“Black Political Thought” is presented this term as a reading course focused on the historical development of political perspectives and strategies among African Americans (and more broadly, the African diaspora) from the 17th century to the present. This term, our work together, our learning experience, will be conducted in person. Presentations, analyses and reviews of our readings, discussions, and essays will compare and assess political tendencies within a broad thematic framework. Themes will range from nationalist resistance to socialism, feminism/womanism, conservatism, progressivism/ liberalism, and pan-Africanism. Leadership, organizations, the reparations debate, and grassroots activism are also examined. Much attention will be given to intersectionality, and to the links and associations that can be made when considering politics, social class, gender, sexuality, and race. Mass incarceration, race and the criminal justice system, and voting rights are a major focus in our studies. In addition to assigned readings, a documentary film series is also a part of the course calendar.

The course calendar will be divided into four broad thematic topic areas. At the core of each unit is a book that we will review, along with other shorter readings and videos.

A. UNIT 1  Resistance as a necessary component of Black Political Thought from the era of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade to the present: A focus on the early period.
B. UNIT 2  Artist and Intellectuals and their political voices and significance to Black political thought and activism: A focus on the 19th-century and early 20th-century women
C. UNIT 3  Artists and Intellectuals and their political voices and significance to Black political thought and activism: A focus on the 20th century
D. UNIT 4  Recent Political Thought and Activism with special attention to James Baldwin, Ta-Nehisi Coates, The Black Live Matter Movement, and Electoral Politics 2020

Books: The following books have been ordered at the Rutgers University Book Store.

1. David Walker and James Turner. DAVID WALKER’S APPEAL. (BCP)


Additional Readings: Some of our readings will be found as articles or short data sheets to be accessed on the internet.

**Student Requirements:** Two short papers, based on our readings, video and lecture presentations, and guide questions provided by the instructor are required. The first paper is to be submitted on 21 October; and the final paper is due on 8 December. Papers must be documented, and submitted electronically. Given our pandemic circumstance, protocols (including mask-wearing) must be performed.

The first 3 class sessions will be devoted to organization, overview, and background historical lectures. No readings are assigned until 9 September. At that time our calendar of readings will be assigned.

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:30 – 2:30 We must be masked during the office sessions; and distancing will be in place.