

Introduction to African American Studies II

Spring 2015

014:112

Eng 209 MW: 2:30-3:50; 1:00-2:20

Course Description

This course explores 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.

Course Objectives

At the end of this semester, you will:

1. Have 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. Use your textbook, scholarly essays, and primary sources, to think critically about the African American experience from the late nineteenth century into the twentieth-first century.
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 at the turn of the twentieth century, during two major World Wars and in contemporary times.
5. Identify the basic components of African American Literature.
6. Discuss and debate the importance of black literary expression to modern understandings of the African American experience and American race relations.
7. Evaluate and discuss the shifting meanings of freedom, equality, and national identity to African Americans from the late nineteenth century to the twenty-first.
8. Discuss and debate issues of race, gender and identity as we think collectively about the contributions of African Americans to modern American society.



Sanitation Worker Strike, Memphis
Tenn. 1968

Instructor: L. Hunter

How to contact me:

Email:

lahunter@scarletmail.rutgers.edu

lpbhunter@gmail.com (please CC all messages and assignments here.)

Office & Office Hours:

Conklin rm. 326

MW: 11:00-12:30

Required Texts:

Mia Bay, Deborah G. White, Waldo E. Martin
Freedom on My Mind: A History of African Americans Vol. 2 (New York: Bedford St. Martin's, 2013)

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



“Die-in” protest, Marquette University 2014

Grading Scale

Grading in this course is based on a raw points scale:

Short Papers (10 points)

Formal Paper (15 points)

Quizzes (20 points)

Exams (35 points)

Presentation (10 points)

Individual Project Grade (5 points)

Participation (5 points)

Total points possible (100)

Course Requirements

Short informal Paper Assignments: You are responsible for two short reading response papers this semester. The first paper requires you to analyze a primary source taken your main textbook. Your second writing assignment requires you to critically analyze and evaluate a given primary source related to the Black Psychology unit. Due dates are listed in the course schedule below.

Longer formal Paper Assignment: This semester you will write one formal book review essay on a classic black novel from a given list. Within your essay, you will engage the literary theories of either Toni Morrison or Henry Louis Gates covered in class. Detailed guidelines for this assignment are available on blackboard, but we will discuss it in detail as the due date approaches. **You must submit all papers in either APA or Chicago format with the honor pledge written or typed on it. I also ask that you all submit one electronic, and one hard copy of every assignment.** Failure to complete your papers on time will result in an overall lower grade.

Quizzes: You will take four quizzes over the course of the semester, some will be announced, others will not, please make sure you have read for each class so that you are prepared to demonstrate your understanding of the major trends and events that we discuss throughout the semester. **Note: If you miss a quiz for any reason, you must make it up within two class sessions. After this time, you will lose the opportunity – except in cases of proven medical emergency. You cannot re-take a missed pop quiz.**

Exams: You will complete two examinations in this course. Each test will require you to demonstrate your understanding of the concepts

and ideas we discuss together each week, and your ability to analytically apply those concepts and ideas to the present. Please see the reading schedule below for the dates of both.

Participation: Consistent participation in this course is vital to excelling in it, and thoughtful, open conversations are the only ways to keep it interesting. To ensure this, we must each bring ourselves to every conversation. We must each question, challenge, critique and consider every point offered in class if we are to walk away from this semester with a strong command of the major issues that shape early African American history. Accomplishing this for all of us will mean active participation in class dialogue and spirited involvement in the following activity:

The People’s Campaign — Beginning in week three of this semester, you will sign up to participate in a group project, in which you will create a public awareness campaign with approximately 5-6 of your classmates. This activity requires each group to organize a faux public campaign that creatively discusses and resolves an issue the group identifies within the topic you collectively choose. You will make your choices from a selection of broad topics I will present to the class during week two. Once each group has been notified of their team members, you will begin to collaborate on the issue you want to bring to the public forum and your proposal to alleviate the problems it creates. In the last several weeks of class, each group will take turns presenting their projects. A detailed guideline for this exercise is available on blackboard.

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.

Attendance & punctuality: 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 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.

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 ALL of your submitted work 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**. One of these opportunities will offer you the opportunity to tour Harlem's historic downtown areas for a fee of \$20. The other is an opportunity to participate in Rutgers' annual Marion Thompson Wright Lecture series during the month of February. Both assignments are optional, please see me if you intend on completing one.

Accommodations: Rutgers University provides accommodations and/or modifications to any student who has been deemed eligible for special services, in order 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.

Additional notes: Writing is critical in this course and much of what you will be writing about will require you to engage issues of race, gender, class, sexuality, and morality in a sophisticated way. In light of this, I encourage you to utilize me as a resource and a sounding board in addition to any online resources, the library and the writing center. Additionally, feel free to send me drafts of assignments and ask me questions via email.

