

AAS 101 African American Survey

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS

Interdisciplinary, Gender, and Ethnic Studies

Semester/Term 202#

Time:

Class Location:

Office Location:

Office Hours:

Phone:

WebCampus: <https://webcampus.unlv.edu>

Email:

Note: The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus as it relates to how the course is administered.

Course Description

This course introduces students to key events, individuals, institutions, and experiences that shaped the history and culture of Africans and their descendants from their arrival in North America to the present. It is expected that beyond attaining a general knowledge of the multidimensional experiences of African American history, students will also critically analyze important issues and questions that comprise African American Studies in general. Issues of race, gender, class, and freedom all intersect within the readings and lectures throughout the course, and students will gain a deeper understanding of the development of “blackness” in American cultural and political discourse. For instance, not all black Americans were enslaved, not all slaves were southern, and free blacks were often not entirely “free”. The content in this course follows a general chronology, but heavily draws upon specific themes to highlight key issues and moments in the African American experience from multiple disciplinary perspectives, especially in how they relate to contemporary social and political events. In contrast to an introductory survey course that simply teaches students a Who, What, and When historical narrative, this course delves into questions concerning **How** and **Why** enslaved from the continent of Africa became African Americans, and how this population has in turn impacted American culture. Ultimately, the course borrows from multiple disciplinary frameworks to fully comprehend the magnitude of Black people’s contributions to the United States and the world, combining research from Black Political Thinkers, Carceral Scholars, Comparative Historians, Geographers, Philosophers, and Sociologists.

Learning Outcomes/Course Objectives

In line with the University's Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULO's), upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. contribute to critical conversations about interdisciplinary theory and practice

2. demonstrate the complexity of problems and identify different perspectives from which problems and questions can be viewed
3. transfer knowledge and skills gained from general and specialized studies to new settings and problems, especially by critically and systematically apply interdisciplinary research methods and contrasting theories in examining their research topic
4. Explore both primary and secondary sources to look at the African American experience..

Required Text

Miscellaneous articles and primary source readings are posted (free of charge) to the course website. No physical textbook is required.

Evaluation Methods

Students will be required to complete 8 “reading responses” throughout the semester, as assigned by the Professor. Additionally, students will be given a final exam that comprises multiple choice, various short-answer questions, and essay responses. Lastly, students will write two papers. The first paper comprises a Book Review, and the second on a Film topic selected by the student and professor. Participation points are freely given toward the end of the semester, as they only require the student to engage the course throughout its duration (submission of assignments, participation in discussions, optional communication w/professor, etc.).

Reading responses: 200 points

Participation: 100 points

Book review: 200 points

Final project: 500 points

TOTAL: 1000 points

Attendance Policy

Attendance is not relevant this semester, due to the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19. However, I do anticipate that students will keep me updated on any changes to their personal circumstances, and everyone is still expected to keep up with the assigned materials and submit assignments on relevant dates. If at any point in the semester a student is having problems with the course, please contact me by phone, email, or during office hours.

Grading Scale

A	95 – 100
A-	90 – 94
B+	87 – 89
B	84 – 86
B-	80 – 83
C+	77 – 79
C	74 – 76
C-	70 – 73

D+	67 – 69
D	64 – 66
D-	60 – 63
F	00 - 59

Course Schedule

Week 1

Jan. 20- General Introductions. The Concept of "African American Studies" and the "African Diaspora"

Week 2

Jan. 25- The African American Experience- The Many Meanings of "1619"

Assignment: Nikole Hannah-Jones, "America Wasn't a Democracy, Until Black Americans Made it One," *New York Times* August 14, 2019

Jan. 27- African Origins and the African Diaspora to the Americas

Reading: "Lupe Fiasco's "Manillas" and the Material Culture of Anti-Black Violence," *Black Perspectives* (May 2, 2019); Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, Chapter 1; Venture Smith, *A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Venture, a Native of Africa*, Chapter 1.

Response 1 Due

Week 3

Feb. 1- Developing the Institution of Slavery

Reading: Venture Smith, *A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Venture, a Native of Africa*, Chapter 2; Hilary Beckles, "On Barbados, The First Black Slave Society," *Black Perspectives*, April 8, 2017; Michael Guasco, "The Fallacy of 1619: Rethinking the History of Africans in Early America," *Black Perspectives*, September 4, 2017.

