

## **Black Thought and the Long Fight for Freedom: From the Antebellum Period to the Black Lives Matter Movement**

**21:512: 391**

**Fall 2016**

Instructor: Dr. M. Cooper

Email: melissa.cooper@rutgers.edu

Mondays & Wednesdays: 10:00 AM-11:20 AM

Room: 348 Conklin Hall

Office Hours: Mondays 1:20 PM-2:20 PM; Wednesdays 2:20 PM-3:20 PM, 353 Conklin Hall

### **Course Description**

This undergraduate seminar examines a diverse group of black intellectuals' formulations of ideologies and theories relative to racial, economic and gender oppression within the context of dominant intellectual trends. The intellectuals featured in the course each contributed to the evolution of black political thought, and posited social criticisms designed to undermine racial and gender oppression, and labor exploitation around the world. This group of black intellectuals' work will be analyzed paying close attention to the way that each intellectual inverts dominant intellectual trends, and/or uses emerging social scientific disciplines, and/or technologies to counter racism, sexism, and classism. This seminar is designed to facilitate an understanding of the black intellectual tradition that has emerged as a result of African American thinkers' attempts to develop a response to, and understanding of, the black condition.

This course explores of a wide range of primary and secondary sources from several different periods, offering students opportunity to explore the lives and works some of the most important black intellectuals. We will also consider the way that period-specific intellectual phenomenon—such as Modernism, Marxism, Pan-Africanism and Feminism—combined with a host of social realities to shape and reshape black thought.

### **Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course:

- Students should be able to explain how a diverse group of black intellectuals developed ideologies and theories relative to racial, economic and gender oppression within the context of dominant intellectual trends.
- Students should be able to describe how the intellectuals featured in the course contributed to the evolution of black political thought, and posited social criticisms designed to undermine racial and gender oppression, and labor exploitation around the world.
- Students will be able to interpret and analyze a variety of primary source materials.
- Students will be able to compose "synthetic essays" that analyze, compare and contrast multiple scholarly interpretations and studies.

### **Requirements:**

#### **Discussion Questions/Attendance**

The completion of weekly readings is mandatory. You are expected to bring required readings to class meetings: please print out, and bring to class, readings posted on Blackboard. Each student is required to compose one question derived from the readings for each class meeting. Your typed question should be linked to a specific passage—please quote

directly from the text. Your question should be submitted at the start of each class. You will not receive credit for your question if you are absent from the class meeting. Each class meeting, several students will be asked to raise their questions for discussion. Your questions, and contributions to class conversations will constitute your participation grade.

Students are expected to attend each scheduled class meeting, to be on time, and to be prepared for each class session. The University attendance policy specifies that students are allowed four absences, excused or unexcused, with each further unexcused absence resulting in a deduction of a portion of a letter grade (i.e., B+ dropping to a B). An illness that requires 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 are “excused” absences. Class absences will inevitably affect your class participation grade. Repeated tardiness will lower your participation grade.

### **Academic Integrity**

Please review Rutgers University-Newark’s Academic Integrity Policy and Policy on Plagiarism (<https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/phd-university-policy-plagiarism>). Students who violate this policy will be subject to academic penalties and disciplinary sanctions.

### **Classroom Expectations**

Please set your cell phones to the "silent" notification mode during class sessions. Do not use your cell phone to send "text messages," etc. during class meetings. While I understand that many students use laptops and tablets to take notes, I expect that these devices will be used for those purposes only. Please do not audio or video record class meetings or lectures. You are also expected to refrain from distracting and disruptive behaviors (i.e. "chatting" during lectures/discussions, consuming a full meal in class, etc.).

### **Students With Disabilities**

If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, contact the Office of Student Disability Services at the semester’s start. Please review the University’s statement below:

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information please contact Kate Torres at (973) 353-5375 or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting [odsnewark@rutgers.edu](mailto:odsnewark@rutgers.edu).

