

# INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN AMERICAN AND AFRICAN STUDIES II – SPRING 2019

MW – 10:00-11:20 am (Conklin 446)

## Course Description

This course interrogates the historical and psychological impacts of the American experience on people of African descent in the United States, from the end of the Civil War to the present. Together, we will explore the intersections of the “color-line,” as W.E.B. Du Bois called it, with the American ideals of freedom, and democracy. We will explore the impacts of race and racial prejudice on people of African descent as they made their way out of slavery and into a society that struggles to embrace them equally. We will consider several questions related to this journey. Specifically, we will think about what freedom and democracy have meant to African American people in the United States, and the ways that they have creatively expressed these meanings over the course of a century.



Instructor: Professor Hunter

**Office:** Conklin Hall room 337

**Hours:** MW 11:30-12:30 (Make appointments to meet using this link: <https://calendly.com/lpbhunter>)

**Email:** [lahunter@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:lahunter@newark.rutgers.edu)

### Required Texts:

Deborah G. White, et. al., *Freedom on My Mind: A History of African Americans* Vol. 2 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Bedford St. Martin's, 2016) ISBN: 978-1319060534

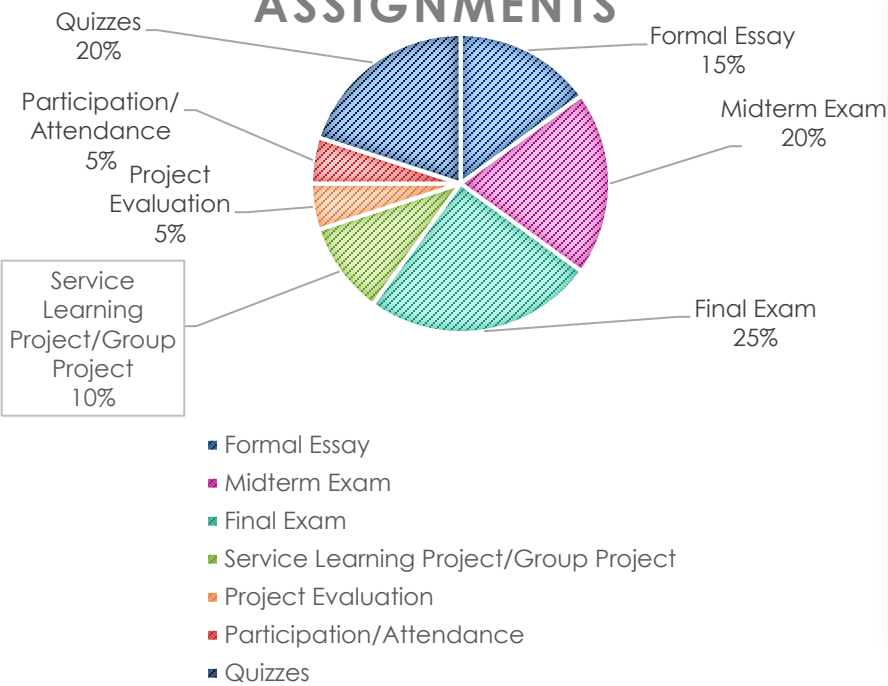
Toni Morrison *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: Vintage, 1992) ISBN: 978-0679745426



## Course Objectives

1. Develop a basic understanding of the ways in which the events following the American Civil War shaped the African American struggle for social, economic and political equality during the twentieth century.
2. Think critically about the African American experience from the late nineteenth century into the twentieth-first century using the course textbook, scholarly essays, and primary sources.
3. Consider the psychological impacts of race and racial prejudice on African Americans after the Civil War and into the present.
4. Identify the major strategies African Americans employed post-Emancipation to undermine social and political oppression from the turn of the twentieth century into contemporary times.
5. Identify the basic components of African American literary expression and discuss its importance to modern understandings of the African American experience and American race relations.
6. Evaluate the shifting meanings of freedom, equality, and national identity to African Americans from the late nineteenth century to the twenty-first.
7. Discuss and debate issues of race, gender and identity as we think collectively about the contributions of African Americans to modern American society.