Feb. 3- Slaves vs. Servants in Colonial North America

Readings: David Galenson, White Servitude and the Growth of Black Slavery in Colonial America, *Black Perspectives*; Tyler D. Parry, The Curious History of Anthony Johnson: From Captive African to Right-wing Talking Point, *Black Perspectives* .

Week 4

Feb 8- The Second Amendment and African American History

Readings: Robert F. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, Chap. 1; Charles Cobb, *This Nonviolent Stuff*, Prologue; Charles Cobb, *This Nonviolent Stuff*, Introduction.

Feb 10- Black Resistance and the Making of Nations

Reading: Teaching the Haitian Revolution (JSTOR); The Haitian Revolution - Documentary (2009), *Youtube*.

Week 5

Feb. 15- President's Day (No Class)

Feb. 17- Dogs, Slaves, and the Origins of Anti-Blackness

Reading: Parry and Yingling, *The Canine Terror*, *Jacobin*, May 2016; Tyler D. Parry, "Police Dogs and Anti-Black Violence," *Black Perspectives*, July 31, 2017; Slave Narrative- Pursued by Bloodhounds (Posted on WebCampus).

Reading Response 2 Due

Week 6

Feb. 22- Resisting Enslavement

Reading: Slave Catchers, Slave Resisters (youtube); Christmas and Resistance to Slavery in the Americas, *Black Perspectives*.

Reading Response 3 Due

Feb. 24- Enslaved Cultures, Migrations, and the Foundations of the American "Cool"

Reading: Drumming and the Foundations of Black Music (Video; Ted Talk); Soul Music and American Popular Culture (Documentary).

Week 7

March 1- Race and Policing in America: A History of Conflict

Assignment: Panel Discussion linked on Webcampus

March 3- Discussion: Gender, Slavery, and Black Personhood

Reading: Jennifer Morgan, *Law, Race, and Reproduction in Colonial Slavery* (JSTOR); *The US Medical System is Still Haunted by Slavery*

Week 7

March 8- Slave Weddings in Black Popular Memory

Assignment: Tyler D. Parry, The Broomstick Wedding in American History (JSTOR)

Reading Response 4 Due

March 10- The Civil War and Postwar Period- An African American Perspective

Reading: Slave Narratives and the Civil War (Linked on WebCampus); Black Radicalism and the ‘Tuition Free’ University,” *Black Perspectives*

Week 8

SPRING BREAK March 15-19

Week 9

March 22- George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and the Legacies of “Strange Fruit”

Assignment: The Great Migration (Video); Jim Crow of the North (youtube); Mississippi of the West (Linked article)

March 24- Book Review of *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* due at beginning of class via Webcampus. Information for assignment submission available on course website

Week 10

March 29- Familial Separations and the Foundations of American Economics

Reading: Tera W. Hunter, The Long History of Child-Snatching, *New York Times*, June 3, 2018; The Domestic Slave Trade (Text and Video).

March 31- Reviewing Segregation and Desegregation

Assignment: Malcolm Gladwell’s Revisionist History- Brown vs. Board of Education (podcast)

Week 11

April 5- Beyond Martin and Malcolm: The Civil Rights Movement

Readings: Unsung Hero of the Civil Rights Movement; Missing Voices of the Civil Rights Movement.

April 7- Are Modern Prisoners Enslaved?

Assignments: Mass Incarceration and Its Mystification; Demystifying the 13th Amendment; Slavery, the 13th Amendment, and Mass Incarceration. (all on *Black Perspectives*)

Due in Class- Project Source Selection.

Reading Response 5 Due

Week 12

April 12- Class Consciousness and Coalition Building

Readings: Keri Leigh Merritt Interview, Poor Whites and Political Erasure; Leonard Pitts, Jr., Poverty Doesn't Have a Skin Color, *Miami Herald*; Miseducation of Poor White People; The Black Panthers and the Rainbow Coalition, *Jacobin*

April 14- Debate: For or Against Reparations

Assignments: Congressional Hearings (Video)

Reading Response 6

Week 13

April 19- African Americans in the Mississippi of the West

Reading: Racial Cauldron in Las Vegas; African Americans in Las Vegas (Documentary); Every Voice: Race, Protest, and Power in Las Vegas (Video-Panel Discussion)

April 21- Plantations, Memorials, and American Politics in Historical Memory

Reading: Slavery and the Plantation Myth, *Black Perspectives*; Debate on Confederate Monuments (C-SPAN)

Reading Response 7 Due.

