

Intro to Africana Studies Spring 2018 100% Online Course

Instructor: Dr. Colleen A. Vasconcellos
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Office Hours

Please see the CourseDen for the daily schedule as it changes each week.

Course Objectives

Africana Studies investigates the lives, histories, cultures, and thought of Africans and African-descended people. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to several of the key concepts, moments, and debates that prevail in the discipline. Over the course of the semester we will examine the role of race, the mechanics of global slavery, and the importance of both in the making of the modern world. We will examine ideas of identity, rebellion and resistance, and investigate whether the American Civil War was propelled by a slave rebellion of its own. We will examine major, often transformational, figures like Marcus Garvey, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Angela Davis, and Audre Lorde, among others, and we will tackle key themes and subjects that have shaped, and that continue to shape, our current era such as colonialism, decolonization, and neo-imperialism; race, gender, and sexuality; violence and non-violence; community and kinship; mass incarceration; and student politics. This course seeks to examine and explore as much as it does to celebrate the development of a field that was born out of the activism of the 1960s. It is interdisciplinary, wide-ranging, and focuses on the experiences and lives of Africans and Africa's descendants from the past and present. Chronological and thematic in approach, this class is only meant to be an introduction to the field and the minor.

This course is a 100% online course using CourseDen and your computer as the delivery medium. You are not required to attend class face to face. The midterm and final exams will both be taken online, and there will be no proctored exams for this course.

This is a DSW (Discipline Specific Writing) course, and contains a significant amount of writing assignments. For more information about DSW requirements, please see <http://www.westga.edu/undergrad/18850.htm.Study>

Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate the ability to

- utilize the comparative and evaluative techniques explicitly associated with the academic field, discipline, and meta-discipline of Africana Studies in order to analyze the texts, practices, and narratives within this course

- think historically through an understanding of the political, social, economic, and cultural dimensions of African, African American, and African Diasporic Studies
- comprehend the causal relationships and patterns of change and continuity over time
- develop an awareness of the social significance of ethnicity, gender, race, and class
- and understand the social, cultural, or political development of people of African descent within the wider Atlantic World.

Special Note

Students, please carefully review the following information at this link:

https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/assets/docs/faculty-resources/common_language_for_course_syllabi_v2.pdf

This link contains important material pertaining to your rights and responsibilities in this class. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, university, and accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.

Course Texts

The following are available in the campus bookstore or through online booksellers:

- Lawrence Hill, *Someone Knows My Name* (WW Norton, 2008). ISBN: 0393333094.
- John Lewis, *March: Book 3* (Top Shelf, 2016). ISBN: 1603094024.
- Okey Ndibe, *Never Look an American in the Eye: A Memoir of Flying Turtles, Colonial Ghosts, and the Making of a Nigerian American* (Soho, 2017). ISBN: 1616957603.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

COMPUTER ACCESS

It is highly recommended that you have regular (daily) computer access, preferably a home computer with broadband Internet access. This course can be completed using public computers at UWG or other public access areas. However, be aware that using public computers may create a hardship. All course requirements remain the same whether your computer access is public or private (home).

TECHNICAL SKILL REQUIREMENTS

You should be comfortable with the following:

- using a word processor (changing font, spell check)
- using email for communication and sending an email attachment if necessary
- navigating the Internet

Online Help

Have questions about our classroom navigation? Email me at cvasconc@westga.edu or in Courseden. Have questions about getting into CourseDen? Contact the helpdesk:

UWG | Online HelpDesk (M-F 8-5pm) *Phone: 678-839-6248 *Email: online@westga.edu
24/7 HelpDesk <https://D2LHelp.view.usg.edu>

COURSE EVALUATION AND GRADE DISTRIBUTION

The course will be evaluated on a 10-pt scale: A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=59-0.

Emphasis will be on clarity of ideas, reading, writing, analytical and critical thinking skills, class participation, and overall presentation. Participation in class discussions and lectures is encouraged and will form a component of the written assignment grades. There will be no extra credit offered in this class, so don't ask. Grade calculations are as follows:

- Book Papers 30%
- Research Paper 20%
- Historical Figures Facebook Page Project 10%
- Short Reflective Pieces 10%
- Instagram Project 10%
- Cultural Event Paper 5%
- Class Participation 15%

Exams

You will notice that there are no exams this semester. That's because you have enough to do. You're welcome.