## ASSIGNMENTS



Katherine Dunham, *Tropical Revue*, 1943

**Formal Essay**—Towards the end of this semester, you will write a short formal paper, in which you examine and critically assess an African American novel using the theoretical approach of either Henry Louis Gates or Toni Morrison. A detailed guideline for this assignment is available on blackboard.

**Exams**—This semester you will take two exams, one midterm and one final. Each test will require you to demonstrate your understanding of the concepts and ideas we discuss together each week, and your ability to apply these concepts to our contemporary moment. Please see the reading schedule below for the dates of both.

**Project options**—In the social justice tradition of African American studies scholars, you will have an opportunity to work on a project rooted in grassroots activism and civic engagement. You will choose one of the following projects in the first three weeks of our course and will present your projects at the end of the semester.

**Service Learning Project**—Students who prefer not to participate in a collective project will have the option of completing a service learning project through a site of their choice (i.e. NJ Cares, Local Pantries, Free Medical Aid, Free Educational Tutoring Services). Please see the guide for this project on blackboard.

**Imagining Black Possibility Project**—Beginning in week three of this semester, those of you who select this project option will begin work on an interactive public history initiative in which you work to highlight and preserve the narrative of a specific person, place, or event in contemporary African American life.

**Project Evaluation**—Five percent of your grade will come from those you work with. Whether you choose a group project or the service learning option, your performance and contributions will be assessed by your group members or service learning supervisor.

**Quizzes** — We will take 3-4 quizzes this semester. Each quiz is designed to measure your skill level and your grasp of the reading material. Some of these quizzes will be announced, but not all. Make sure that you have read for each class to ensure your success on each assessment. **Note: If you miss a quiz for any reason, you must take it within two class sessions. After this time, you will lose the opportunity. Pop quizzes cannot be retaken.**

**Participation/Attendance**—Participation and attendance are vital to success in this course. Showing up to class on time and contributing to class discussions thoughtfully can mean the difference between an A and a B+, or a C+ and a B. Besides active participation, being in class is a key component to excelling in this course. Understandably, there will be times when each of us may be late or absent. In this case, let's agree to keep each other posted at least 24 hours AHEAD of time when we can. If this is not possible, and your late attendance or absence is not due to an emergency, it will count against you. Three incidences of lateness will equal one absence; each unexcused absence after this will lower your final grade by one half grade. Any student who misses five 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.

# Evaluations & Course Policies

**Evaluation:** A key element aspect of your experience in this class will involve the instructor's evaluation of your progress in the course, with the course materials. As part of each of the instructor's assessment of your coursework, the following elements will be considered where applicable with each of the course assignments noted above.

- How effectively you develop your arguments in clear and coherent texts, as well as in oral communication, to produce an informed analysis of the materials with which you have been presented.
- How effectively you grasp the differing ways to read a variety of texts and cultural artifacts, and then produce an informed analysis of them. The evaluation will also include assessing your understanding of the connections among texts within given disciplines, and the similarities and distinctions between texts from different disciplines.
- How successfully you discuss your ideas individually and collectively in class, informally address in writing the information which you are presented in your responses to readings, and how you more formally engage these ideas in longer written work, as well as the midterm and final examinations.
- How you creatively produce ideas and texts in response to each other through the debates and the one-on-one conversation sessions.
- How you employ basic methods and methodologies employed in the humanities and social sciences. How well you identify, discuss and analyze interactions between people from a range of political, social, cultural, racial, ethnic, and gendered groups.
- How well you understand and address the relationship between the course materials and the defining social, political, cultural, and intellectual questions of your own time, in both historical and historical perspectives.

**Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism):** Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. The standard minimum penalties for students who cheat or plagiarize include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University. You are **REQUIRED** to insert an academic integrity pledge on EVERY assignment you submit this semester. **The pledge should read as follows: "On My honor I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment."**

## Resources & Notes on Success

**Extra Credit:** This semester you will have two extra credit opportunities, from which you can only choose **ONE**. A list of on and off-campus events will be posted on blackboard at the beginning of February, and will be available through April.

