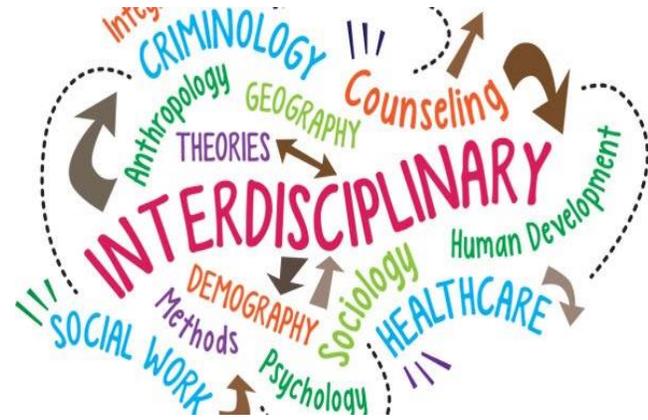


MTH 1:00-2:20 pm (Engelhard Hall room 213)

Course Description

Interdisciplinary research is a central foundation in African American and African Studies. Understanding the most pertinent issues of black identity in the American world required the use of a multilayered approach. How, for example, could we understand African American civil rights activism without studies economics, psychology, race, history, philosophy, religion, gender and national laws? This course is an introduction to research and writing for student of African American and African studies and studies whose academic and career goals require interdisciplinary research. Together we will interrogate and challenge traditionally accepted social, political and cultural knowledge in several academic disciplines by expanding their boundaries. In particular, we will critically assess the ways in which scholars of the African diaspora have used interdisciplinary methodology to resist systems of oppression in and outside of academia. Specifically, we will think about the ways in which African American and African Studies researchers help define and redefine the contours of regional, national and transnational identity for marginalized groups whose socio-political and historical experiences intersect. As a community of scholars, we will employ the methods of these pioneering scholars for our own projects—which will culminate in our own digital archive. Drawing on archival material, interdisciplinary methods and theoretical frameworks, you will formulate your own critical questions and answers as you think about specific issues of ethnicity, race, class, gender, spirituality, nationality, social and political justice, education, public health, or public representation.



Instructor: Professor Hunter

Office: Conklin Hall room 326

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

Email: lahunter@scarletmail.rutgers.edu (please CC all messages to lpbhunter@gmail.com)

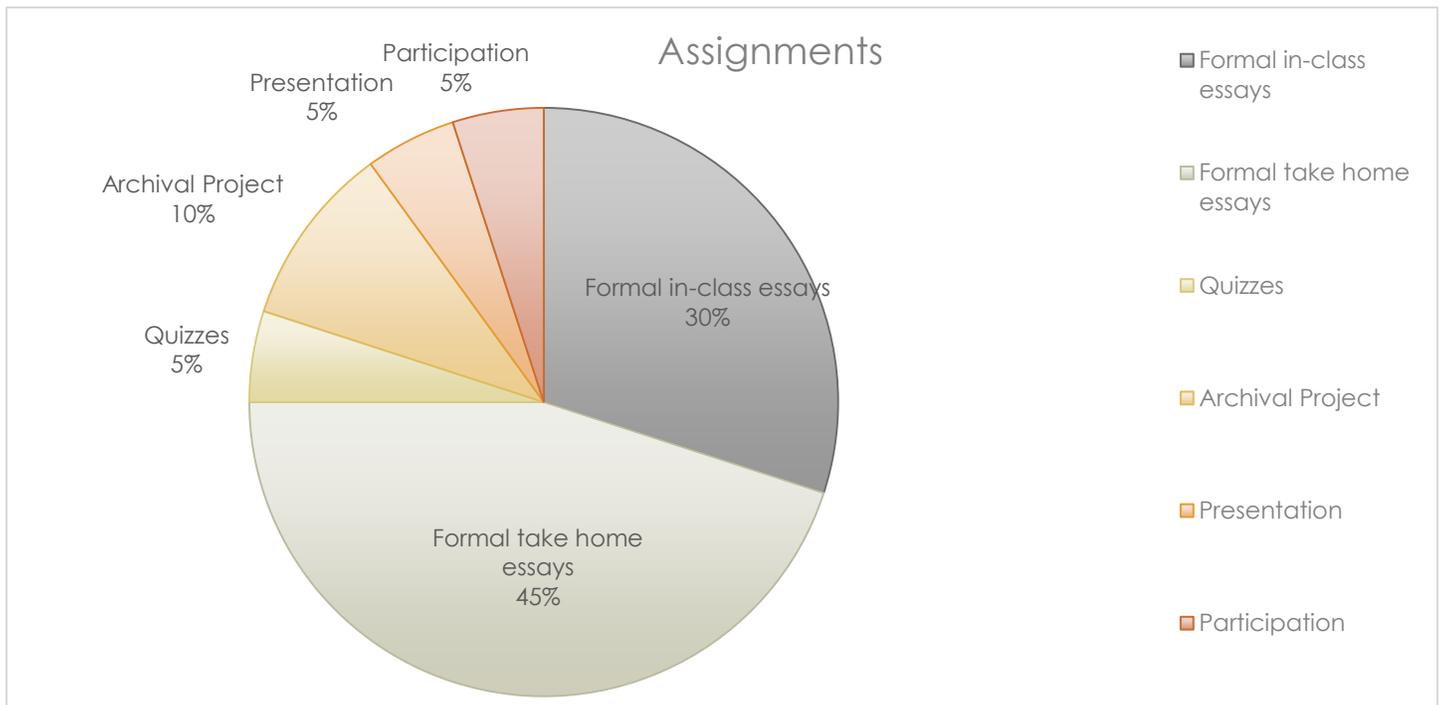
Required Texts:

Wayne Booth, *The Craft of Research* (Chicago University Press, 2008) [3rd or 4th edition is fine]

All other required texts are available on blackboard.

