INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES
ETHNIC STUDIES 250
WINTER 2017
TTR 12:00-1:20
4.0 CREDITS
176 LOKEY EDUCATION BLDG

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GRADUATE TEACHING FELLOWS (GTFs):
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course introduces students to the theoretical models used in the interdisciplinary study of African-America. Using a thematic approach, students will learn to critically engage the development of and dynamics between race, racism and blackness in the United States. This course, then, highlights the symbiotic relationship between structural domination and cultural resistance. As a sub-field of Ethnic Studies, the Introduction to African-American Studies pays special attention to the intersections of race, class, gender and sexuality.

READINGS AVAILABLE ON CANVAS

ASSIGNMENTS:

REFLECTION PAPER (30% OF FINAL GRADE):
You will have three opportunities to submit a 3-5 page reflection paper. Each date corresponds roughly with a section of the course: January 31, March 2, and March 16. The purpose of the reflection paper is to create a space to apply what you have learned in this course to your own lived experiences, and how this knowledge confirms or contradicts your values, perspectives and/or experiences. While reflection papers privileges the articulation of your experience, they also need to significantly engage course material (lectures, readings, films).

EXAMS (60% OF FINAL GRADE):
The midterm (2/14) and final exam (3/20) are take-home exams that will each include a combination of short answer questions and longer essay questions. Exams seek to measure your ability to remember the key ideas from the class, to draw conclusions from themes discussed throughout the course, to synthesize multiple reading and video assignments, and to craft persuasive arguments citing direct evidence from assigned readings. The midterm exam is worth 30% of your grade and the final is worth 30%. Both must be completed in order for you to pass the course.

Be sure to format exams with 1” margins (top, bottom, and sides) in double-spaced Times/Times Roman/Times New Roman 12pt. font. Be sure that the pages are numbered and that your name appears on each page in the header. Your GTF may not accept improperly formatted documents. EXAMS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED LATE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

Quotations of text and citation of sources are required and must be in compliance with the style sheet provided on Canvas.

PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE (10% OF FINAL GRADE):
Attendance is required. You are expected to attend all lectures, and in-class assignments done during lecture sections count toward your participation grade. Furthermore, you will be responsible for material from in-class videos and lectures on the exams and quizzes. Weekly
reading responses should be posted to Canvas by 10 a.m. These postings factor into your participation grade.

**COURSE ACCESSIBILITY**
The University of Oregon seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Accessible Education Center by emailing uoaec@uoregon.edu, calling (541) 346-1155, or visiting the office at 164 Oregon Hall. The Center will work with you and I will gladly make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Accessible Education Center.

**E-MAIL ÉTIQUETTE**
Your relationships with Dr. Cheney and your GTF, Paul Guernsey, are professional relationships. When corresponding by e-mail, always include a salutation (e.g. “Dear Prof. Cheney” or “Dear Mr. Guernsey”) and a closing that identifies who you are (“Sincerely, María Rodríguez”). If we have not replied to e-mail, within a day or two, do not hesitate to follow up in person or with a second e-mail.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES**
Wireless and handheld devices and cell phones must be turned off prior to class. Please do not text in class.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM**
All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. Violations will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. Please review the University’s policies at: [http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/judicial/conduct/sai.htm](http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/judicial/conduct/sai.htm)

**STUDENT CONDUCT**
Two standards of expectations regulate student responsibility in ES 250—these standards are non-negotiable. 1) Respect yourself and others: a diversity of views should be expected and protected. The topics covered in this course are often emotionally charged and are not always comfortable to discuss openly. You are expected to engage the issues in a mature, reasonable, and respectful manner, and to show respect for other students, the GTFs, and the professor at all times. 2) Bring your brains: Ethnic Studies is an academic discipline. This course is an intellectual, not an experiential, endeavor. Therefore an informed discussion of the problems and issues addressed in this course is required.

