BLACK FEMINISTS IN THE UNITED STATES AND LATIN AMERICA
Second Session Summer 2017
July 11 – August 7

Instructor: Selfa A. Chew-Melendez PhD.
E-mail: sachewsmithart@utep.edu (I will respond within the next 24 hours)
Session: Summer II
Classroom: Online via Blackboard.
Virtual Office Hours: MWF 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM, or by appointment.

**Course description and objectives.**

This course is an examination of the feminist thought of women of African descent in the United States and Latin America in the context of social inequality. Distinct historical conditions, shaped in part by colonization processes, in turn determining languages and culture, will emerge in our analysis of women of the African Diaspora. Textbook, articles, and films will assist us to understand the political, cultural, social, and economic strategies developed to challenge racism and other relations of power in diverse regions of the American Continent. Our course will allow for a comparison of social/historical experiences and intellectual production across heterogeneous populations. Students will read assigned texts to understand core concepts; view-supporting materials for weekly online assignments about key topics, and use related web sites for weekly online discussions, with specific deadlines.

The objectives of this course are:

- To **critically** analyze the social, cultural, and political development of women in the African Diaspora.
- To examine the thought of Black feminists and the historical contexts in which they developed their commitment to social change.
- To analyze primary and secondary sources for clear, accurate, and informed discussion (in online discussions and in your written reports);
- To identify the relation of history with other disciplines; and
- 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:**

- Read critically primary and secondary sources, and properly incorporate them into their research.
- Identify interlocking relations of power.
- Evaluate past events and social processes as factors that shape our present.
- Assess the validity of theories that explain the origin of current social behaviors.
- Develop strategies to improve independent study skills.
- Developing learning skills valued in graduate school.
- Become familiar with social science terminology.
- Ponder the possibility of contributing to the solution of social issues affecting their communities.

If you can’t acquire your textbooks through our UTEP library, please, access an internet provider such as Amazon or Barnes and Noble. Other articles and films will be available through JSTOR or EBSCO sources, accessible through our on-line library.
Submission of assignments and participation in group discussions via Blackboard are compulsory to pass this course.

Texts required (my preference is e-book format due to accessibility in any device with internet access.)

Bay, Mia, Griffin, Farah J., Jones, Martha S., Toward an Intellectual History of Black Women, The University of South Carolina Press, 2015. It may be available through our UTEP library. There is a download option that may allow you to use it for one day at a time. Consult your librarian.


All other texts are accessible through our library electronic resources section (JSTOR or EBSCO)

Grades will be determined by students’ performance in the following areas:

Grading Policy:

Course requirements are:

- Journal 55%
- Quizzes (assessments) 10%
- Participation in forums 15%
- Final Paper 15%
- Chicago Style Format quiz 5%

Total 100%

Final grades will be based on the total number of points earned in the course.

Grade Scale

A = 90 – 100%   B = 80 – 89%   C = 70 -79%   F = 69% and under

It is highly recommended to visit Blackboard on daily basis until the end of our course. You can find your grades, post messages, form discussion groups and be reminded of tests, assignments, events, etc.

How to start: 1) Click on the tab titled “Week 1.” 2) Click on the tab titled “Day 1.” 3) Click on the texts tab and read your assigned chapters or articles. 4) Click on each assignment for the day to see the instructions and submit your homework.

Late work policy:
This is not a self-paced course. Daily assignments must be posted through Blackboard on or before the assigned dates.

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 are not acceptable in academia.
- Students will consider perspectives that originate in disfranchised social sectors, recognizing that this course intents to provide the views and knowledge of communities largely excluded from mainstream 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.

To get an “A” in this course:

Complete all assignments on time.

Blackboard Journal Entries (55%):
Journal entries are the backbone of our course. They will be submitted by midnight, daily. Late submissions will carry 10% deduction per day. Journal entries consist of one summary per text (at least 200 words per summary of text or film analyzed, if that covers the main points and argument. A maximum of 700 words per summary will be accepted). In addition to the two or three summaries
(depending on the number of texts and films), students will add one paragraph with comments about the
texts.
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.
our summary 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 to support
the argument, and main points or concepts.
Plagiarism will not be tolerated and journal entries with patchwork (pasting sentences which are
directly copied from the texts) will earn zero points. Journal entries must be coherent and demonstrate
understanding of the text as a whole. Each journal entry must have footnotes and bibliography (Chicago
style). Five instances of late submission or omission will produce a failing grade. Journal entries will be
submitted through the “write submission” tab, not the “comments” section. It is recommended to use
SafeAssign report before submitting your homework.

Blackboard Quizzes/assessments (10%):
Students will complete quizzes through Blackboard by datelines determined in our schedule.
Assessments submitted late carry a penalty of 10% per day, deducted at the end of the course. They will
be based on the texts and films assigned for our course.