At the End of this semester you will:

1. Develop a basic understanding of interdisciplinary research, writing and methodology.
2. Identify and explain the steps of the interdisciplinary research process.
3. Explain the importance of interdisciplinary studies to facilitate cognitive advancement.
4. Analyze complex problems within several the intersecting disciplines of African American and African Studies.
5. Identify the defining elements of disciplines relevant to these problems.
6. Discuss and debate issues of race, gender, and identity as we think collectively about the role of interdisciplinary work in African American and African Studies.
7. Construct and create analytical, argumentative essays that observe the basic conventions of academic writing, including proposing a thesis, organizing and analyzing main points, and supporting ideas with well-chosen textual evidence from multiple sources.
8. Create a small archival project connected to an individual research question.
9. Propose an individual interdisciplinary research problem to pursue that engages physical or digital archival sources.



Formal Take Home Essays— You are required to write three out-of-class essays this semester. Each essay will be based on an assigned reading we discuss in class. We will discuss each paper prior to its respective due date; all paper submission deadlines are listed below. Papers submitted one class later than the required due date will be lowered one half-grade; those submitted over one week late will receive a failing grade. This, however, does not exempt you from submitting any assignment.

Formal In-class Essays — In addition to your out-of-class essays, you will also write multiple in-class essay assignments. Formal in-class essays will be graded, but informal in-class writing assignments will not. Each in-class assignment will facilitate your ability to write essays that have a clear thesis, strong topic sentences, and well-developed paragraphs. They will also strengthen your ability to effectively use textual support, write strong introductions and conclusions, and edit for grammatical errors. Please note, some of your in-class assignments will be full class period exercises; the dates of these are listed below.

Quizzes— This semester you will take several quizzes based on the readings assigned throughout the semester. Each quiz will assess your ability to illustrate a strong reading of assigned texts, and to use that text to construct arguments, make critiques, or assess writing strategies. If you miss a quiz for any reason, you will have two class sessions to retake it. After this time, you will not be able to make up your quiz. This does not include students that may have unforeseen medical emergencies, or other significant mitigating circumstances.

Archival Project— This semester you will contribute to a class archive that will house your archival research and notes on your research topics and finding aids. A detailed guide will be posted on blackboard.

Presentation— In the final weeks of this semester, you will give a brief presentation about your project and research journey. A detailed guide will be posted on blackboard.

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. 18	Course Introduction & the influence of research		Email confirmation
2	Jan. 22	Archives and the challenges for interdisciplinary researchers	Read: Allen F. Repko et. al. "Interdisciplinary Studies Defined"	
	Jan. 25		Read: W.E. B. Du Bois <i>Souls of Black Folk</i> Ch. 1	Submit topic list by end of day
3	Jan. 29		Read: Deborah Gray White "Mining the Forgotten" & Michel Trouillot "The Power in the Story"	Formal in-class essay 1
	Feb. 1		Dana Library Session Weekend reading: <i>The Craft of Research</i> Ch. 1	Over the weekend use a digital or physical archive to locate sources
4	Feb. 5	Understanding and Applying Methodology		Upload your first set of sources to course archive
	Feb. 8		Read: Allen F. Repko et. al. "Identifying Relevant Disciplines"	
5	Feb. 12		Sule V. Thandi "Who Deserves a Seat?"	
	Feb. 15			Midterm assessment
6	Feb. 19		Read: France Twine "Visual Ethnography and Racial Theory: Family Photographs as Archives of Interracial Intimacies"	
	Feb. 22		Read: Laura Troiano "Slippery When Wet"	
7	Feb. 26		Paper workshop [bring your laptop]	
	Mar. 1		Read: Mary Anna Kidd "Archetypes, Stereotypes and Media Representation"	Take home essay 1
8	Mar. 5	Understanding and Applying Theory	Read: Allen F. Repko et. al. "Creating Common Ground Between Insights: Theories"	
	Mar. 8		Writing Workshop [bring your laptop]	

9	Mar. 12	Spring break	-----	
	Mar. 15	Spring break	-----	
10	Mar. 19			Formal in-class essay 2
	Mar. 22		Read: Derrick Bell "The Space Traders"	
11	Mar. 26		Read: Excerpts from Toni Morrison's <i>Playing in the Dark</i>	
	Mar. 29		Guest Speaker TBA	Take home essay 2
12	Apr. 2		Read: Excerpts from Frederick Nietzsche's <i>The Will to Power</i>	
	Apr. 5		Read: Excerpts from <i>Black Theology and Black Power</i>	
13	Apr. 9	Constructing and Proposing Your Research Project & Applying Your Analysis	Read: <i>The Craft of Research</i> Ch. 2	Project Presentations
	Apr. 12		Read: Excerpts from John Gwaltney's <i>Drylongso</i>	Project Presentations
14	Apr. 16		Project workshop [bring your laptop]	Project Presentations
	Apr. 19			Project Presentations
15	Apr. 23		Guest Speaker TBA	Project Presentations
	Apr. 26		Writing workshop [bring your laptop]	Project Presentations
16	Apr. 30		Read: "Applied Africana Studies Methodology"	Project Presentations All archival project material submitted by 11:59 pm
	May 7	Final Exam	-----	Final Essay due at 3 pm