The Long Black Freedom Struggle: From Emancipation to Black Lives Matter

Course Description
This introductory-level survey course offers an overview of the major events and developments in African-American history, from the emancipation of slavery to the present. At its core, this course explores the various, complicated, and consistent efforts African Americans took in their quest for full freedom and equality in the United States. With the demise of slavery’s end, this course will provide a roadmap for students to explore the history and experiences of African Americans from Reconstruction and Jim Crow, to the World Wars through the Cold War to the Great Migration. It also examines how political, social, and cultural developments of the post-war period laid the foundation for social movements such as the Long Civil Rights Movement, the Black Power Movement, Black Feminism, and the Welfare Rights Movement to take over. This course will end in the latter half of the late 20th century up to the 21st century as themes like politics, mass incarceration, and police brutality offer a deeper discussion of the presidency of Barack Obama and the Black Lives Matter Movement. This class will address these issues and many others by linking the American past and present in a broad interdisciplinary discussion.

Learning Goals:
1. Develop a grasp of broad patterns and major historical events within African American history from the Civil War era to the present.
2. Be able to identify and relate contemporary issues to historical moments in order to learn how the past and present are connected.

3. Be able to interpret and critically engage with written primary sources.

4. Be able to identify and analyze the main arguments, themes, and purposes of assigned readings.

5. Improve writing and critical thinking through discussion paper assignments.

6. Identify the political and social contributions of African Americans to American history and culture.

Suggested Texts:

**All readings and videos for this class will be uploaded on Canvas. You are not required to purchase this textbook. It will be used as a guide for many of the subjects we will discuss throughout this semester.**

Readings:
The weekly readings required in this course average 50 to 75 pages. Students are expected to do all the reading and be prepared to discuss readings/videos in class on the date listed in this syllabus. Please bring your readings to class with you. Please use the files tab on the left of the class site on Canvas to access readings.

Assignments:

Discussion Posts
To help facilitate our class discussions, a 1-2 page write up on the weekly readings must be written each week. The purpose of the discussion posts is for students to reflect on what they have read that week. They should not only summarize, but should serve as a reflection, organized with thoughts and a critical analysis that connects the theme discussed throughout the week. This will allow me to see how each student is grasping the material covered in class. Late work will not be accepted (except in the case of excused absences or you have met with me).

Each discussion will be graded out of 10 points, with a breakdown of on-time completion, reading comprehension, and reflection.

*We will discuss expectations on what constitutes a good discussion paper during the first week of class. I will also upload examples and a prompt with questions that will help guide your discussion writing.*
Exams

In addition to discussion assignments, course participants must complete two exams, a mid-term and a final. Both exams will be based on the readings, discussions, and lectures. Students will be expected to identify and link common themes we have covered in the course. The exam will consist of identification terms and short answer responses. We will discuss the content and composition of each exam in the class periods before each exam. The midterm will cover material from the first half of the semester and the final will cover the second half of the semester. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will be handled in accordance with University policy of academic integrity.

Attendance & Participation

Attendance and class participation is key to creating a learning and engaging classroom environment. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class. It is expected that you attend all lectures, participate in discussions, and submit all assignments by their assigned due dates. However, I understand that life happens, and as we still navigate the semester amidst Covid-19, unexpected events may occur. Students will be allowed two unexcused absences that will not be penalized against you. All unexcused absences after that are subject to class participation grade deductions. According to the History Department’s policy, any student who misses eight or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.” University policy defines an “excused” absence as an illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions. If you made it this far into the syllabus, that shows you have read this thoroughly, please email me the code “extra” for a 1point extra credit that will be added to your final grade. I encourage students to reach out if there is an emergency or a reason you’ve missed class.

Grading

- **Class Participation**: 15%
- **Discussion Post**: 25%
- **Midterm Exam**: 30%
- **Final Exam**: 30%

100%-90%=A
89%-87%=B+
86%-80%=B
79%-77%=C+
76%-70%=C
69%-60%=D
59%-0%=F
**Academic Integrity:**
Academic integrity is of the upmost importance to this class and plagiarism are unacceptable. For the University’s policies, which you are responsible for reading and abiding by, go to: [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu) If you commit Academic Dishonesty, I will not be understanding. All papers will be checked for plagiarism, Any assignment in which a student engages in Academic Dishonesty will receive a grade of “0”. And as a standard minimum penalty, students who are suspected of cheating or plagiarism are reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Pending investigation, further penalties can include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University.

All written work must be your own original work. Any references to other sources within your own paper must be properly cited according to the Chicago Manual of Style, which is available at Rutgers libraries and online at the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL): [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/).

**For Individuals with Disabilities:** The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at [ods.rutgers.edu](https://ods.rutgers.edu). Contact ODS at (973)353-5375 or via email at ods@newark.rutgers.edu.

**For Individuals who are Pregnant:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy. Students may contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance at (973) 353-1906 or via email at TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.

