

AAS, 100 Introductions to African American Studies
Dr. Johnny Washington
Fall, 2013

Office: Strong Hall Rm., 337
Office Hrs: W: 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
TR: 8:30 am to 9:30 am, and
TR: 10:45 am to 11:45 am.
jwashington@missouristate.edu

Objective: The purpose of this class is to introduce students to the various dimensions that comprise African American experiences. To begin to understand these experiences, it is essential to explore briefly the African American heritage, particularly that of Western and Central Africa, as well as the period of slavery during which Africans were uprooted and taken to different parts of the Western hemisphere leading to an understanding of Africans' socio-cultural condition and development in their new environments. This investigation requires an interdisciplinary approach. The basic historical framework will be augmented by the insights of several disciplines including: anthropology, art, dance, economics, family studies, literature, music, political science, psychology, religious studies, sociology and theater.

As part of the Understanding of Culture and Society section of the General Education Program, AAS 100 seeks to meet the following Gen Ed goals:

1. Knowledge of the many expressions of culture, including:
 - understanding of the unique shared ways of thinking, believing, and acting developed by a people who live together over a long period of time,
 - ability to conceptualize and trace the influences of community, institutions, and other constructions such as class, gender, and race,
 - familiarity with the ways in which culture is expressed artistically, through literature, performance, and artifact,
 - awareness of and appreciation for the ways in which culture and society influence and are influenced by work and leisure.
2. Understanding the sources and expression of diverse values throughout the world, including ethical, religious, aesthetic, political, and economic values as well as social and cultural priorities.
3. Understanding the ways human choices affect communities, from local to global, and responsibilities of individuals to assume the duties of citizenship.
4. Understanding the role of governmental regulation and of legal requirements, political processes, and financial and economic influences on decisions of individuals and society.

This particular course seeks to meet the following course goals common to all AAS 100 courses; the Gen Ed goals to which the course goals correspond are indicated.

- i) To bring students to an understanding of the relationship of Africa to the Americas through an exploration of the paradigm of the Atlantic World that stresses the impact of the African Diaspora on cultural forms. (Corresponds to Gen Ed goal 1 above.)

- ii) To aid students in understanding the development of African American culture in the U.S. from the times of slavery through the Emancipation to the present. (Corresponds to Gen Ed goals 1 and 2 above.)
- iii) To prepare students to trace the development of institutions and forms of community that informs present-day African American society. Specifically, the following institutions or industries will be considered: entertainment, the church, the family, athletics and education. (Corresponds to Gen Ed goal 2 above.)
- iv) To allow students to acquire a familiarity with the products of constantly evolving African American artistic and aesthetic modalities in areas such as music, plastic arts, dance, and literature. (Corresponds to Gen Ed goal 1 above.)
- v) To enable students to obtain the tools necessary to explore comprehensively the interactions of African American institutions, culture, and aesthetic with the larger society. (Corresponds to Gen Ed goal 2 above.)
- vi) To impart to students an understanding of the historic and political contexts of the tensions surrounding issues of race, gender, and class that characterize much current public discourse within African American society and about the African American community in the larger society. Issues that might be explored include inter-ethnic tensions, gender in the African American community, and economic oppression and the creation of an African American underclass. (Corresponds to Gen Ed goal 4 above.)
- vii) To encourage students to make informed projects about the future of the U.S. public arena, with an awareness of how African American identities and destiny will develop and inform the nation of the future. (Corresponds to Gen Ed goal 3 above.)

Required Texts:

- i) Johnny Washington, *Evolution, History and Destiny: Letters to Alain Locke (1886-1954) and Others*, (EHD) (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2003).
- ii) Delores P. Aldridge and E. Lincoln James, *Africana Studies: Philosophical Perspectives and Theoretical Paradigms*, (AS) (Pullman, Washington: Washington State University Press, 2007).

Examinations: There will be a mid-term examination and a final examination. Each will be of the essay form. The final examination will be comprehensive. Brief quizzes or other assignments might also be given.

Make-ups: If you miss an examination or quiz, you will be allowed to take it at another time. You may do so only if your reason for missing it were based on circumstances largely beyond your control, such as death in the immediate family; or, you (or someone in your immediate family) were hospitalized on the basis of emergency some hours prior to the examination.

Paper: A paper at least six (6) typed-written pages in length is required. Suggested topics will be provided later in the course.

Participation: This will be accessed through (unannounced) quizzes, writing assignments, and quality and quantity of comments in class.

Grades: The mid-term examination will constitute 25% of your total grade; and the final examination will constitute 30% of your total grade. The paper will be the basis of 35% of your total grade. Class participation will constitute 10% of your total grade. All works will be graded on the following scale: A: 90%; B: 80%; C: 70% and D: 60%.