Week 14

April 26- Film Selection

Reading: Project Specific readings

April 28- Film Selection

Reading: Project Specific readings

Week 15

May 3- Open Office Hours

May 5- COVID-19 and Systemic Inequities

Reading: The Victims of Coronavirus; Black Victims Face Higher COVID-19 Rates; The Pandemic as a "Civil Rights Reckoning;" Coronavirus and the African Continent.

Response 8 Due

FINAL PROJECTS DUE (May 12, 11:59pm)

UNLV Policies

Public Health Directives

Face coverings are mandatory for all faculty and students in the classroom. Students must follow all active UNLV public health directives while enrolled in this class. UNLV public health directives are found at [Health Requirements for Returning to Campus](https://www.unlv.edu/coronavirus/health-requirements), <https://www.unlv.edu/coronavirus/health-requirements>. Students who do not comply with these directives may be asked to leave the classroom. Refusal to follow the guidelines may result in further disciplinary action according to the [UNLV Student Conduct Code](https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/StudentConduct-Code.pdf), https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/StudentConduct-Code.pdf, including being administratively withdrawn from the course.

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the University community. We all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, and are encouraged to always take the ethical path whenever faced with choices. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's educational mission. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another person, from the Internet or any other source without proper citation of the source(s). See the [Student Conduct Code](https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct), <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

Auditing a Course

Auditing a course allows a student to continue attending the lectures and/or laboratories and discussion sessions associated with the course, but the student will not earn a grade for any component of the course. Students who audit a course receive the same educational experience as students taking the course for a grade, but will be excused from exams, assessments, and other evaluative measures that serve the primary purpose of assigning a grade.

Classroom Conduct

Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn, or of instructors to teach. Use of devices such as cellular phones and pagers, or other potentially disruptive activities are only permitted with the prior explicit consent of the instructor. Students are specifically prohibited to record classes without instructor authorization, including online/remote classes (either audio only, or video and audio). The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative withdrawal of the student from the course.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic forced some instruction to be delivered remotely starting in Spring 2020, numerous students have asked instructors to record their synchronous classes, so that they can access them at their convenience. Instructors who agree to record their classes (audio only, or video and audio) should inform students in advance. Recorded lectures may not be broadly released to anyone, but made available exclusively to those students enrolled in the class during the particular academic term. Recorded lectures must be stored securely, and are subject to the Nevada System of Higher Education's Records Retention Policy, meaning that the recordings can only be deleted 120 days after the end of class (i.e., after grades are posted). Once this requirement is met, the recordings should be deleted. Class recordings are protected from disclosure, as they are deemed part of an educational record under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Copyright

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with, and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you, nor assume any responsibility for student or employee violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional [copyright policy information](https://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright) is available at <https://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The [UNLV Disability Resource Center](https://www.unlv.edu/drc) (Student Services Complex, SSC-A, Room 143, <https://www.unlv.edu/drc>, telephone 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. Students who believe that they may need academic accommodations due to a permanent disability, temporary or permanent medical need, or academic support due to pregnancy are encouraged to contact the DRC as early as possible in the academic term. A Disabilities Specialist will discuss what options may be available to you. Students who are already registered with the DRC should request their accommodations online each semester, and make an appointment to discuss their accommodations with their instructors.

Final Examinations

The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur on the date and at the time specified in the Final Exam schedule. The Final Exam schedule is typically available at the start of the semester, and the classroom locations are available approximately one month before the end of the semester. See the [Final Exam Schedule](https://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars), <https://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

Identity Verification in Online Courses

All UNLV students must use their Campus-issued ACE ID and password to log in to WebCampus-Canvas.

UNLV students enrolled in online or hybrid courses are expected to read and adhere to the [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy), <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy>, which states that “acting or attempting to act as a substitute for another, or using or attempting to use a substitute, in any academic evaluation or assignment” is a form of academic misconduct. Intentionally sharing ACE login credentials with another person may be considered an attempt to use a substitute, and could result in investigation and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

UNLV students enrolled in online courses are also expected to read and adhere to the [Acceptable Use of Computing and Information Technology Resources Policy](https://www.it.unlv.edu/policies/acceptable-use-computing-and-information-technology-resources-policy), <https://www.it.unlv.edu/policies/acceptable-use-computing-and-information-technology-resources-policy>, which prohibits sharing university accounts with other persons without authorization.