**For Individuals with temporary conditions/injuries:** The Office of the Dean of Students can assist students who are experiencing a temporary condition or injury (e.g., broken or sprained limbs, concussions, or recovery from surgery). Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury should submit a request using the following link: [https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu](https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu).

**For English as a Second Language (ESL):** The Program in American Language Studies (PALS) can support students experiencing difficulty in courses due to English as a Second Language (ESL) and can be reached by emailing PALS@newark.rutgers.edu to discuss potential supports.

**For Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance can assist students who are experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence,
or stalking. Students can report an incident to the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance by calling (973) 353-1906 or emailing TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. Incidents may also be reported by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. For more information, students should refer to the University’s Student Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Related Misconduct located at http://compliance.rutgers.edu/title-ix/about-title-ix/title-ix-policies/.

For support related to interpersonal violence: The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance can provide any student with confidential support. The office is a confidential resource and does not have an obligation to report information to the University’s Title IX Coordinator. Students can contact the office by calling (973) 353-1918 or emailing run.vpva@rutgers.edu. There is also a confidential text-based line available to students; students can text (973) 339-0734 for support.

For Absence Verification: The Office of the Dean of Students can provide assistance for absences related to religious observance, emergency or unavoidable conflict (e.g., illness, personal or family emergency, etc.). Students should refer to University Policy 10.2.7 for information about expectations and responsibilities. The Office of the Dean of Students can be contacted by calling (973) 353-5063 or emailing deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Crisis and Concerns: The Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team works with students in crisis to develop a support plan to address personal situations that might impact their academic performance. Students, faculty and staff may contact the CARE Team by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNCARE or emailing careteam@rutgers.edu.

For Stress, Worry, or Concerns about Well-being: The Counseling Center has confidential therapists available to support students. Students should reach out to the Counseling Center to schedule an appointment: counseling@newark.rutgers.edu or (973) 353-5805. If you are not quite ready to make an appointment with a therapist but are interested in self-help, check out TAO at Rutgers-Newark for an easy, web-based approach to self-care and support: https://tinyurl.com/RUN-TAO.

The Writing Center
The Writing Center (http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter), located in Room 126 of Conklin Hall, offers writing tutoring and writing workshops to all undergraduate students currently enrolled in classes on the Rutgers-Newark campus. Their tutors work to help students become more independent readers and writers capable of responding well to the demands of writing within the university. Please inform your students that The Writing Center is available to them free of charge and encourage them to take advantage of their services to strengthen their reading, writing, and research skills.

Schedule
Week One

Thursday, September 8: Course Introduction “How and Why We Study History?”
Read:
“His Name Was Will: Remembering Enslaved Individuals in Rutgers History” in Scarlet and Black: Slavery and Dispossession in Rutgers History

Week Two

Monday, September 12: Slavery, the Civil War and Emancipation
Read:
Chapter 7 “Freedom Rising: The Civil War” in Freedom on My Mind
Chapter 6 “From Slavery to Freedom” in Deborah Gray White’s Ar’n’t I a Woman?

Thursday, September 15: Black Reconstruction Part I
Read:
“Negotiating and Transforming the Public Sphere: African American Political Life in the Transition from Slavery to Freedom” by Elsa Barkley Brown

**Discussion paper due Thursday by 11:59pm

Week Three

Monday, September 19: Black Reconstruction Pt II
Read:

Thursday, September 22: The Rise of the Jim Crow South
Read:
Chapter 9 “Black Life and Culture During the Nadir, 1880-1915” in Freedom on My Mind

Primary Source:

**Discussion paper due Thursday by 11:59pm

Week Four

Monday, September 26: Strategies for Survival
Read:

**Primary Source:**
Ida B. Wells Urges Self Defense in *Major Problems in African American History*
Booker T. Washington Promotes Accommodationism in *Major Problems in African American History*
Resolutions of the National Association of Colored Women in *Major Problems in African American History*

**Thursday, September 29: The Great War & the Great Migration**
**Read:**

**Primary Source:**
Black Population in Selected Cities, 1910-1930 in *Major Problems in African American History*
Migrants’ Letters in *Major Problems in African American History*

**Discussion paper due Thursday by 11:59pm**

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**Week Five**

**Monday, October 3: The Rise of the New Negro**
**Read:** Excerpts from *Chicago's New Negroes: Modernity, the Great Migration, and Black Urban Life* by Davarian Baldwin

**Primary Source**
“Alain Locke, Philosopher, Defines the “New Negro”” in *Major Problems in African American History*

**Thursday, October 6: The Great Depression and 1930’s Radicalism**

**Read:** Chapter 18 “Black Protest, the Great Depression, and the New Deal” in *The African American Odyssey* and “Augusta’s Clay, Migration, and the Depression, 1915-1940” from *A Black Women’s History of the United States*