Week	Dates	Topic	What to Read	What's Due
1	Jan 21	Introduction to the course		Please confirm your email address
2	Jan. 26	<i>Reconstruction & the Challenges Ahead, 1880-1915</i>	Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 8 pp. 376-390 & DOCUMENTS pp.409-413	
	Jan 28		Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 8 pp. 390-408 & DOCUMENTS pp.415-418 Blackboard Readings: Blackboard Readings: Booker T. Washington "The Atlanta Compromise Speech"	
3	Feb 2	Jim Crow in the Twentieth Century, 1915-1940	Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 9 pp. 430-445 & DOCUMENTS pp.472-74	
	Feb 4		Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 9 pp. 445-464 Blackboard Reading: W.E.B. Du Bois "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others" & Booker T. Washington on the Reaction to his Atlanta Compromise Speech	
4	Feb 9		Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 10 pp. 492-510 Blackboard Reading: Excerpts' from W.E.B. DuBois's <i>Brownie's Book for Children</i>	
	Feb 11		Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 10 pp. 510-526 Blackboard Readings: Marita Bonner's "On Being Young — A Woman — and Colored" & Claude McKay "If We Must Die"	Reading Response due today
5	Feb 16	Early Civil Rights Strategies & the "Double V" — 1939-1948	Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 11 pp. 550-560 & VISUAL DOCUMENTS pp. 593-601	Review Sheet posted on Blackboard
	Feb 18		Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 12 pp. 604-625	
6	Feb 23	MIDTERM REVIEW	MIDTERM REVIEW DAY	
	Feb 25	MIDTERM EXAM	MIDTERM EXAM	
7	Mar 2	African American Psychology: introduction	Blackboard Reading: <i>African American Psychology</i> Ch. 1 pp.3-18	
	Mar 4		Blackboard Readings: <i>African American Psychology</i> Ch. 2 pp. 31-50	
8	Mar 9	"We People Who Are Darker than Blue:" Race, community and Identity	Blackboard Readings: <i>African American Psychology</i> Ch. 4 pp. 103-120 & Jacquelin Rahman "The N-Word: It's History and Use in the African American Community," <i>Journal of English Linguistics</i> Vol. 40 No. 137 (July 2011)	

	Mar 11		Blackboard Reading: <i>African American Psychology</i> Ch. 5 pp. 137-167	
9	Mar 16		SPRING BREAK — NO CLASSES	-----
	Mar 18		SPRING BREAK — NO CLASSES	-----
10	Mar 23	Is self love the first law of preservation? Black identity and Body Image	Blackboard Readings: Excerpts from <i>Ain't Nobody Worrying: Masculinity in Black America</i>	Second Reading Response due today
	Mar 25		Blackboard Readings: Satoshi Kanazawa "Why Are Black Women Less Physically Attractive than Other Women?" in <i>Psychology Today</i> (2011)	
11	Mar 30	Black Psychology & Education	Blackboard Readings: Excerpts from <i>Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?</i>	
	Apr 1		Blackboard Readings: Excerpts from <i>Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?</i>	PRESENTATION 1
12	Apr 6	<i>The Multiple Meanings of Freedom & Considering Black Literary Expression, 1963-1975</i>	Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 12 pp. 625-635; Ch. 13 pp.662-671 *Optional Read: See Black Fire Folder*	PRESENTATION 2
	Apr 8		Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 13 pp. 671-693 & <i>Playing in the Dark</i> Preface & Excerpts from <i>Signifying Monkey</i>	PRESENTATION 3
13	Apr 13	Telling Our Own Stories cont. —1968-2000	Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 14 pp. 720- 750 & Blackboard Readings: See Black Lit Folder 1	PRESENTATION 4
	Apr 15		Read: <i>Playing in the Dark</i> Ch.1 & Blackboard Reading: See Black Lit Folder 2	PRESENTATION 5
14	Apr 20		Read: <i>Playing in the Dark</i> Ch. 2 & Blackboard Reading: See Excerpts from <i>Signifying Monkey</i>	PRESENTATION 6 Book Review Due
	Apr 22	Black Narratives in the "Age of Obama," 2000-present	Skim: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 15 Blackboard Readings: Blackwell, Jacqueline A. "African-American Literature and "Post-Racial" America. Or, You Know, Not." <i>Inquiry</i> 16, no. 1 (March 2011)	PRESENTATION 7
15	Apr 27		Blackboard Readings: See Black Lit Folder 3	PRESENTATION 8 Review Sheet posted on Blackboard
	Apr 29		Blackboard Reading: Marshall, Elizabeth, Staples, Jeanine; Gibson Simone "Ghetto fabulous: reading black adolescent femininity in contemporary urban street fiction" <i>Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy</i> Vol. 53 no. 1 (Sept. 2009)	
16	May 4		Final Exam Review	

	May 6		READING DAY	-----
17	May 11		FINAL EXAM May 11, 2015 3:00-6:00 pm	-----