To the greatest extent possible, all graded assignments and assessments in UNLV online courses should be hosted in WebCampus-Canvas or another UNLV-managed platform that requires ACE login credentials for access.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of “I” (Incomplete) may be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session, but cannot complete the last part of the course for reason(s) beyond the student’s control and acceptable to the instructor, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. For undergraduate courses, the incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the period indicated, a grade of “F” will be recorded, and the student’s GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete grade do not register for the course, but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the “I” grade.

Library Resources

Librarians are available to consult with students on research needs, including developing research topics, finding information, and evaluating sources. To make an appointment with a subject expert for this class, please visit the [Libraries’ Research Consultation](https://guides.library.unlv.edu/appointments/librarian) website, <https://guides.library.unlv.edu/appointments/librarian>. You can also [ask the library staff](https://ask.library.unlv.edu/) questions via chat and text message at <https://ask.library.unlv.edu/>.

Missed Classwork

Any student missing class, quizzes, examinations, or any other class or laboratory work because of observance of religious holidays will be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed work. The make-up opportunity will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for Fall and Spring courses (except for modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for Summer and modular courses, of their intention to participate in religious

holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit the Missed Classwork policy, under Registration Policies, on the [Academic Policies](#) webpage, <https://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=32&navoid=8271&hl=>.

In accordance with the policy approved by the Faculty Senate regarding missed class time and assignments, students who represent UNLV in any official extracurricular activity will also have the opportunity to make up assignments, provided that the student submits official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).

The spirit and intent of the policy for missed classwork is to offer fair and equitable assessment opportunities to all students, including those representing the University in extracurricular activities. Instructors should consider, for example, that in courses which offer a “Drop one” option for the lowest assignment, quiz, or exam, assigning the student a grade of zero for an excused absence for extracurricular activity is both contrary to the intent of the Faculty Senate’s policy, and an infringement on the student’s right to complete all work for the course.

This policy will not apply in the event that completing the assignment or administering the examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the University that could be reasonably avoided. There should be a good faith effort by both the instructor and the student to agree to a reasonable resolution. When disagreements regarding this policy arise, decisions can be appealed to the Department Chair/School Director, College/School Dean, and/or the Faculty Senate Academic Standards Committee.

For purposes of definition, extracurricular activities may include, but are not limited to academic recruitment activities, competitive intercollegiate athletics, fine arts activities, liberal arts competitions, science and engineering competitions, and any other event or activity sanctioned by a College/School Dean, and/or by the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Rebelmail

Rebelmail is UNLV’s official email system for students and by University policy, instructors and staff should only send emails to students’ Rebelmail accounts. Rebelmail is one of the primary ways in which students receive official University communications, information about deadlines, major Campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the University. Sending emails within WebCampus-Canvas is also acceptable.

Tutoring and Coaching

The Academic Success Center (ASC), at the Claude I. Howard Building, provides tutoring, academic success coaching, and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, please visit the [ASC website](#), <https://www.unlv.edu/asc>, or call 702-895-3177. The ASC is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A, Room 254. Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor

of the Lied Library, and on the second floor of the College of Engineering building (TBE A 207).

UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, <https://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>, located in the Central Desert Complex, Building 3, Room 301 (CDC 3–301). Walk-in consultations are sometimes available, but students with appointments receive priority assistance. Students may make appointments in person or by calling the Center, telephone 702-895-3908. Students are requested to bring to their appointments their Rebel ID Card, a copy of the instructions for their assignment, and two copies of any writing they have completed on their assignment.

Optional statement for inclusion in syllabi.

Diversity Statement

As an institution of higher learning, UNLV represents a rich diversity of human beings among its faculty, staff, and students, and is committed to aspiring to maintain a Campus environment that values that diversity. Accordingly, the University supports understanding and appreciation of all members of its community, regardless of race, sex, age, color, national origin, ethnicity, creed, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, or political affiliation. Please see [University Statements and Compliance](https://www.unlv.edu/about/statements-compliance), <https://www.unlv.edu/about/statements-compliance>.

A successful learning experience requires mutual respect and trust between the students and the instructor. Accordingly, the instructor asks that students be willing to listen to one another's points of view, acknowledging that there may be disagreements, keep discussion and comments on topic, and use first person, positive language when expressing their perspectives.