**Accommodations:** Rutgers University provides accommodations and/or modifications to any student who has been deemed eligible for special services, to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to participate in all Rutgers programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, requiring assistance and/or accommodation should speak with Disability Services in a timely manner.

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	WHAT TO READ	WHAT'S DUE
1	Jan. 23	Course Overview		
2	Jan. 28	Reconstruction & the Challenges Ahead, 1880-1915	Begin Reading <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 8 & Blackboard Reading: Excerpts from W.E.B. Du Bois' <i>Black Reconstruction</i>	
	Jan. 30		Complete <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 8 & Blackboard Reading: Letters to the Freedmen's Bureau	
3	Feb. 4	Jim Crow in the Twentieth Century, 1915-1940	<b>Begin reading <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 9 this week.</b>	
	Feb. 6		Blackboard Reading: Booker T. Washington's "Atlanta Exposition Speech" & "A Protest Against the Burning of Negroes"	
4	Feb. 11		Blackboard Reading: DuBois "Of Booker T. Washington and Others"	
	Feb. 13		Blackboard Reading: Excerpts from <i>The New Negro in the Old South</i>	
5	Feb. 18		Begin <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 10	Midterm Review Sheet posted on Blackboard
	Feb. 20		<b>Complete <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 10 this week.</b> Blackboard Reading: Angela Davis "I Used to be Your Sweet Mama"	
6	Feb. 25	Early Civil Rights Strategies & the "Double V" – 1939-1948	Begin <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 11	
	Feb. 27		Continue reading <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 11 Blackboard Reading: Robert Korstad "Opportunities Found and Lost"	
7	Mar. 4	MIDTERM REVIEW	MIDTERM REVIEW DAY	
	Mar. 6	MIDTERM EXAM	MIDTERM EXAM	
8	Mar. 11	African American Psychology: Introduction	Blackboard Reading: Bertha Holliday "The History and Visions of African American Psychology"	
	Mar. 13		Jacquelin Rahman "The N-Word: It's History and Use in the African American Community"	
9	Mar. 18	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES	-----	

	Mar. 20	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES	-----	
10	Mar. 25	Black Psychology & Education	Blackboard Reading: Excerpts from <i>The African American Child: Development and Challenges</i>	
	Mar. 27		Blackboard Reading: Kristal Shelvin “Stereotype Threat in African American Children”	
11	Apr. 1	Black Identity and Body Image	Blackboard Reading: Ronald Jackson “Defining Black Masculinity as Cultural Property”	
	Apr. 3		Blackboard Reading: Anita Thomas “Gendered Racial Identity of Young Black Women”	
12	Apr. 8	The Multiple Meanings of Freedom & Considering Black Literary Expression, 1963-1990	Blackboard Readings: <i>Playing in the Dark</i> Ch.1 & <i>Black Lit Folder 1</i>	Presentation 1
	Apr. 10		Begin reading <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 13	Presentation 2
13	Apr. 15		Blackboard Reading: Henry Louis Gates <i>Signifying Monkey</i>	Presentation 3
	Apr. 17		Blackboard Readings: <i>Playing in the Dark</i> Ch. 2 & <i>Black Lit Folder 2</i>	Presentation 4
14	Apr. 22	Black Narratives in the “Age of Trump,” 2000-present	Blackboard Video: The Great White Hoax	Presentation 5
	Apr. 24		<b>Complete <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 13 this week.</b>	Presentation 6 Formal book review due today
15	Apr. 29		Blackboard Reading: Demertria Irwen “In Trump Era, Black Writers Must Put Pen to Power”	Presentation 7
	May 1		Read first three sections of <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 14	
16	May 6		Final Exam Review	<b>All evaluations due by the end of today.</b>
		Final Exam May 13 8:30-11:30 am	-----	