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

*Note: Readings, films, and lecture topics may be subject to minor modifications, which will be announced in class and posted on Canvas. Make sure your email is linked to the course Blackboard site.*
SECTION ONE: THE ORIGINS OF AFRICAN-AMERICA

The Origins of and Debates within Africana Studies

T (1/10)  Lecture: “The Birth of Black Studies”
TR (1/12) Lecture/Discussion & Film: *Race: The Power of an Illusion*

Required Readings:
- Lori Patton Davis, “Why Have the Demands of Black Students Changed So Little since the 1960s?”  
- UO Black Student Task Force Demands  
  (http://static1.squarespace.com/static/541e2ec8e4b042b085c464d9/t/5651440ae4bbb0a376ef7e6b72/1448166410921/UO+Black+Student+Task+Force+ListOfDemands_2015+%281%29.pdf)

The Origins of the African Diaspora: Slavery in the New World

T (1/17)  Lecture: “Slavery in the New World”
TR (1/19) Lecture/Discussion & Film: “Africans in America”

Required Readings:
- Katie Geneva Cannon, “Slave Ideology and Biblical Interpretation”

The Social Construction of Blackness

T (1/24)  Lecture: “Blackness & the Principle of Hypodescent”
TR (1/26) Discussion & Film: *A Question of Color*

Required Readings:
- Winthrop Jordan, “Mutual Causation’ of Racism and Slavery”
- Barbara Fuchs, “A Mirror Across the Water: Mimetic Racism and Cultural Survival”
- Patricia de Santana, Pinho, “White but Not Quite: Tones and Overtones of Whiteness in Brazil”
- Zeba Bey, “I Was Raised to Honor My African-ness”  
  (http://www.xojane.com/issues/i-was-raised-to-honor-my-african-ness-and-avoid-becoming-black-with-a-capital-b)

First Reflection Paper Opportunity January 31

SECTION TWO: BLACK POLITICAL THOUGHT/ACTIVISM

Quotidian Resistance

T (1/31)  Lecture: “Slave Culture”
TR (2/3)  Lecture/Discussion: “Black Institutions: Churches & Schools”

Required Readings:
- Barbara Bush, “The Woman Slave and Slave Resistance”
- Barbara Dianne Savage, “Biblical and Historical Imperatives: Toward a History of Ideas about the Political Role of Black Churches”

Civil Rights Activism

T (2/7)  Lecture: “The Modern Civil Rights Movement”
TR (2/9) Lecture/Discussion & Film: “Eyes on the Prize”

Required Readings:
- Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, KS (1954)
http://www.nationalcenter.org/brown.html
Martin Luther King Jr., “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” 1963
Charles Payne, "Men Led, but Women Organized: Movement Participation of Women in the Mississippi Delta"

MIDTERM DUE BY NOON FEBRUARY 14

Black Nationalism & Black Radicalism
TR (2/16)  Lecture: “The Black Power Movement”
Required Readings:
Black Panther Party, “What We Want/What We Believe”
Eldridge Cleaver, “The Allegory of the Black Eunuch”
Michele Wallace, Black Macho

A Challenge to Hegemony: Black Feminist Thought
T (2/28)  Lecture/Discussion: “Black Feminism in Practice”
Required Readings:
Combahee River Collective, “The Combahee River Collective Statement”
Deborah K. King “Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousness: The Context of Black Feminist Ideology”

Second Reflection Paper Opportunity March 2

SECTION THREE: BLACK CULTURAL TRADITIONS/PRODUCTION

The Cultural Politics of Black Music
TR (3/2)  Lecture: “Lady Sings the Blues: The Gender Politics of Blues Women”
T (3/7)  Lecture/Discussion: “Women in the Rap Music Industry: Racial Pornography and/or Feminist Politics?”
Required Readings:
Hazel V. Carby, “‘It Jus Be’s Dat Way Sometime’: The Sexual Politics of Women’s Blues”
Tera Hunter, “The Blues Aesthetic and Black Vernacular Dance”

Literature as a Form of Cultural Resistance
Required Readings:
Alain Locke, “The New Negro”
Langston Hughes, “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain”

SECTION FOUR: BLACK SEXUALITY

Black Is, Black Ain’t: Exploring A Politics of Exclusion in Black Communities
TR (3/16)  Lecture/Film: “Black Is/Black Ain’t”
Required Readings:
E. Patrick Johnson, “To be Young, Gifted and Queer: Race and Sex in the New Black Studies”
Dwight McBride, “Can the Queen Speak? Racial Essentialism, Sexuality and the Problem of Authority”

Third Reflection Paper Opportunity March 16

Final Due: Monday, March 20 @ 11 A.M.