

Fall 2006, AFA 3930-5305
“The African Diaspora”
T5-6/R6, WEIL 0279

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This course, which is being offered in Fall 2006 as a special topics course, provides a general overview of the African Diaspora and the transterritorial fields of cultural contact, power, and competing economic interests in which it has come to exist. Although some attention will be given to the Indian Ocean region, the principal focus will be on the history and contemporary dynamics of inter-cultural contact, exchange, and belonging within the transatlantic region, also mapped as the Black Atlantic. Organized largely around the contents of two anthologies and two single-authored books, the course will explore the ways in which critical scholarship on the African Diaspora has raised important questions about the following recurrent themes: 1) sociocultural change over the past 500 years, including the birth of new “creole” cultures and languages as they related to the continuity or discontinuity of African cultural heritage; 2) the historical contingency and social construction of the social distinction categorized as “race”; 3) the impact of race’s interactions with other salient axes of difference and inequality, among them gender, sexuality, class, and national identity; 4) the dynamics between structures of domination and agency (i.e., the capacity of individuals or collective persons to engage in socially and politically consequential action); 5) economic marginality and social injustice as a prevalent condition and characteristic of black social life; 6) the importance of migration and travel, both *intranationally* and *internationally*, in forming new identities and new diasporas during the post-emancipation, post-colonial periods; 7) the impact of multi-directional exchanges and flows of culture, ideas, and images across the Africana world; and 8) the interplay between diasporas and globalization as interrelated historical processes.

The key objectives of the course are: 1) to expand students’ awareness of U.S. African American experience as one among many interrelated situations within the wider African Diaspora; 2) to educate students about both the diversity and similarity among various communities of African descendants across the transatlantic region as well as within many national contexts; 3) to promote understanding of the multiple forms of social inequality to which African descendants have had to adapt, resist, and mobilize against; 4) to expose students to some of the interpretive, theoretical, and methodological tools developed for researching the African Diaspora; and finally 5) to cultivate critical thinking and the interrelated ability to articulate ideas with clarity and cogency in both oral and written communication. This course satisfies the **Gordon Rule E6** Composition requirement, which entails that students complete and receive feedback and guidance on writing assignments amounting to 6000 words. It also meets **General Education** requirements for the humanities (**H**), social sciences (**S**), and international/diversity focus (**I**).

REQUIREMENTS

1. Readings:

George Reid Andrews, 2004. *Afro-Latin America, 1800-2000*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Charles Green, ed. 1997. *Globalization and Survival in the Black Diaspora: The New Urban Challenge*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Darlene Clark Hine and Jacqueline McLeod, eds. 1999. *Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Jacqueline Copeland-Carson, 2004. *Creating Africa in America: Translocal Identity in an Emerging World City*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Copy pack (CP) available at OBT at 309 13th St. Phone #: 375-2707

2. Participation (20 points)—Learning is a shared collaborative endeavor. Students are to accept responsibility for active learning. This means that they are expected to attend class regularly as well as participate in a number of other ways, including by submitting weekly questions or comments on the readings, giving informal presentations, and occasionally leading class discussions. Rosters will be circulated regularly to track attendance. More than three absences without a documented excuse will lower students' grade.

3. Writing Assignments (80 points)—Critical thinking and effective writing are important skills to cultivate. Students should keep well-organized notebooks on the readings, lectures, class discussions, and the questions and comments they must contribute to the discussions. Three kinds of writing assignments are required:

A. Critical Reflections (15 points total or 5 points each)

Students are required to write three short essays expressing their reflections on the readings. Each essay is to be at least 4 pages long (1000 words), double-spaced, typewritten, and submitted in hard copy on the days they are due (Sept. 5, Sept. 26, and Nov. 2). Students are expected to examine some aspect of the readings they have done over a space of two or three weeks. Although the professor may suggest possible writing topics, students will have the academic freedom to write about whatever most interests or concerns them. Essays may focus on a single text; however, generally these assignments should examine issues that run across several readings. Student may express their personal reactions; however, personal opinions and experiences should always be informed by the conceptual and empirical substance of the assigned readings. These essays will be evaluated for both their form and content. Students, therefore, are to respect the principles of both English composition and critical thinking.