### **Presentations**

Each student will conduct one short (5-10 minute) presentation based on course readings. At the end of class on 9/12/2016, you will select a reading (between week 3-15) to present on. Your presentation should be accompanied by a short response paper (4-5 pages—typed), in which you discuss, analyze and respond to major themes in the assigned readings. Your response paper is due at the beginning of class on the day that you present.

### Papers/Exams

During the course of the semester, students are expected to complete two papers. One 4-5 page response paper, and the final exam seminar paper. The final seminar paper, which should 10-15 pages (excluding notes), is due at the end of the semester. The final seminar paper is a "synthetic paper" in which you will choose one of the various themes that emerges from course readings, or provide an in depth analysis of the work of one of the intellectuals featured in the course, and bolster your analysis with evidence from text sources. Please see the instructor before Thanksgiving to discuss your seminar paper topic. All writings are to be double-spaced and in 12-inch font. The Chicago format should be used for all citations. Extensions will not be given except in health and family emergencies.

Students are also expected to successfully complete a midterm examination. The exam will be derived from course readings, and will consist of several short essay questions.

### **GRADING:**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Attendance/Participation/ Discussion Questions	20%
Presentation and Paper	25%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam Paper	30%

### **Books to Purchase:**

Harris-Perry, Melissa, *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America*. Yale University Press, 2011.

Walker, David. *David Walker's Appeal*. Hill and Wang, 1995.

### **Week 1, September 7: Course Introduction**

### **Week 2, September 12 & 14: Calling for Revolution, David Walker, Black Freedom Ideology and Philosophical Questions about Christianity, Slavery and Morality**

Book: Walker, David. *David Walker's Appeal* (Hill and Wang, 1995).

Monday: Preamble; Article I; Article II

Wednesday: Article III; Article IV

Frederick Douglass: What to the Slave is Fourth of July? **On Blackboard**

### **Week 3, September 19 & 21: Civilization Discourse, Ida B. Well's Anti-Lynching Campaign, and Anna Julia Cooper's Fight for Black Womanhood**

Monday:

Cooper, A.J. "The Intellectual Progress of Colored Women of the United States Since the Emancipation Proclamation" (1894); excerpts from *A Voice from the South* (1892)

**On Blackboard**

Wednesday:

Wells-Barnett, Ida Bell, excerpts from *On Lynchings, Southern Horrors, and A Red Record* (1892-1895) .

Bederman, Gail, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (University of Chicago Press, 1995), 45-77. (Chapter 2- "The White Man's Civilization on Trial": Ida B. Wells, Representations of Lynching, and Northern Middle-Class Manhood)

**On Blackboard**

**Week 4, September 26 & 28: Uplift? W.E.B. DuBois, "Double Consciousness," Race and American Sociology, and Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery***

Monday:

DuBois, W.E.B., excerpts from *The Souls of Black Folk Essays and Sketches* (1903).

Taylor, Carol M. "W.E.B. DuBois's Challenge to Scientific Racism." *Journal of Black Studies*, 11 (June 1981): 449-460.

Lange, Werner J. "W.E.B. DuBois and the First Scientific Study of Afro-America." *Phylon*, 44 (2nd Qtr., 1983): 135-146.

**On Blackboard**

Wednesday:

Washington, Booker T., excerpts from *Up From Slavery: An Autobiography* (1901).

**On Blackboard**

**Week 5, October 3 & 5: New Negro Intellectuals, Modernism, the Social Sciences and Boasian Anthropology**

Monday:

Locke, Alain Leroy, *The New Negro: An Interpretation*.(1925).

Frazier, E. Franklin, "The Impact of Urban Civilization Upon Negro Family Life." *American Sociological Review*, 5 (Oct., 1937): 609-618.

**On Blackboard**

Wednesday:

Johnson, Charles S., "Haiti as a Laboratory for Cultural Research." *Phylon* (1940-1956), Vol. 8 (3rd Qtr., 1947): 252-264.

