose a relevant topic to present to the class through a video clip. You will Zoom to record your presentation (and edit it with Windows video editor, when necessary). The basic format to present a topic is using a PPT as a guide to discuss your topic and show images while recording your presentation through Zoom. Your creativity is the limit and originality of the text a requisite. Reading information from slides or a document is not an acceptable practice and will reduce your points. PPT slides must contain *power points* with minimal text, and they should integrate images (when appropriate). The video-clip required length is three minutes. A primary source must be included in your presentation, and its relevance stated. Submit your power point and script along through Blackboard two weeks before your presentation for approval, and stay in communication with your professor in case you need to adjust your presentation. Your PPT files 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 and in your lesson plan. Sources must be academic, considered reliable by your professor (not Wikipedia, ask.com, bio.com). Please, consult with your professor if you find information in internet that is important, when no other academic source validates the data.

You will maintain your participation status mainly by submitting your work on time and contributing to maintaining a collegial environment. In-class discussions must generate respectful and meaningful conversations. Conversations will always be unfinished since our aim is to generate permanent reflection on the topics at hand and to reflect on the readings, lectures, and documentaries provided as a point of departure. Applying the most current academic terminology to describe communities, except when outdated terms are properly quoted, allows us to observe how our language has evolved to reflect new perspectives in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender relations. When in doubt about the propriety of a term, consult with your professor.

Every module assignments in Blackboard and Packback must be **completed** by the end of the day on Friday (11:59 PM). **Start your first Blackboard discussion text and post your Packback question before Wednesday so your peers can submit their replies on time.**

Late work policy:

- **All assignments, including forum discussions and quizzes are due on or before the assigned dates.**
- **Late assignments will receive a 10% penalty per day.**

It is important that you understand the reasons why you receive the grade you do. Assignments are assessed according to rubrics. You can find the rubrics by clicking on the appropriate assignment link in Blackboard and choosing to "View Rubric" from the button beneath the Points Possible for the assignment. I encourage students to discuss graded papers, quizzes or exams with me, but such conversation can only take place 24-hours after students receive their scores.

Course evaluation:

Our university administration will send you a message to request your course evaluation. Submit it using the link provided in the message. Once completed, you will receive another message stating that you have completed the evaluation. Copy that statement and upload it through Blackboard to receive the points assigned to this activity. Please, ponder carefully the meaning of each question in the evaluation since it is seriously considered by our administration.

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Packback Questions

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Packback Questions is an online community where you can be fearlessly curious and ask open-ended questions to build on top of what we are covering in class and relate topics to real-world applications.

Packback Requirements:

Your participation on Packback will count toward **30%** of your overall course grade.

There will be a Friday 11:59 PM MST **(midnight)** deadline to complete your weekly submission – one question and two answers. Submit your question on Wednesday so your peers can respond by Friday In order to receive your points you should submit the following per each deadline period:

- **One** open-ended **Question** specifically addressing the content assigned in your syllabus with a minimum Curiosity Score of 65, each worth 4 points of each assignment grade
- **Two responses** per week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 65, each worth 3 pts of each assignment grade. Every response should address a different question. You are welcome to submit more than two responses if you are interested in other prompts. Invest the same attention to detail and argumentation skills you devote to your question.
- Your professor may override your grade if our Packback TA does not evaluate your questions and answers according to our course requirements.
- Your questions and answers will cite your sources. This is an easy step since they are the readings and films needed to complete this assignment. Feel free to add other sources.
- Half credit will be provided for questions and responses that do not meet the minimum curiosity score.

How to Register on Packback:
You may register by following the instructions below:

1. Create an account by navigating to https://questions.packback.co and clicking "Sign up for an Account"
   Note: If you already have an account on Packback you can log in with your credentials.

2. Then enter our class community's lookup key into the "Looking to join a community you don't see here?" section in Packback at the bottom of the homepage.
   Community Lookup Key: **a97942ca-9a72-46bf-861d-007b6f45ebce**

3. Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.

   Packback will require a paid subscription of $25.00. Refer to www.packback.co/product/pricing for more information.

How to Get Help from the Packback Team:
If you have any questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please read their FAQ at help.packback.co. If you need more help, contact their customer support team directly at help@packback.co.