B. Term Paper Proposal (5 points)

Students must turn in a 4 page (1000-word) proposal describing the topic s/he would like to explore in the required library research project, which is discussed at greater length below. Students must select a topic as early as possible, so there will be enough time to do the research and write the paper in multiple drafts. The proposal should help students decide what to focus on. The proposals should state what the paper's focus will be, and why that particular topic is being selected. Topics must be tenable as research projects. A fascinating topic that is not covered in an already existing literature is not a viable option. Hence, proposals must also include a listing of the potentially useful references students have come across in the preliminary phase of their research. This will be in addition to the 3 pages of text. Internet sites may be used, but they must be approached with caution. The main source material must be established scholarship published in peer-review journals and books. The expectations for this assignment will be discussed further in class. The proposal is due on Oct. 19, early enough for the professor to offer useful feedback and guidance to ensure students' success.

C. Term Paper (20 points)

A term paper focused on some aspect of the African Diaspora is required and, together with the proposal, will represent a major portion of the semester's work load. The paper is to be based on library research. Research may build upon some of the required readings. In fact, students are strongly encouraged to begin their search for possible term paper topics by browsing and, hopefully, more closely examining the required texts for clues, ideas, and references. Term papers, due on the last day of class (Nov. 30), must be at least 8-10 pages long (or 2000-2500 words). They will be evaluated on the basis of five criteria: 1) the application and articulation of an interdisciplinary perspective, 2) the clarity of exposition, 3) the quantity and quality of evidence used to support the arguments, 4) the adequacy of organization and writing (i.e., word usage, grammar, and spelling), and 5) the relative quantity and quality of citations. Most of these criteria should be considered general guidelines for all writing assignments.

D. Essay Examinations (40 points)

There will be a mid-term and a final exam, due October 3 and December 12, respectively. Both will be both take-home essay assignments that students will have a week to complete. Each exam will be worth 20 points.

EXTENSIONS ON ASSIGNMENTS

Students will be allowed extensions on assignments ONLY if there are extenuating circumstances that can be documented. Otherwise, due dates are written in stone. Students are to manage their time accordingly.

EVALUATION

Final grades will be determined by the total accumulation of points. The scale is the following: 93-100 A, 92-89 B+, 80-88 B, 76-79 C+, 70-75 C, 60-69 D. Final grade will be based on both the intellectual contents of assignments as well as the quality of students' writing.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The university honor code must be respected. Every student must operate according to an implied pledge that "any work submitted for credit the student has neither received nor given unauthorized aid." In other words, cheating and plagiarism are breaches of academic honesty subject to disciplinary action, which may involve a failing grade for the course. For details on the specifics of UF's honor code, consult the following website:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentrights.php#studenthonorcode>.

ACCOMODATIONS TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students needing classroom accommodation should register with the Dean of Students Office, where the necessary documentation will be issued. Students must submit their documentation to the professor when requesting accommodation.

CLASS SCHEDULE, READINGS, & OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

08.24 Introductions and orientation to class

Week 1 Conceptualizing the African Diaspora
08.29-31 St Clair Drake, "The Black Diaspora in Pan-African Perspective"
 Ruth Simms Hamilton, "Toward a Paradigm for African Diaspora Studies"
 Edward A. Alpers, "The African Diaspora in the Indian Ocean: A
 Comparative Perspective" in *The African Diaspora in the Indian Ocean*,
 Shihan de S. Jayasuriya & Richard Pankhurst, eds.

Week 2
09.05-07 Multiple Diasporizations in the Black Atlantic World
Stuart Hall, “Thinking diaspora: Home-thoughts from abroad”
Paul Gilroy, “The Black Atlantic as a counterculture of modernity,”
in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*.