Chicago Style Format Assessment (5%)
It will evaluate the students’ ability to use the Chicago citation format, used to write papers in the
field of History and other related areas. Such practice will help you develop a skill that can be transferred
to other citation formats and academic disciplines. It is programmed during the last week of class.
There are multiple sites where you can find the guidelines, including manuals edited by professional
organizations, which you may find at UTEP library. A simple guide on this citation format is here
http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

Blackboard forums (15%):
Forums are sites where the entire group meets for conversations on topics related to our readings.
Read the instructions and prompt for each forum discussion before posting your reflection. In general,
students will write a reflection on the relationship between the two areas studied in our course: the United
States and Latin America, as described in the texts and films assigned for the class. This original posting
must indicate (through footnotes) the sources of the information that supports your perspective. After
posting a reflection in at least 200 words, students will reply to two peer's text (preferably they will not
previous replies so we can distribute the conversation) in at least 150 words. Students must submit their
original text before reading their peers’ assignments. Opening the forum before posting your first entry
will result in a cancellation of your grade.
“Good point” or “I agree” type answers will not earn points. All answers must integrate the
knowledge acquired through our readings. Blackboard will alert you of replies to your posting. Read
them so you can improve future journal entries and forum reflections. Make sure you follow the
guidelines for discussions: they are basically a request 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 carry a 10% deduction per day, recorded at the end of the course. Failure to submit
your posting on time five times will result in an F.

Final paper (15%):
A paper with an extension of at least 8 pages, double space, Times Roman 12 is due by our final
exam date. Graduate students will submit a final paper of 15 pages, individually. Submissions must take
place through Blackboard. Essays will compare the experiences of Black feminists in the United States
and Latin America. Papers will be graded based on formulation of an argument, data supporting the
argument, citation formatting, and grammar. Papers will integrated assigned texts and video materials, citing at least five academic works from our reading list. Citations and bibliography must be formatted using Chicago style. Mandatory to pass this class; however, students who submit on time all journal entries, discussion interventions, and quizzes, earning a score of 90% or higher, will be granted a waiver for the final paper. Final paper will be verified by SafeAssign to make sure it is free of plagiarism. Evidence of full, timely, collaboration is necessary for each student to receive the team’s grade.

**Graduate students:**
Graduate students will submit a final paper of 15 pages, individually. Summaries will have an extension of 300 words. No waiver for final paper will be granted.

**Follow these rules for an enjoyable class:**
1. Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions but refrain from personal attacks -- focus on ideas. Labeling an idea as “silly,” “stupid,” “ridiculous,” or applying it to imaginary situations in an attempt to elicit the same derogatory labeling to other persons’ ideas, counts as a personal attack.
2. Participate to the fullest of your ability -- community growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice.
3. The goal is not to agree -- it is about considering and exploring divergent perspectives.
4. Submit your assignments on time, participate in our forums and complete your assessments before the dateline, following all instructions.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Dean of Students. Your journal entries and assignments must be your own. Always cite your sources and use quotation marks if you are integrating a segment from the texts. Be conscious of patchwork plagiarism which is the process of selecting certain phrases from different parts of the text and add them to your journal entry or paper as if they were yours (that is an unacceptable practice in this class). Students must demonstrate a complete understanding of the text through original writing and extraction of the most important points. Should you need information on how to avoid plagiarism you may consult the following source [http://www.plagiarism.org/](http://www.plagiarism.org/) I recommend to use as often as possible SafeAssign (in Blackboard/Course tools) to verify that your text is free of plagiarism.

This syllabus is subject to modifications.

**Office Hours:** Stay in contact with your professor via e-mail or Blackboard. Read your forums and journal entries feedback and respond to them for continued personal conversations on your progress and areas to improve. Make sure you have all software needed in your computer to use the chat feature. If chat doesn’t work, contact your instructor by phone, or by e-mail (if during office hours, she will respond during the next minutes, unless she has other students waiting). All software related to UTEP sites for online courses will be provided by UTEP, contact helpdesk/IT if you have any problem using any Blackboard feature.

**UTEP Library Room 300 (Technicians can assist you during person-to-person meetings.)**
Phone: 915.747.4357 (HELP)
Email: Helpdesk@Utep.Edu

**Information on how to use Blackboard:**

**Schedule:**
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Text or documentary assigned</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td><em>Blackness in the White Nation: A History of Afro-Uruguay</em>, presentation by professor George Reid Andrews. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3UtTJ3hJe44">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3UtTJ3hJe44</a></td>
<td>Read your syllabus</td>
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</tbody>
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| July 19 | Moreno Vega, Marta. "Afro-Boricua: Nuyorican de Pura Cepa” in *Women Warriors of the Afro-Latino Diaspora*.  
“The House We Live In”: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mW764dXEI_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mW764dXEI_8)  
(Read instructions to write reflections for this video) | Blackboard forum, journal entry, and assessment. |
| July 21 | Savage, Barbara. “Professor Merze Tate: Diplomatic Historian, Cosmopolitan Woman.” In *Toward an Intellectual History of Black Women*.  
*Sister Citizen: Shame Stereotypes and Black Women in America* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=blX2YHdqUIJA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=blX2YHdqUIJA)  
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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chicago/Turabian quiz due</td>
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<td>Melissa Harris Perry: How Black Hair Matters (six minutes) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBAObetZed8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBAObetZed8</a></td>
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<td>Videos (one paragraph for both):</td>
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<td>Santa Cruz, Victoria. “Black and Woman” <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2vnOa9isco">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2vnOa9isco</a></td>
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<td>They Called Me Black (by Victoria Santa Cruz) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1h8glbhFUp0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1h8glbhFUp0</a></td>
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<td>In addition: these two brief reports (no need to submit journal for these two texts but you will earn extra credit for them).</td>
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<td>All sections Summary: 600 words, comments: 200 words. Value: 50 points.</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 7</td>
<td>Submit final paper through Blackboard by midnight.</td>
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Recommended Texts:


Recommended Films
