**African American and Diaspora Studies 1000-01**

**Introduction to African American Studies**

**Spring 2015**

**Instructor**: Dr. Ulrich Adelt

**Classroom & Time**: Engineering 3106 / MWF 2:10 p.m. – 3 p.m.

**Office Hours**: MWF 3 p.m. – 4 p.m. and by appointment

**Office:** Cooper House **/ Email**: uadelt@uwyo.edu

**Course Description**

This course aims to provide students with an interdisciplinary introduction to the fundamental concepts, theories, methodologies and debates in the disciplines covered by African American Studies. We will survey a myriad of perspectives in African American Studies, across academic disciplines such as history, economics, psychology, literature, political science, sociology, gender studies, philosophy and art. In short, the course provides a foundation for a critical understanding and discussion of the field. Students will be introduced to the origin, scope and relevance of African American Studies, as well as its theoretical foundations and challenges.

This course fulfills the Diversity in the United States or “D” requirement. The “D” requirement necessitates an exploration of the complexity of cultural identities in the United States and the interdependence of cultures located primarily within these geographic and civic boundaries.

**Course Objectives**

* To introduce students to the interdisciplinary study of the African American socio-historical experience, including the discipline of the African Diaspora as it relates to African and African American experiences.
* To provide students with the opportunity to compare different paradigms, theories, philosophies and ideologies within the discipline of African American Studies.
* To provide an understanding of the critical role that the African sold into slavery in the “New World” played in shaping the course of American history, culture, and society.
* To help students learn about the culture, lifestyle, and religion of people of African descent before enslavement and the colonization of Africa.
* To stimulate interest in the experience and agency of African Americans, and the contributions of African and African Americans into the fabric of American culture, art, society and ideas.
* To motivate students to examine the evolving political, social, and cultural experiences for African Diaspora in a global society.
* To provide students with an understanding of the salience of African American Studies to life in Wyoming.

**Course Readings**

* Talmadge Anderson and James Stewart, *Introduction to African American Studies: Transdisciplinary Approaches and Implications* (Baltimore: Inprint Editions, 2007). Available at the bookstore in the Union.
* Various readings located on the WyoWeb Course Site for this class. Be sure to become familiar with how this resource operates, as it will be vital to keep up with the readings.

**G.A.’s**

The two graduate assistants for this class are Maggie Mullen (mmullen5@uwyo.edu) and Glen Carpenter (gcarpen1@uwyo.edu). Feel free to contact them with questions about the class.

**Cell Phones**

Cell phones, lap tops and other electronic devices need to be turned off during class. Be respectful of your classmate and your instructor.

**Academic Honesty**

Academic dishonesty is an action attempted or performed that misrepresents one’s involvement in an academic endeavor in any way, or assists another student in misrepresenting his or her involvement in an academic endeavor; e.g., cheating, fabrication of information, plagiarism, etc**. Any student who plagiarizes will, at minimum, receive an F in the course and may go before a University board for a hearing on the matter. At maximum, the above can occur and you can be dismissed from the University.**Please see UW Reg 802.

Examples of acts that constitute cheating include but are not limited to:

Plagiarism:  presenting the work (i.e., ideas, data, argument) of another, wholly or in part, as one’s own work without customary and proper acknowledgement of sources and extent of use, unless authorized by the instructor.  Cheating:  using information, study aids, notes, materials, devices, or collaboration not explicitly approved by the instructor.  Examples: doing a class assignment for someone else or allowing someone to copy one’s assignment; copying from, or assisting, another student during an examination; or stealing, or otherwise improperly obtaining, copies of an examination before or after its administration. Fraud: altering or inventing data, research, or citations for an  academic endeavor; fabricating, forging or otherwise misrepresenting to an instructor or an institution one’s past or current academic or professional activities; impersonating someone or allowing oneself to be impersonated for an examination or other academic endeavor; using a ghost writer, commercial or otherwise, for any type of assignment. Violation of Standards: violations against ethical and professional standards required by individual University programs, academic courses, and clinical programs that may result in qualification for entry into a profession that maintains standards of conduct. Multiple Submissions: submitting, wholly or in part, the same academic endeavor to earn credit in two or more courses without explicit approval by all concerned instructors. Interference/Obstruction: interfering with academic efforts of other students to gain unfair advantage for personal academic advancement.

Interference may include but is not limited to: sabotage, harassment, tampering, bribery, or intimidation of another student. Complicity:  assisting another person in any act of academic dishonesty as defined above.

*Academic honesty is expected of all students. Each student has an obligation to act with honesty and integrity, and to respect the rights of others in carrying out all academic assignments.  All instances of academic misconduct will be penalized. If, at any time, you are not sure if your actions constitute academic misconduct, please see me.*

**Method of Instruction**

The primary teaching method used in this class is facilitated discussion, but also expect a variety of other approaches, including lectures, audio-visual materials, and group work. You should bring your readings to class (in either electronic or hardcopy format). The classroom provides a space for us to share our collective findings and engage in critical and informed analysis of alternative perspectives. Everyone should come to class prepared to engage in *rigorous* and *respectful* discourse and dialogue. Student self-reflection and critical analysis of lectures, texts and course materials is an especially important component of this course, and one that will often take place outside of the classroom***.***

**Method of Evaluation**

You will be graded on active and informed participation during classroom exchanges, a midterm and final exam, quizzes, and two written assignments. Written assignments must be typed (12 point size) and double-spaced, with a maximum of 1-inch margins. Papers must be numbered and stapled. No late essays will be accepted. Do not email or fax papers to the instructor. All papers are due in-class in a hard copy.

