AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES 3101
THEORY AND DYNAMICS OF RACISM & OPPRESSION
SPRING 2018
BEL, 208; Tuesdays and Thursdays; 8 am-9:15 am

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will systematically and objectively examine the sources of American oppression and explore how it shapes the life chances of African Americans from just prior to the Reconstruction Era to the twenty-first century. More specifically, we will explore the timing and manner of their entry into U.S. society, conflicts with other groups, encounters with prejudice and discrimination, as well as the extent to which they have secured access to cultural, economic, political, and social assimilation into U.S. society.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the history of conflict between race groups in America
2. To understand how conflict among race groups has shaped the life chances of African Americans
3. To develop analytical and critical perspectives of the role of racial and ethnic differentiation in the organization of contemporary US society
4. To understand the historical processes by which racial/ethnic categories, meanings, identities, and inequalities are created and transformed (and destroyed?)
5. To understand contemporary racial inequalities, ideologies, and practices designed to confront and defeat racism and oppression

Readings:

NO REQUIRED TEXT BOOKS.

ALL REQUIRED COURSE READINGS CAN BE FOUND IN THE COURSE CONTENT FOLDER ON CANVAS.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grade Calculation:

The final grade is weighted as follows:

- Attendance and Discussion Leader: 10%
- Paper Presentation: 10%
- Reading Journals/Quizzes/Short responses: 20%
- Midterm: 30%
- Critical Essay (6-8 page limit, not including refs): 30% DUE WEEK 15

IF STUDENTS NEGLECT TO COMPLETE ALL COMPONENTS OF THIS COURSE, THEY WILL FAIL THIS COURSE.

Grading Scale

All exams and final course grades are calculated according to the following scale:

A=94-100, A-=89-93, B+=87-88, B=84-86, B-=79-83, C+=77-78, C=74-76, C-=69-73, D+=67-68, D=64-66
D-=58-63, F=below 58.

Deadlines: I expect students to complete assignments and examinations on time. I do not offer make-up examinations or extend deadlines. I make exceptions to this policy only in instances of excusable personal illness or hospitalization or death of immediate family members. I expect students who have emergencies to contact me within 48 hours of the scheduled assignment or exam or as soon as possible. Provide documentation for the event that motivates your request. Those who fail to do both (provide notification and documentation), may not be permitted to make up the work and may be award a grade of zero for the missed assignment or examination. Students who receive extensions will be informed about grade reductions once the extension request is approved. Students whose university business creates scheduling conflicts must discuss alternative arrangements with me well in advance of travel dates. Also, see university policy regarding attendance below.

Intellectual Property Rights:

Teaching and curricular materials (including but not limited to classroom lectures, class notes, quizzes, exams, handouts, and presentations) are the property of the instructor. Therefore, electronic recording and/or transmission of class or class notes is prohibited without the express written permission of the instructor. Such permission is to be considered unique to the needs of an individual student (e.g. ADA compliance), and not a license for permanent retention or electronic dissemination to others.

Reading Journals:

Word Count: 350-500

Due: Mondays at 5pm (starting Week 2). No reading journals entries are due Weeks 1, 7, 10, 14-16

What to expect: I will either present a question to you about the readings, or ask you to reflect on the readings, films, and your life experiences. Doing well on these writing assignments is dependent on you having done the reading prior to submitting reading journal responses.

Your journal entries do not need to be in the style of an academic paper. In other words, you do not need an introduction, thesis, conclusion, etc. However, I do expect college level writing. This means the use of proper grammar, complete sentences, good spelling, etc. In grading the entries, I will be looking for thoughtful reflection, application of course materials, completion of exercise (if applicable) and coherence. The journals themselves are private communications between yourself and the instructor. As such, I hope that you will challenge yourself to submit personally introspective and honest entries.
Grading Rubric for Reading Journals

See Canvas.

Reading Journal Prompts:

To view Reading Journal schedule, see Canvas.

Quizzes:

Throughout the semester, students should be prepared to be tested on the assigned readings. All quizzes will be based on reading materials and will be in multiple choice format. Be sure to read the directions for the quizzes carefully before beginning these assessments especially when the quiz is online (i.e. offers specifics regarding back tracking, etc.).

Paper Presentation:

To view Paper Presentation directions, see Canvas

Critical Essay:

To view Critical Essay assignment and grading rubric, see Canvas.

Essay Length and Due Date:

This is a 6-8 page essay (not including references). This critical essay will be due in class on April 17, 2018. No exceptions: This means that electronic versions of papers (sent via email) will not be accepted. Nor will late papers, unless an extension (requested at least 48 hours prior to due date) was approved by the instructor.

Critical Essay requirements:

All essays must be typed, have standard margins and font size.

