

# Foundations in African American Studies

129:062:001

2:30-3:45 MW 403 JB

Prof. L. Hill (lena-hill@uiowa.edu)  
Office Hours: MW (10:00-11:30) & by appt

Office: 470 EPB (after class, 510 JB)  
Office Telephone: 335-1384

## **Required Texts**

All texts are listed on our course ICON site unless otherwise noted. You must bring printed versions of the readings to *every* class meeting. I will administer periodic extra-credit checks to assess whether you are keeping your readings in a well ordered binder.

## **Course Overview**

In this course we will study the areas, methods, and practice of African American Studies as a discipline. The course covers four central facets of AAS: 1) the history of AAS as a discipline; 2) the fields of study comprising AAS (with special attention to the program at the University of Iowa); 3) the basic methods of interdisciplinary work; 4) the research, analytical, and writing skills fundamental to the practice of AAS scholarly work.

## **Course Requirements**

### ***Class Participation***

This course asks that you engage critically and actively with demanding readings. I will expect you to come prepared for our work together, to meet deadlines, and to respond thoughtfully to class discussion. *Please be aware that merely attending class does not constitute effective participation.*

### ***Written Work & Major Assignments***

1. Reading Quizzes. I will administer regular reading quizzes throughout the semester. Some are scheduled on the syllabus, but others will be unannounced. These short quizzes are designed to assess whether you are keeping up with the reading.
2. Short Writing. You will write three brief pieces: a 1-2 page critical response, a 1-page proposal for a possible final project on the Great Migration, and a 1-page proposal for your final project.
3. Presentation. You will give a ten minute oral presentation related to your final essay.
4. Final Essay. Your final essay will be an interdisciplinary, 5-7 page analytical essay that grows out of a reading assigned on the syllabus.
5. Final Exam: The final will test your familiarity with our texts and require you to contemplate them within the analytical framework our class creates.

## **Practical Matters**

### ***Grading***

This course will employ a +/- scale. Your final grade will be determined by the following breakdown:

Class Participation: 10%  
Reading Quizzes: 20%  
Short Writing: 10%  
Presentation: 10%  
Final Essay: 25%  
Final: 25%

### ***Attendance and Punctuality***

Students are expected to attend all class meetings. *There will be no make-ups for reading quizzes or presentations.* Please contact me ahead of time if you need an extension on written assignments. If you do not request an extension and I do not receive your assignment within a week of the due date, *I will not accept it.* If you are absent more than three times—regardless of the reasons—your class participation grade will be lowered one whole letter grade. After the third absence, each subsequent missed class will result in a +/- reduction in your participation average. Chronic tardiness will negatively impact your participation grade.

### ***Format for Written Work***

Please format your text in a common 12pt font (like this one) with 1-inch margins and headings. Double-space text for essays and be sure to staple your pages and include page numbers. This is not a course in the mechanics of writing, but I am happy to help you with any concerns you may have about points of style, usage, or grammar. I also encourage you to take advantage of the services offered by the Writing Center. For information, visit their website at [www.uiowa.edu/~writingc](http://www.uiowa.edu/~writingc) or contact them at 335-0188.

### ***Student Rights and Other Responsibilities***

This course is given by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and its home department is African American Studies. Students wishing to add or drop this course after the official deadline must receive approval of the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Details of the University policy of cross enrollments may be found at [http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/policy\\_undergrads\\_outside.shtml](http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/policy_undergrads_outside.shtml).

### **Departmental/Collegiate Complaint Procedures**

All students have the right to adjudication of any complaints you have about classroom activities or instructor actions. Information is available at [www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic\\_handbook/ix.shtml/](http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml/). You should first attempt to resolve the issue with the faculty member involved. Lacking a satisfactory outcome, you can turn to the program coordinator, Richard Turner ([richard-turner@uiowa.edu](mailto:richard-turner@uiowa.edu)). If a satisfactory resolution remains unmet, you may contact the DEO of African American Studies, Helena Dettmer ([helena-dettmer@uiowa.edu](mailto:helena-dettmer@uiowa.edu)). After exhausting these options, you may turn to the CLAS and submit a written complaint to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, 120 Schaeffer Hall (335-2633). Please note: in complaints involving the assignment of grades, it is college policy that grades cannot be changed without the permission of the department concerned. All complaints must be made within six months of the incident.

### **Students with Disabilities**

You have the right to expect a classroom environment that enables you to learn, including modifications if you have a disability. Students with disabilities that may require some modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements should discuss them with me so that appropriate arrangements may be made. It is the student's responsibility to contact Student Disability Services, 3100 Burge Hall (335-1462), and obtain a Student Academic Accommodation Request form (SAAR). See [www.uiowa.edu/~sds/](http://www.uiowa.edu/~sds/).

### **Understanding Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. Visit [www.sexualharassment.uiowa.edu/](http://www.sexualharassment.uiowa.edu/) for definitions, assistance, and the full policy.