**Participation and Attendance (50 points).** This course is participation-intensive.Substantial class participation is expected and regular attendance is mandatory. **You may have 3 unexcused absences***,* after which you must have an excuse or University authorization, as outlined at www.uwyo.edu/dos/absences/index.html (Dean of Students webpage). **For each subsequent unexcused absence, you will lose 25 points from your overall grade. After 6 unexcused absences, you will be unable to pass the course, regardless of past performance or current standing***.*

The in-class participation portion of your grade is evaluated based on your performance during classroom interactions with the instructor, being able to identify key themes or topicsfrom your assigned readings for broader class discussion and being able to develop a cogent response to the discussion questions pertinent to our daily reading.

**Midterm Exam** **(100 points)*.*** Exam questions are developed directly from the assigned readings, lectures, videos, discussions, activities and any material presented in class. The midterm is to be taken in-class on

**Final Exam** **(150 points).** The final exam is cumulative and will cover issues and material from the entire semester. There will be a review for the exam on the last day of class. The final exam date will be on **Wednesday, May 13, 1:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.**

**Quizzes** **(50 points):** Ten pop quizzes will be given throughout the semester. There will be a variety of question types covering the readings, the terminology revolving around those readings, lectures, presentations, videos, and in-class discussions.

**History Narrative Paper** **(50 points).** For your first paper, you will have to compare the narrative of a Hollywood movie that involves a moment in African American history with the narrative of African American history in our textbook, Anderson and Stewart’s *African American Studies*. A list of films to choose from will be provided. This paper should be 6-8 pages, typed and double-spaced in a standard 12 font with one inch margins on the sides. This paper is due in-class on **March 13**.

**Research Paper** **(100 points)*.*** The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate your understanding of the interdisciplinary approach of African American Studies, in relation to African American cultural production. You should select an example of cultural production (a piece of literature, music, etc.) and write an 8-10 page research paper situating the piece you chose in the context of African American history and theory. Make good use of some of the methods and frameworks outlined in your course readings. You must also incorporate at least three additional scholarly readings. This paper should be typed and double-spaced in a standard 12 font and is due in class on **May 1**. A proposal for the paper is due in class on **April 17**.

**Grading Rubric**

Participation and Attendance 50 pts

Midterm Exam 100 pts

Final Exam 150 pts

Quizzes 50 pts

Paper 1: History Narrative 50 pts

Paper 2: Research Assignment 100 pts

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 Total: 500 pts

**Disability Statement**

If you have a physical, learning, sensory or psychological disability and require accomodations, please let me know as soon as possible. You will need to register with, and provide documentation of your disability to University Disability Support Services (UDSS) in SEO, room 330 Knight Hall.

***The instructor may make changes to the syllabus as the course proceeds. If necessary, these changes will be announced in class. Substantive changes made to the syllabus shall be communicated in writing to the students.***

**Reading Schedule**

**UNIT 1: What is African American Studies?**

**Week one**

Jan. 26 Introductions

Jan. 28 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 1-26

Jan. 30 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 27-42

**Week two**

Feb. 2 Screening: *The Black West*

**UNIT 2: The History of African Americans**

Feb. 4 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 43-49

Feb. 6 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 49-52

**Week three**

Feb. 9 Screening: *Africans in America*

Feb. 11 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 52-60

Feb. 13 Frederick Douglass, *Narrative* (WyoCourses)

**Week four**

Feb. 16 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 60-64

Feb. 18 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 65-68

Feb. 20 Richard Wright, “The Man Who Was Almost a Man” (WyoCourses)

**Week five**

Feb. 23 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 69-76

Feb. 25 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 76-82

Feb. 27 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 82-88

**Week six**

March 2 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 88-91

March 4 **Midterm exam**

**UNIT 3: Black Sociology**

March 6 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 97-124

**Week seven**

March 9 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 124-140

March 11 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 140-171

March 13 **Paper #1 due**

**SPRING BREAK**

**UNIT 4: Black Psychology, Politics and Economics**

**Week eight**

March 23 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 173-200

March 25 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 201-224

March 27 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 224-251

**Week nine**

March 30 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 253-275

April 1 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 275-297

April 3 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 347-377

**UNIT 5: Black Arts and Humanities**

**Week ten**

April 6 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 299-304

April 8 Screening: *Ethnic Notions*

April 10 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 305-310

**Week eleven**

April 13 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 310-313

April 15 James Baldwin, “Sonny’s Blues” (WyoCourses)

April 17 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 313-315

**Paper proposal due**

**Week twelve**

April 20 Alice Walker, “1956” (WyoCourses)

April 22 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 316-320

April 24 Screening: *Hip Hop Beyond Beats and Rhymes*

**Week thirteen**

April 27 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 320-330

April 29 Anderson/Stewart, pp. 330-345

May 1 **Paper #2 due**

**Week fourteen**

May 4 Screening: *The Black 14*

May 6 Semester wrap-up

May 8 Review for the final exam

**Final exam: Wednesday, May 13, 1:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.**