Zora Neale Hurston (primary source set)

**On Blackboard**

*Optional Supplemental Readings:*

Arnold Rampersad, "The Book That Launched the Harlem Renaissance." *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, 38 (Winter, 2002-2003): 87-91.

Houston A. Baker, Jr. "Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance." *American Quarterly*, 39 (Spring, 1987):84-97.

Delbanco, Andrew, "The Political Incorrectness of Zora Neale Hurston." *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* No. 18 (Winter 1997-1998):103-108.

**Week 6, October 10 & 12: Gender, Class and Marcus Garvey's Pan-African Visions**

Monday:

Garvey, Marcus (primary source set)

Satter, Beryl, "Marcus Garvey, Father Divine and the Gender Politics of Race Difference and Race Neutrality" *American Quarterly* Vol. 48, No. 1 (March 1996): 43-76.

**On Blackboard**

Wednesday:

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**Week 7, October 17 & 19: Situating Black Education and the Black Past, Carter G. Woodson & Mary McLeod Bethune**

Monday:

Woodson, Carter G. "Education Under Outside Control" and "The Study of the Negro" in *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (1933).

**On Blackboard**

Wednesday:

Bethune, Mary McLeod. "The Adaptation of the History of the Negro to the Capacity of the Child" (1939) and "The Sacrifices and Achievements of African-American Women" in *Journal of Negro History*.

**On Blackboard**

**Week 8, October 24 & 26: Frantz Fanon: Psychoanalyst of Culture, Racism and Colonialism**

Monday:

Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin White Masks* (1952) Introduction, 64-88.

**On Blackboard**

Wednesday:

*Black Skin White Masks* (1952) 120-184.

**On Blackboard**

**Week 9, October 31 & November 2: The Civil Rights Movement and Racial Liberalism**

Monday:

Baldwin, James. Excerpts from *The Fire Next Time* (1963).

**On Blackboard**

Wednesday:

King, Martin L. *Letters from a Birmingham Jail* (1963).

Murray, Pauli. "Protest against the Legal Status of the Negro" (1965).

**On Blackboard**

**Week 10, November 7 & 9: Black Power/ Black Internationalism Part I**

Monday:

X, Malcolm, *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements*

\*selected readings: "Declaration of Independence," "The Ballot or the Bullet," "Letters from Abroad"

**On Blackboard**

Wednesday:

**NO CLASS**

**Week 11, November 14 & 16: Independent Study/Research**

**Week 12, November 21: Black Power/ Black Internationalism Part II**

Monday:

Carmichael & Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation* (Vintage, 1967), 2-33, 34-57

**On Blackboard**

Wednesday:

THANKSGIVING BREAK

**Week 13, November 28 & 30: Black Feminism, the Black Studies Movement and Black Womanist Literature/ Rap Music's "Organic Intellectuals" in Black Urban America**

Monday:

Beal, Frances "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female" (1969)

Combahee River Collective Statement

A Conversation Between Elaine Brown and Angela Davis: "Angela Davis: A Black Woman in the Liberation Struggle" (1972).

**On Blackboard**

Wednesday:

Au, Wayne "Fresh out of School" *Journal of Negro Education*, v74 n3 p210 Sum 2005

\* Selected KRS-One, Public Enemy, and Nas: Lyrics Document Set

**On Blackboard**

**Week 14, December 5 & 7: Contemporary Black Intellectuals? Praxis and Old/New Directions/ Black Thought in the Black Lives Matter Era**

Monday:

Harris-Perry, Melissa, *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America*. (Yale University Press, 2011), 1-20; 51-97; 101-133.

West, Cornell "The Dilemma of the Black Intellectual" *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, No. 2 (Winter, 1993-1994), pp. 59-67 **On Blackboard**

Wednesday:

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. Excerpts from *Between the World and Me* (2015)

**On Blackboard**

**Week 15, December 12 & 14: Black Thought in the Black Lives Matter Era: Contemporary Black Intellectuals and the Digital Sphere**

Monday:

In-class digital exploration

Wednesday:

In-class digital exploration