Book Papers

Rather than write a more traditional book reviews of the three books assigned for this class, you will instead write **three separate 5-page review papers** on each of these books that follow a certain list of questions provided by me in the Class Projects and Assignments Module. Each paper constitutes 10% of your overall grade or a total of 30% combined. Late papers or papers submitted outside of the Assignment Dropbox will not be accepted without a properly documented excuse. If you miss a paper for properly documented reasons, you should make arrangements with me as soon as possible for an extended deadline.

Research Papers

Each of you will write a **6 to 8-pg paper on a topic related to Africana Studies** that will comprise 20% of your grade. Please see the Class Projects and Assignments Module in CourseDen for more details. Late papers or papers submitted outside of the Assignment Dropbox will not be accepted without a properly documented excuse. If you fail to submit this paper for properly documented reasons, you should make arrangements with me as soon as possible for an extended deadline.

Historical Figures Facebook Page Project

For this project, you will **create a Facebook page about the historical figure of your choice** for a total of 10% of your overall grade. Please see the Historical Figure Facebook Page Project Module in CourseDen for more information on what is required of this project, when it is due, where it should be submitted, and how it will be graded. Late and/or emailed assignments will not be accepted without a properly documented excuse. If you miss this assignment deadline, you should make arrangements with me as soon as possible for an extension.

Short Reflective Pieces

You will have **three short reflective pieces** to submit this semester by the deadline outlined in the syllabus. I will give you a few prompts, but these can be on any topic you wish concerning the themes discussed in that particular unit. The format of the piece is up to you. This can be a creative writing piece, a commentary, a journal entry, etc. If you prefer, you can also submit a poem, a song, a piece of art that you have created, or anything else you feel encapsulates the themes of the unit. The choice is yours, and you should **feel free to get as creative as you like**. Instagram photos are excluded from this assignment. Late and/or emailed assignments will not be accepted without a properly documented excuse. If you miss this assignment deadline, you should make arrangements with me as soon as possible for an extension. These papers comprise 10% of your overall grade.

Instagram Project

For this project, you are tasked with creating an Instagram Account specifically for this assignment and uploading a total of **8 photos, 1 per unit, that you yourself have taken and that you feel is representative of the theme of that unit**. The photos, which are to be linked or posted in the Discussion Forum labeled Instagram Project, are due at the end of each unit and comprise a collective 10% of your overall grade. Late and/or emailed photos will not be accepted without a properly documented excuse. Please see the Instagram Project Module in CourseDen for more information on what is required of this project, as well as how it will be graded. If you miss a photo deadline, you should make arrangements with me as soon as possible for an extension.

Cultural Event

Each of you will **attend one cultural event related to African American culture and provide a 2-3 page response to the event no later than one week after you attend**. This event can take place on or off campus. Email me prior to the event to get approval for these events. Your response should not be limited to a summary or description of the event, but instead, it should provide a thoughtful reflection of what the event reveals about African American culture and its historical antecedents. Please submit these papers in the appropriate CourseDen Dropbox. Please see CourseDen for guidelines. If you fail to submit this paper for properly documented reasons, you should make arrangements with me as soon as possible for an extended deadline. This paper constitutes 5% of your grade.

Class Participation

There are a total of **8 unit discussions** based on that unit's course material, with each discussion receiving a separate grade that will be applied towards your class participation grade. Grades received for your **mandatory introduction** and **student contract quiz** will also be counted towards your class participation grade. Each Online Unit Discussion will be graded on a 25 point scale. Late posts will not be counted towards your unit discussion grades. See the Course Overview Module for more information on Class Participation Guidelines and Grading. Class participation is 15% of your overall grade.

A Note about Submitting Assignments to CourseDen

ASSIGNMENT FORMAT: All submitted written assignments must be submitted in MS word format. Papers should be double-spaced and be written in size 12 Times New Roman font, black text, with 1" margins. Parenthetical references of (pg) are required for all paraphrased or directly quoted information. The use of any source outside of CourseDen is not allowed. Instagram photos and/or Facebook pages must be submitted to their respective Discussion Forums as working links. Please note that I will not be contacting you to resubmit in the event of a broken link.

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS LATE OR OUTSIDE COURSEDEN: Late assignments submitted after the scheduled deadline or outside of the Assignments Dropbox will not be accepted unless you have a properly documented excuse. **Late assignments submitted without proper documentation will receive a 0. Please note that this rule is written in stone.**

THE RETURN OF GRADED WORK: Assignment grades will be posted within a week of the due date. Discussion grades will be posted within one week of the date of the discussion's end.

EXTRA CREDIT: There is no extra credit offered in this class outside of that stated on the syllabus or by the professor.