### **Plagiarism and Cheating**

All of our work will be conducted according to a spirit of integrity. Plagiarism and any other activities that result in a student presenting work that is not his or her own constitute academic fraud. Academic fraud is reported to the departmental DEO and then to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Services in CLAS. For more information, visit [www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic\\_handbook/ix.shtml](http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml).

### **Reacting Safely to Severe Weather**

If severe weather is indicated by the UI outdoor [warning system](#), class members will seek shelter in the innermost part of the building, if possible at the lowest level, staying clear of windows and of free-standing expanses which might prove unstable. The class will resume after the severe weather has ended. See the Operations Manual section [16.14. i](#).

## Working Schedule

Wk			Seminar	Assignments
1	M	8/25	<b>I. History of African American Studies</b> Introduction: African American Studies	
	W	8/27	Nathaniel Norment, Jr., "Introduction"  Nikongo BaNikongo, "The Scope of Contending Issues"	
2	M	9/1	-----Labor Day-----	Reading Quiz
	W	9/3	Nell Irvin Painter, "Captives Transported, 1619-ca. 1850" & "Those Who Were Enslaved, ca. 1770-1859"  Albert Raboteau, "The Black Experience in American Evangelicalism: The Meaning of Slavery"  Vincent Harding, "Religion and Resistance among Antebellum Slaves, 1800-1860"	
3	M	9/8	Paul Finkleman, "Introduction: The Centrality of Slavery in American Legal Development"  Rupert Taylor, "Political science encounters 'race' and 'ethnicity'"	
	W	9/10	Frederick Douglass, <i>The Narrative of Frederick Douglass</i> (299-330)	
4	M	9/15	Douglass, <i>Narrative</i> (330-369)	Reading Quiz
	W	9/17	Lawrence Levine, "African American Music as Resistance: Antebellum Period"	
5	M	9/22	George Aiken, <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> (136-162)	
	W	9/24	Aiken, <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> (162-184)	

6	M	9/29	Bruce Chadwick, “ <i>The Birth of a Nation: The Greatest Motion Picture Ever Made...</i> ” & “The Whole Truth and Nothing but the Truth”  Clips from <i>The Birth of a Nation</i>	Reading Quiz  Critical Response Paper
	W	10/1	Dwight McBride, “Can the Queen Speak? Racial Essentialism, Sexuality, and the Problem of Authority”  Richard E. Lapchick, “Race and College Sport: A Long Way to Go”	
7	M	10/6	<b>III. Interdisciplinary Methods (Theme: The Great Migration)</b>  Eric Arnesen, “Introduction: ‘The Great American Protest’”	
	W	10/8	Burton Peretti, “Hot and Sweet, White and Black: The Jazz Age”	
8	M	10/13	Langston Hughes’ Poems (Handout: Sample Proposal)	
	W	10/15	Zora Neale Hurston, “The Gilded Six-Bits” & “Story in Harlem Slang”	
9	M	10/20	Richard Wright, “Between Laughter and Tears,” “Inheritors of Slavery,” and “Big Boy Leaves Home”	Reading Quiz
	W	10/22	Wright, “Death on the City Pavements”  Ralph Ellison, “King of the Bingo Game”	
10	M	10/27	Jacqueline Stewart, “Reckless Rovers versus Ambitious Negroes” & 1 <sup>st</sup> section of “ ‘We Were Never Immigrants’”	Paper Proposal on the Great Migration
	W	10/29	<b>IV. Research (Theme: Civil Rights Movement)</b>  Painter, “Cold War Civil Rights, 1948-1960” & “Protest Makes a Civil Rights Revolution, 1960-1967”	

<b>11</b>	M	11/3	Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail"  Malcolm X, <i>The Autobiography of Malcolm X</i> (Chapter 11: Saved)	
	W	11/5	Lorraine Hansberry, <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> (1725-1744)	
<b>12</b>	M	11/10	Hansberry, <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> (1744-1789)	
	W	11/12	Donald Bogle, "The 1960s: Social Symbols" (92-125)	
<b>13</b>	M	11/17	Bogle, "The 1960s: Social Symbols" (125-171)  William Rose, <i>Guess Who's Coming to Dinner</i> (in class movie)	Final Essay Proposal
	W	11/19	Rose, <i>Guess Who's Coming to Dinner</i>	
<b>14</b>	M	11/24	-----THANKSGIVING-----	
	W	11/26		
<b>15</b>			<b>V. AAS Paper (Theme: Socio-Cultural Polarization)</b>	Reading Quiz
	M	12/1	Painter, "Epilogue: A Snapshot of African Americans in the Early Twenty-First Century"  William Wilson, "Race-specific Policies and the Truly Disadvantaged"	
	W	12/3	Mark Anthony Neal, "Sold Out on Soul: The Corporate Annexation of Black Popular Music"  S. Craig Watkins, "Black Youth and the Ironies of Capitalism"	
<b>16</b>	M	12/8	Presentations	
	W	12/10	Presentations	
	M	12/15	<b>Final Exam at 9:45 a.m.</b>	<b>Final Essay Due</b>