You may use MLA or APA style. Your written report should be approximately 6-8 pages in length, not including the cover and bibliography pages.

Your paper should rely on a minimum of six outside sources to support the claims in your paper.

Accommodations for Students with Documented Special Needs

Efforts will be made to make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Students needing accommodations should discuss their needs with the instructor. Documentation of your disability at the beginning of the semester is strongly suggested.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT:

**UPDATED 3/4/2016**

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

(1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
(2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:
Cheating

Plagiarism or cheating will not be overlooked by the instructor. Cheating of any kind will be dealt with using appropriate university policies. Note: See Academic Honor Policy below.

A Note On Plagiarism

Whenever you use someone else's ideas or words, it is necessary to give credit to the source from which you took them. Otherwise, this constitutes plagiarism – defined as appropriating and presenting as one's own the writing, ideas, or thoughts of someone else. You may not use another person's words, ideas, opinions, interpretations, theories, or thoughts (either paraphrased or in direct quotes) without indicating the source from which you obtained the words, facts, or ideas. If the words you are using are direct quotes, you are required to indicate this by enclosing the directly quoted material in quotation marks and by providing information on the source from which you obtained the material. If you use someone else's ideas but don’t quote them directly, you are still responsible for indicating the source from which you obtained the ideas.

Plagiarism will result in an automatic failing grade for the entire course. There will be no exceptions to this rule. If there is any ambiguity about this definition or you have any questions about what comprises plagiarism, please contact me before you submit a written essay. I will not accept the excuse that you did not know that what you were doing constituted plagiarism.

Class Conduct

Disruptive and rude behavior interrupts the learning environment, and will not be tolerated by the instructor. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to the following: making/receiving cell phone calls during class, sending text messages, leaving early or coming to class late, talking out of turn in an excessive and rude manner, reading the newspaper during class, doing assignments for other classes, sleeping, and engaging in other activities that distract from the classroom learning experience. Lastly, I do not allow the use of laptops during class. Students are expected to use pen/pencil and paper to note take. Please turn off your cell phone in the classroom (put it on vibrate or turn down ringer). If you need to make/take a call, please leave the classroom to complete your call. NOTE: I reserve the right to lower your final grade for disruptive behavior. Also, when students are asked to leave due to disruptive behavior, a meeting may be required before the student will be allowed to rejoin the class.

University Attendance Policy:

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.
Academic Honor Policy:

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "...be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at http://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy)

Free Tutoring From FSU:

On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services' comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options - see http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring or contact tutor@fsu.edu. High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

Syllabus Change Policy:

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

Topics and Weekly Reading Assignments


**Week 1: Foundations of Modern Racism**

*January 9 and 11*


**Week 2: Ethnic Myth: The Cultural Paradigm**

*January 16 and 18*

*Steinberg, Stephen. The Ethnic Myth: Race, Ethnicity and Class in America. Read Part II (Introduction and Chapters 3 and 4).*


**FILM:** “*Banished: American Ethnic Cleanings*”
Week 3: Race Based Assumptions About Intelligence and Mobility  
January 23 and 25


Fischer et al., *Inequality By Design*. Chapter 8.

Week 4: Residential Segregation  
January 30 and February 1


Part 2: Experiences within American Institutions

Week 5: Schools  
February 6 and 8

Woodson, Carter G. *The Mis-Education of the Negro*. Chapters 2 and 4.


Film--”A National Disgrace”

Week 6: Workplaces  
February 13 and 15


Week 7: Midterm  
February 20 and 22
Week 8: The Welfare State  
February 27 and March 1


Week 9: Health Care Facilities/Services  
March 6 and 8


Film: “The AMERICAN Dream”

Week 10: Spring Break  
March 12-16

Week 11: Neighborhood Quality in “Black America” and the Health Effects of Raced Space  
March 19 and 21


Film: *Tales of the Grim Sleeper*

PAPER DRAFTS DUE

Week 12: Criminal Justice System: Why It’s Not So Just...  
March 26 and 28


**Week 13: Confronting Jim Crow and the Reality of Backlash Politics**
**April 3 and 5**


Film: “Brick by Brick: A Civil Rights Story”

**Week 14: Pathways to Liberation 2: Black Lives Matter and Beyond**
**April 10 and 12**

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Chapter 1.


Black Lives Matter Policy Platform and Demands. [https://policy.m4bl.org/platform/](https://policy.m4bl.org/platform/)

**Week 15: Student Presentations**
**April 17 and 19**

**FINAL PAPERS DUE**

**Week 16: Wrap up/Student Presentations**
**April 24 and 26**

King, Martin Luther. Where do we go from here? Speech [http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/where_do_we_go_from_here_delivered_at_the_11th_annual_sclc_convention/](http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/where_do_we_go_from_here_delivered_at_the_11th_annual_sclc_convention/)