09.05 *Critical Reflection #1 due*

Week 3
09.12-14 Beyond the Atlantic: Africans in the History of South Asia & the East Indies
Richard Pankhurst, “The Ethiopian Diaspora to India” in *The African Diaspora in the Indian Ocean*
Helene Basu, “Slave, soldier, trader, faqir: Fragments of African Histories in Western India (Gujarat)” in *ADIO*
Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya, “The African Diaspora in Sri Lanka” in *ADIO*

Week 4
09.19-21 Historical Perspectives on the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery
Video: Haile Gerima’s “Sankofa”
Thomas C. Holt, “Slavery and Freedom in the Atlantic World” and
Barry Gaspar, “With a rod of Iron: Barbados Slave Laws as a Model for
Jamaica, South Carolina, and Antigua, 1661-1697” in *Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora*

Week 5
09.26-28 Comparing histories of diaspora
Earl Lewis, “To Turn as on a Pivot: Writing African Americans in to a
History of Overlapping Diasporas” in *Crossing Boundaries (CB)*
George Fredrickson, “Reform and Revolution in American and South
African Freedom Struggles” in *CB*
Rosalynd Terborg-Penn, “Free Women Entrepreneurs from the 1820s to the
1850s: The Cases of Nancy Prince and Mary Seacole” in *CB*

09.26 *Critical Reflection #2*

Week 6
10.03-05 Identity and Culture
Allison Blakely, “European Dimensions of the African Diaspora: The
Definition of Black Racial Identity” in *CB*
Dwayne E. Williams, “Rethinking the African Diaspora: A Comparative
Look at Race and Identity in a Transatlantic Community” in *CB*
Kim D. Butler, “Abolition and the Politics of Identity in the Afro-Atlantic
Diaspora: Toward a Comparative Approach” in *CB*
Philip Howard, “Creolization and Integration: The Development of a Political
Culture among the Pan-Afro-Cuban Benevolent Societies” in *CB*

10.03 **Mid-term question-sets distributed**

Week 7
10.10-12 Survival and Resistance
Robert Stewart, “A Slandered People—Views on “Negro Character” in the
Mainstream Christian Churches in Post-Emancipation Jamaica” in *CB*
Carlos Aguirre, “Working the System: Black Slaves and the Courts in Lima,
Peru, 1821-1854” in *CB*
Edward Cox, “From Slavery to Freedom: Emancipation and Apprenticeship in
Grenada and St. Vincent, 1834-38” in *CB*

- 10.10** *Mid-term due*
- Week 8 The Diaspora in Latin America
10.17-19 George Reid Andrews, *Afro-Latin America, 1800-2000* (Introduction-Chapter 3))
- 10.19** *Proposal for term paper due*
- Week 9 The Politics of Blackness in Latin America
10.24-26 GR Andrews, *Afro-Latin America* (Chapters 4-6)
- Week 10 Diaspora in the Age of Contemporary Globalization
10.31-11.02 Charles Green, ed. *Globalization and Survival in the Black Diaspora* (Parts II & III)
- 11.02** *Critical Reflection #3 due*
- Week 11 Negotiating the challenges of the global economy
11.07-09 Charles Green, Parts IV & V
Filomina Steady, “Global Perspectives on Black Women and the Paradox of Globalization” in *Black Women, Globalization, and Economic Justice*, Filomina Steady, ed.
Beverly Mullings, “Globalization, Tourism, and the International Sex Trade” in *Black Women*
- Week 12 Globalization and Obstacles to Self-Determination
11.14-16 Video: Stephanie Black’s “Life and Debt”
- Week 13 Global Cities, Emerging World Cities, and Overlapping Diasporas
11.21 Jacqueline Copeland-Carson, *Creating Africa in America* (Part I)
- 11.23** **THANKSGIVING DAY HOLIDAY**
- Week 14 Translocal Identities and Remaking Africa in Diaspora Communities in the U.S.
11.28-30 Jacqueline Copeland-Carson, *Creating Africa in America* (Parts II and III)
- 11.30** *Term papers due*
- Final exam distributed.**
- Week 15 Last class meeting, final exam distributed
- 12.05 No class
- 12.12** *Final exam due by 3 pm (12D).*
Please deliver them to Dr. Harrison’s office in Turlington Hall.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!