

Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, at 11:30 am , Conklin 455

“African American Community” is presented this term as a reading course focused on structures, dynamics political economic issues, and social contexts within the African American community. The course is centered largely on the contemporary urban setting; however, a historical overview of developments extends back in time to African beginnings. Class and gender issues are explored; and special attention is given to the impact of incarceration, gentrification, and the persistence of racial stereotypes, profiles, and misrepresentation. In addition to an inter-disciplinary base of readings, a documentary film series is also incorporated as a part of the course calendar. At points, the arts and literature are also used as a lens for understanding the community’s voice(s). A theater trip is also planned.

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to attend each meeting of the class. All unexcused absences numbering beyond 3 will lead to demerits from the semester grade. Both a mid-term examination and a final examination are included as a part of the semester’s work. The format for examinations is as follows: roughly 30 to 40 percent “fill-in-the blanks” with short answers; and roughly 60 to 70 per cent of the examinations will be in the form of essay questions. A research paper of 12 to 15 pages is also required. A list of suggested topics for the term paper will be provided during the second week of class. Term paper topics, once chose, will be narrowed and refined in consultation with the professor and in individual office sessions.

Books

1. Zain Abdullah. BLACK MECCA: THE AFRICAN MUSLIMS OF HARLEM. (Oxford)
2. Michelle Alexander: THE NEW JIM CROW: MASS INCARCERATION IN THE AGE OF COLORBLINDNEsS. (The New Press)
3. HOME. By Toni Morrison. (Vintage)
4. Alford Young, Jr. THE MINDS OF MARGINALIZED BLACK MEN: MAKING SENSE OF MOBILITY, OPPORTUNITY, AND FUTURE LIFE CHANCES. (Princeton)

ADDITIONAL READINGS

At points, students will be required to access and to conduct readings on web sites.

Professor Holbrook’s Office, 303 Conklin Hall

Tuesdays: 1 to 2; and at other times by appointment. Special hours for term paper advisement will be posted (with a list of times for “signing in”) beginning in the third week of the semester.