For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions

Students' responsibilities

- Students will complete all procedures required to drop the course if they desire to obtain a "W."
- Students will be active in their own learning process, obtain knowledge on their own, and share their knowledge with their peers and teacher.
- Students will show respect for the instructor, guests and one another regardless of opinion, cultural values and other group differences.
- Communications with your peers and your professor must follow the protocol you will read at http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor. The format to address your professor is "Dr. Chew." Participation points will be deducted when your messages do not follow the conventions listed in the site referenced.
- When requested to meet with your professor, you must schedule a meeting or meet her during virtual office hours during the next 36 hours.
- Students should give one another equal opportunity to express opinions, experiences and ideas. Students will respond according to their turn, not in a ping-pong mode, or in a two-person discussion. The goal is not to win a discussion but to reflect on the information and perspectives presented during our group conversations.
- All students should be supportive of a cooperative learning environment in the classrooms.
- Students will acquire their subscription to Packback by the first Wednesday of our first week of classes.

Graduate students coursework

Students seeking credits for this course in their current graduate program will read one journal article in list of supplementary readings (see the "If You Want to Learn More" folder) and submit a weekly additional summary, in addition to our regular workload. Such summary will be posted in our Blackboard discussion tab. Texts included in extra credit assignments for our class will not be earn double credit. The quality of their interventions in both our Packback and Blackboard discussions will reflect a deeper engagement and consideration to the theoretical notions discussed by the authors we study.   If you are a graduate student and will not seek accreditation for this course in your graduate program you are encouraged to read the ***If you want to learn more*** material but the graduate assignments are not mandatory.

Technology requirements

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. In addition, a subscription to Packback is needed to complete a section of our assignment. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

You will need to have access to a computer/laptop, scanner, a webcam, and a microphone. You will need to access, download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.

If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about Microsoft Office 365 and follow the instructions.

The University of Texas at El Paso provides free 24/7 Helpdesk support to academic students and faculty members teaching on-line. The Help Desk can provide answers to questions about using technology and services as well as technical support. Please visit the technical support page for more information.

How are we going to communicate with our professor?

Because this is an online class, we won't see each other in the ways you may be accustomed to: during class time, small group meetings, and office hours. However, there are a number of ways we can keep the communication channels open:

- **Office Hours**: We will not be able to meet on campus, but I will still have office hours for your questions and comments about the course. My office hours will be held on Zoom and during the times provided in our Blackboard tab. And first area of our syllabus.
- **Blackboard course messages**: We will use our Blackboard message system to communicate. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24-48 hours of receipt.
- **E-mail.** If I do not respond during the next 48 hours, e-mail me through our UTEP system at sachewsmithart@utep.edu When e-mailing me, be sure to email from your UTEP student account and please put the course number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name, and your university identification number.
- **Discussion Board**: If you have a question that you believe other students may also have, please post it in the Help Board of the discussion boards inside of Blackboard. Please respond to other students' questions if you have a helpful response.
- **Announcements**: Check the Blackboard announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages.
- **Phone calls**. I will not have access to our UTEP phone system; therefore, this should be your last resource to contact me. When calling, please, clearly state your complete name, student id number, course number, and reason of your message. I will answer through our e-mail system within the next 24-48 hours.

Netiquette

As we know, sometimes communication online can be challenging. It's possible to miscommunicate what we mean or to misunderstand what our classmates mean given the lack of body language and immediate feedback. Therefore, please keep these netiquette (network etiquette) guidelines in mind. Failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action.

- Always consider audience. This is a college-level course; therefore, all communication should reflect polite consideration of other's ideas.

- Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates and to the instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.

- When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.

- Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on in these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space.

Attendance and participation

Attendance in the course is determined by participation in the learning activities of the course. Your participation in the course is important not only for your learning and success but also to create a community of learners. Participation is determined by your contributions to maintain a collegial environment in our course and by completion of the following activities:
- Reading/Viewing all course materials to ensure understanding of assignment requirements.
- Participating in engaging discussion with your peers on the discussion boards (grading rubric provided in the "grading information" area of each forum).
- Other activities as indicated in each module's folder.

Excused absences and/or course drop policy

According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies, "When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of "W" before the course drop deadline and with a grade of "F" after the course drop deadline." See academic regulations in the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog for a list of excuse absences. I may not drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please let me know and then contact the Registrar's Office to initiate the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an "F" for the course.

Make-up work

Make-up work will be given *only* in the case of a *documented* emergency. Note that make-up work may be in a different format than the original work, may require more intensive preparation, and may be graded with penalty points. If you miss an assignment and the reason is not considered excusable, you will receive a zero. It is therefore important to reach out to me—in advance if at all possible—and explain with proper documentation why you missed a given course requirement. Once a deadline has been established for make-up work, no further extensions or exceptions will be granted.