Reading Assignments:

- Week 1** **Introduction** to the course), and the Prologue to the text, *Evolution, History and Destiny*. . . (EHD)
- Week 2** **Introduction**, cont., and **Movie**, *Higher Learning*.
- Week 3** **African History and Destiny:** Chapter 4, 137-176, (EHD), and the movie, *Caravans of Gold*; Clarke, pp., 1-7 (AS)
- Week 4** **Movie**, *American History X*
- Week 5** **Ethnic Appellations and Conflicts:** Chapter 1, 35-46; and pp., 193-199, (EHD); Butler, pp, 96-100; and pp., Baldwin, pp, 101-111 (AS)
- Week 6** **Modernity and Postmodernity: African Americans:** Chapter 3, 117-135, (EHD); Hudson-Weems, pp., 293-307; Aldridge, pp., 308-320 (AS)
- Week 7** **Developing Theoretical Paradigms:** Chimezie, pp., 124-142 (AS); Aldridge, pp., 143-153 (AS)
- Week 8** **Midterm, Developing Theoretical Paradigms**, cont. Franklin II, pp., 154-162 (AS) and Perry, pp., 197-206 (AS)
- Week 9** **Movie**, *Antwone Fisher*
- Week 10** **Race Relations: Practical and Theoretical Approaches**, cont., Videos or YouTube: Douglass, Garvey, Booker T. Washington. . . (Discussions)

- Week 11** **Destinicity and Struggles**, Chapter 5, 177-203, (EHD); **Videos**, *Eyes the Prize*, Episodes 3
- Week 12** **Movie**, *Freedom Writers*
- Week 13** **Africana Models in Practice**: Asante, pp., 207 (AS); Weems, pp., 241-248 (AS); and Washington, pp., 250-269, (EHD)
- Week 14** Discussions; **Black Leadership: A Theoretical Analysis**: Davis, pp., 176-184 (AS); the movie, *Remember the Titans*
- Week 15** **Africana Studies in the New Millennium**: Lewin, pp., 281-292 (AS); Stewart, pp., 321-336 (AS)
- Week 16** **The Artistic Experiences of African Americans**: YouTube, Videos/tape recordings: spirituals, blues, jazz, R&B, and hip hop forms of music.
- Week 17** **Final Exam**:

Nondiscrimination:

Missouri State University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution, and maintains a grievance procedure available to any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against. At all times, it is your right to address inquiries or concerns about possible discrimination to the Office of Equity and Diversity, (417) 836-4252. Other types of concerns (i.e., concerns of academic nature) should be discussed directly with your instructor and can also be brought to the attention of your instructor's Department Head.

Disability accommodation:

To request accommodations for disability, contact the Director of Disability Services, Plaster Student Union, Suite 405, (417) 836-4192 or (417) 836-6792 (TTY), (<http://www.missouristate.edu/disability>). Students are required to provide documentation of disability to Disability Services prior to receiving accommodations. Disability Services refers some types of accommodation requests to the Learning Diagnostic Clinic, which also provides diagnostic testing for learning and psychological disability. For information about testing, contact the Director of the Learning Diagnostic Clinic, (417) 836-4787, <http://psychology.missouristate.edu/lcd>.

Academic dishonesty:

Missouri State University is a community of scholars committed to developing educated persons who accept the responsibility to practice personal and academic integrity. You are responsible for knowing and following the University's student honor code, *Student Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures* available at <http://www.missouristate.edu/provost/3935.htm> and also available at the

Reserves Desk in Meyer Library. Any student participating in any form of academic dishonesty will be subject to sanctions as described in this policy.

Dropping a class:

If you stop attending this class but do not follow proper procedure for dropping the class, you will receive a failing grade and will also be financially obligated. To drop a class anytime after the first week, you must turn in a drop slip at an authorized registration center.

Attendance

If you miss six (6) days, your final grade will be reduced by one letter grade. If you miss more than eight (8) days, your final grade could be reduced further.

Cell Phone:

As a member of the learning community, each student has a responsibility to other students who are members of the community. When cell phones or pagers ring and students respond in class or leave class to respond, it disrupts the class. Therefore, the Office of the Provost prohibits the use by students of cell phones, pagers, PDAs, or similar communication devices during scheduled classes. All such devices must be turned off or put in a silent (vibrate) mode and ordinarily should not be taken out during class. Given the fact that these same communication devices are an integral part of the University's emergency notification system, an exception to this policy would occur when numerous devices activate simultaneously. When this occurs, students may consult their devices to determine if a university emergency exists. If that is not the case, the devices should be immediately returned to silent mode and put away. Other exceptions to this policy may be granted at the discretion of the instructor.