**Discussion paper due Thursday by 11:59pm**

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**Week Six:**

**Monday, October 10: Victory at Home and Victory Abroad**
Read: Chapter 11 “Fighting for a Double Victory” in Freedom on My Mind

Thursday, October 13:
Read:  
A. Philip Randolph, "Call to Negro America to March on Washington for Jobs and Equal Participation in National Defense." and “Alice’s Medals and Black Women’s War at Home, 1940-1950” in A Black Women’s History of the United States

**Watch:** The Negro Soldier (2009)  
**Discussion paper due Thursday by 11:59pm**

Week Seven:
Monday, October 17: Midterm Review  
Thursday, October 20: Midterm (NO CLASS)

Week Eight:
Monday, October 24: Cold War Civil Rights
Read: Mary L. Dudziak, “Brown as a Cold War Case” (article) and “Telling Stories About Race and Democracy” in “Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy”

Thursday, October 27: Cold War Civil Rights cont.
Read:  
Excerpts from Damion L. Thomas’ Globetrotting: African American Athletes and Cold War Politics  
**Discussion paper due Thursday by 11:59pm**

Week Nine:
Monday, October 31: The Civil Rights Movement
Read: Chapter 12 “The Early Civil Rights Movement” in Freedom on My Mind

Primary Sources:
“We Are Not Afraid” from Freedom on My Mind: A History of African Americans with Documents

Joann Robinson, Women’s Political Council President, Hints of a Bus Boycott in Montgomery, Alabama in Major Problems in African American History (283-284)

Melba Pattillo Beals Recalls Her First Days at Little Rock Central High School in Major Problems in African American History (284-286)

Thursday, November 3: **Black Campus**
Read:
Ibram H. Rogers "People All Over the World are Supporting You”: Malcolm X, Ideological Formations, and Black Student Activism, 1960-1972.” in The Journal of African American History

Carie Rael and Brooke A. Thomas, “‘We the People’: Student Activism at Rutgers and Livingston College, 1960-1985” and “The Second Founding: The Black and Puerto Rican Student Revolution at Rutgers-Camden and Rutgers- Newark” both from Scarlet and Black: Making Black Lives Matter at Rutgers, 1945-2020

**Discussion paper due Thursday by 11:59pm

Week Ten

Monday, November 7: Black Power Pt. I
Read:

Primary Sources:
Malcolm X, “Message to the Grassroots”
Malcolm X Defines Revolution in Major Problems in African American History

Thursday, November 10: Movement Black Power Pt II

Read:

**Discussion paper due Thursday by 11:59pm

Week Eleven

Monday, November 14: Black Feminism
Read:
Sherie M. Randolph, “Women’s Liberation or . . . Black Liberation, You’re Fighting the Same Enemies”: Florynce Kennedy, Black Power, and Feminism

“Shirley’s Run, Black Power, Politics and Black Feminism” in A Black Women’s History of the United States
Primary Source:
The Combahee River Collective Statement, 1977

Watch: Black Feminism In 2 Minutes https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oOFk7YEAh2g

Thursday, November 17: Welfare Rights Organizing

Read: Premilla Nadasen, “We Do Whatever Becomes Necessary” in Want to Start a Revolution?: Radical Women in the Black Freedom Struggle,

Primary Source:
Johnnie Tillmon, “Welfare is a Woman’s Issue”

**Discussion paper due Thursday by 11:59pm

Week Twelve
Monday, November 21: Black Family, Nationalism, and the Problem of Patriarchy

Read:
Donna Murch, Living For the City: Migration, Education, and the Rise of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California, Chapter 5 “Men With Guns”

Primary Source:
The Moynihan Report: Tangle of Pathology
**Discussion paper due Wednesday by 11:59pm

Thursday, November 24: NO CLASS. Thanksgiving Break

Week Thirteen
Monday, November 28: The New Jim Crow


Listen: “Reframing History: Mass Incarceration” on NPR radio
https://www.npr.org/2020/08/05/899441920/reframing-history-mass-incarceration

Thursday, December 1: Black Americans in a New Century: Poverty, HipHop and Protest
Read:
TBD
Primary Source:
The United States Congress Investigates Rap Music in *Major Problems in African American History*

**Discussion paper due Thursday by 11:59pm**

**Week Fourteen**

Monday, December 5: *A Post Racial America?*
Read or Listen to Barack Obama “A More Perfect Union” Speech

We will watch “Whose Streets” in this class for discussion for our final class

Thursday, December 8: *#BlackLivesMatter*
Read:
Excerpts from Laurie Collier Hillstrom’s *Black Lives Matter: From a Moment to a Movement* and #BlackLivesMatter in *Freedom on My Mind*

**Discussion paper due Thursday by 11:59pm**

**Week Fifteen**

Monday, December 12: *Last Class Meeting*
Final Exam Review

**Final Exam Due December 20 by 11:59pm.**