Alternative means of submitting work in case of technical issues

I strongly suggest that you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have a technical issue with the course website, network, and/or your computer. I also suggest you save all your work (answers to discussion points, quizzes, exams, and essays) in a separate Word document as a back-up. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through the course website, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. You can email me your back-up document as a last resort but you will upload it once your access to Packback and Blackboard are restored.

Incomplete grade policy

Incomplete grades may be requested only in exceptional circumstances after you have completed at least half of the course requirements. Talk to me immediately if you believe an incomplete is warranted. If granted, we will establish a contract of work to be completed with deadlines.

Accommodations policy

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, or email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

COVID-19 Accommodations

Students are not permitted on campus when they have a positive COVID-19 test, exposure or symptoms. If you are not permitted on campus, you should contact me as soon as possible so we can arrange necessary and appropriate accommodations.

Scholastic integrity

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline.

Class recordings

Our use of such technology is governed by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and UTEP's acceptable-use policy. **You may not share recordings outside of this course.** Doing so may result in disciplinary action.

Test proctoring software

The final exam will make use of Respondus Lock Down Browser and Respondus Monitor inside of Blackboard to promote academic integrity. You are encouraged to learn more about how to use these programs prior to the first test.

Please review the following guidelines:
- The final exam will only be available at the time identified on the course calendar.
- You may take the test at any time during the 24-hour window.

- A reliable Internet connection is essential to completing the exam. If you must go to a location to take the exam (such as the library), be sure to follow their health and safety requirements.
- You have two attempts to take the test. Once the window closes, your answers will be saved, and no changes can be made. The higher score will be recorded.
- Respondus Lockdown Browser will require that all internet tabs are closed prior to the start of the test.
- Respondus Monitor requires a webcam and microphone.
- You will be required to show the webcam your student ID prior to the start of the test.
- Your face should be completely visible during the test. Blocking the camera will disable the test.
- No notes or textbook materials are permitted during the test. Respondus Monitor requires you to take a video of your surrounding area (desk, chair, walls, etc.)
- You should not have conversations with other people and/or leave and return to the area during the test.

Plagiarism detecting software

Some of your course work and assessments may submitted to SafeAssign, a plagiarism detecting software. SafeAssign is used review assignment submissions for originality and will help you learn how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase.

Copyright statement for course materials

All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

Covid-19 precautions

You must STAY AT HOME and REPORT if you (1) have been diagnosed with COVID-19, (2) are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or (3) have had recent contact with a person who has received a positive coronavirus test. Reports should be made at screening.utep.edu. If you know of anyone who should report any of these three criteria, you should encourage them to report. If the individual cannot report, you can report on their behalf by sending an email to COVIDaction@utep.edu.

For each day that you attend campus—for any reason—you must complete the questions on the UTEP screening website (screening.utep.edu) prior to arriving on campus. The website will verify if you are permitted to come to campus. Under no circumstances should anyone come to class when feeling ill or exhibiting any of the known COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, and alternative instruction will be provided. Students are advised to minimize the number of encounters with others to avoid infection.

Wear face coverings when in common areas of campus or when others are present. You must wear a face covering over your nose and mouth at all times in this class. If you choose not to wear a face covering, you may not enter the classroom. If you remove your face covering, you will be asked to put it on or leave the classroom. Students who refuse to wear a face covering and follow preventive COVID-19 guidelines will be dismissed from the class and will be subject to disciplinary action according to Section 1.2.3 *Health and Safety* and Section 1.2.2.5 *Disruptions* in the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures.

Course resources: Where you can go for assistance

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support:
Technology Resources

- Help Desk: Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.

Academic Resources
- UTEP Library: Access a wide range of resources including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- University Writing Center (UWC): Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
- Math Tutoring Center (MaRCS): Ask a tutor for help and explore other available math resources.
- History Tutoring Center (HTC): Receive assistance with writing history papers, get help from a tutor and explore other history resources.
- RefWorks: A bibliographic citation tool; check out the RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.

Individual Resources
- Military Student Success Center: Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.
- Center for Accommodations and Support Services: Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.
- Counseling and Psychological Services: Provides a variety of counseling services including individual, couples, and group Modules as well as career and disability assessments.

This syllabus may be subject to modifications.