IN THE EVENT OF TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

It is **your responsibility** to see that your assignments have posted to CourseDen properly. Please check to make sure that your assignment was uploaded correctly and appears in the appropriate Assignment Dropbox. **It is your responsibility to confirm that your assignments have been submitted properly to the Assignment Dropbox.**

In the event that you are having computer/wifi difficulties, please find an alternative source. **Please do not wait until the last minute to submit assignments.** You are submitting items over the Internet, and sometimes the Internet Gods get angry and withhold access. There are many things that can go wrong in the path between your computer and CourseDen. Technical problems related to computer connections or equipment cannot be used as an excuse for failure to complete assignments or to participate online.

It is your responsibility to locate the computer hardware, software and Internet connections necessary to stay connected and current with your coursework online. Please be aware of alternate Internet connections and computers available through college computer labs, college Learning Resource Centers (libraries), the public library, and any friends, relatives, or neighbors and access them if my personal computer equipment is not working.

A Note about Academic Honesty:

I will not tolerate cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty in this class.

All assignments and discussion posts submitted in class must be written in your own words. This includes paraphrasing, which may not be taking a passage word for word, but certainly does not give credit to ideas and/or information. **All assignments will be monitored by Turnitin**, and plagiarizers will automatically fail the course. I will also recommend that UWG administration take action. Plagiarism is a serious offense and it can lead to your expulsion and/or suspension from the University. **In short, don't do it.** See CourseDen for details on what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it in the Content Module.

Course Outline

Unit 1 – January 8-19: Identities, Histories, and the Birth of a Field

- Mandatory Participation Deadline. Introduction and Student Contract Quiz due by NOON EST, Friday, January 12. **Failure to participate by the deadline will result in your removal from this course.**
- Unit 1 Discussion due by 9:59 PM EST, Friday, January 19
- Unit 1 Instagram Photo due by 9:59 PM EST, Friday, January 19
- Unit 1 Reflective Piece due by 9:59 PM EST, Friday, January 19
- **Please note that CourseDen has scheduled maintenance on Friday, January 19, beginning promptly at 10 PM and access to the system will be temporarily unavailable. If you are unable to complete and save the assignments in this unit before the system goes offline, you will be given a 0 for all unsubmitted work.**

Unit 2 – January 20-31: Africa and The African Diaspora

- Unit 2 Discussion due by 11:59 PM EST, Wednesday, January 31
- Unit 2 Instagram Photo due by 11:59 PM EST, Wednesday, January 31
- Unit 2 Reflective Piece due by 11:59 PM EST, Wednesday, January 31

Unit 3 – February 1-12: Freedom Songs

- Unit 3 Discussion due by 11:59 PM EST, Monday, February 12
- Unit 3 Instagram Photo due by 11:59 PM EST, Monday, February 12
- *Someone Knows My Name* essay due by 11:59 PM EST, Monday, February 12

Unit 4 – February 13-25: Imperialism, Nationalism, and Decolonization

- Unit 4 Discussion due by 11:59 PM EST, Sunday, February 25
- Unit 4 Instagram Photo due by 11:59 PM EST, Sunday, February 25
- Unit 4 Reflective Piece due by 11:59 PM EST, Sunday, February 25

Research Week: February 26-March 2

- Use this time to begin planning and researching your research papers.

Unit 5 – March 3-14: Pan-Africanism and the Long Civil Rights Movement

- Unit 5 Discussion due by 11:59 PM EST, Wednesday, March 14

- Unit 5 Instagram Photo due by 11:59 PM EST, Wednesday, March 14
- *March: Book 3* essay due by 11:59 PM EST, Wednesday, March 14

Unit 6 – March 15-April 1: Feminism, Gender Politics, and Intersectionality

- Spring Break: March 19-23
- Unit 6 Discussion due by 11:59 PM EST, Sunday, April 1
- Unit 6 Instagram Photo due by 11:59 PM EST, Sunday, April 1
- Historical Figure Facebook Project due by 11:59 PM EST, Sunday, April 1

Unit 7 – April 2-14: Community, Kinship, and the Global Village

- Unit 7 Discussion due by 11:59 PM EST, Saturday, April 14
- Unit 7 Instagram Photo due by 11:59 PM EST, Saturday, April 14
- *Never Look an American in the Eye* essay due by 11:59 PM EST, Saturday, April 14

Unit 8 – April 15-27: Representations, Legacies, and Futures

- Unit 8 Discussion due by 11:59 PM EST, Friday, April 27
- Unit 8 Instagram Photo due by 11:59 PM EST, Friday, April 27
- Cultural Event Paper due by 11:59 PM EST, Friday, April 27

Other Deadlines:

- Research Paper Due by 11:59 PM EST, Monday, May 7