

AAS 433-1002: Contemporary Issues in African American Studies

BLACK LIVES MATTER

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course will study how recent scholarship in African American Studies helps to contextualize, theorize, and illuminate police brutality, the continued contestation of black humanity, and the response of #BlackLivesMatter as a movement. The course draws its critical energy from literary scholars, historians, media scholars, law, and other related disciplines. By studying this scholarship we will pursue questions such as the following: How do Black Lives Matter? How does history inform the need for visibility? How do scholars, and academia more broadly, create sites for resistant scholarship to shift racial paradigms? How do gender and sexuality operate within narratives of police brutality and BLM's response?

In this course you will...

- develop strategies for approaching
- utilize interdisciplinary scholarship to frame analyses of black masculinities
- hone oral communication skills by engaging in full class discussions and small group collaborations.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Davis, Angela. *Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement*

Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*

Ward, Jesmyn. Ed. *The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks about Race*

REQUIREMENTS

1. Reading Q&A: I don't like quizzes and you don't like quizzes. However I still need you to be accountable for the readings since a large part of this class is discussion based. In lieu of quizzes every night you will ask three critical questions you have about the reading and then attempt to answer those questions. I am defining critical questions that ask 'how,' 'to what extent,' and 'why' instead of 'what' questions. If you need to use the Internet to help you answer your questions then use the Internet (responsibly). Your answer doesn't need to be longer

than two or three sentences. I want you to become critically informed readers; active agents in your education. You will be graded on both your questions and answers.

2. Memoir: The beginning of the course will begin with us reading deeply personal memoirs that articulate black resistance and resilience to state-sanctioned violence and the BLM movement. Because we are creators and not just consumers of knowledge, I want you to create a short memoir (one to three pages) about a moment that you may have experienced (for instance: _____ while black), or your response to any of the events of the past two years in memoir form. While memoir generally means prose written from one's memory your memoirs can take the form of a poem or a letter like Baldwin's "My Dungeon Shook" or Coates *Between the World and Me*.

3. Website Review/Response: Early in the semester we will review the Black Lives Matter website to go to the source and see the founder's mission and goals for the movement. You will write a one page, single spaced review to the website. In your review of the website you will be objective/non-editorial(izing). Your review is broken up into three parts (paragraphs) to mirror the organizing scheme of the website: about us, herstory, and principles.

3. Collaborative Creative Project: I want you to produce an original, creative response or representation of the Black Lives Matter Movement. It can be through podcast, vlog, blog or some other social media platform that allows you critical, public space to become a facet of the movement. There will be four people to a group and I need to see clearly what everyone's contributions are in the finished product.

4. Final critical essay and Presentation – Your final critical essay is comprised of three separate parts.

Annotated Bibliography-

First, you will need to do an annotated bibliography of at least five sources, two of which have to be books from the library. As we approach the deadline for your annotated bibliography we will discuss it more in class. However, for the purposes of the syllabus you will need to correctly cite each source using MLA guidelines and write two paragraphs for each source. The first paragraph will be a summary of the material and the second paragraph will outline its relevance to your overall project.

Presentation-

At the end of the semester we will present our conference length papers in our last three meetings (including the time allotted for our final). This is the abridged version of your paper because you will only have ten minutes to present (roughly five pages). Please dress accordingly. You will be graded on your ability to make eye contact and present your research in a clear and concise manner.

Final Paper-

In a 6-8 page essay, you will analyze one or more Pop-Culture artifacts, advancing an original argument about the work(s). You should incorporate at least five scholarly, secondary sources (in addition to primary texts) to support your interpretation. During the last week of regularly scheduled classes I will hold conferences in my office where I will meet all students one-on-one to help in this writing process. Your final papers will be due electronically during our class's

final exam schedule. Please type your essays using Microsoft Word or a comparable program (note: you should convert Apple documents as necessary). Assignments should be double-spaced and typed in 11- or 12-point Times New Roman font, allowing one-inch margins. Indicate your name, the date, and your essay's original title at the top of the first page; no title page is necessary. Your essay must include proper MLA citation.

EVALUATION (1000 point scale)

Reading Q&A	300
Memoir	100
Rhetorical Analysis	100
Creative Project	200
Critical Essay	300

CAVEAT

Like black masculinities, this syllabus is free to change whenever I see fit. If such a change should occur, I will tell you either in the classroom or by email. You should then make the necessary changes to your syllabus and act accordingly.

OFFICE HOURS AND RESOURCES: During my office hours—listed on page one of this syllabus—I would be glad to help you address concerns about your reading, writing, and progress in the course. If you have a scheduling conflict with my designated office hours, you may request an appointment during another time. If and when you decide to come to my office hours it is important to come prepared. You need to have prepared (written questions) beforehand, and a writing utensil and paper at the meeting to write down any notes.

Sample Email Correspondence:

Dear (or Hello) Dr. (or Prof.) Name,

I hope this message finds you well. I am (your first and last name) from your (your class) course that meets on (day and time) . I write to ask (whatever your question or inquiry is) . Thank you for your time, and I look forward to your response.

Best (Warm Regards, Regards, Sincerely),

 (your first and last name)

SCHEDULE

Introductions and Foundations

M	8/29	Introductions and Overview/ Read Syllabus/
W	8/31	Baldwin, <i>The Fire Next Time</i> : “My Dungeon Shook”* Coates, <i>Between the World and Me</i> (Beginning)
W	9/7	Smith, <i>Invisible Man Got the Whole World Watching: A Young Black Man’s Education</i> (Chapter 1)* Ward, <i>The Fire This Time</i> Intro (emphasis on pgs. 3-8)

Ward, *The Fire This Time*, “Message to My Daughters”—Danticat
Memoir Due

The Mission and its Rhetoric

M 9/12 BLM Website* (Rhetorical Analysis)
Website Review/Response Due

W 9/14 The Movement for Black Lives: Platform*

Post-Slavery Subjects and Legacy of Bondage

M 9/19 *Slavery By Another Name* * (streaming film)
Ward, *The Fire This Time*, “Lonely In America”—Walters
Ward, *The Fire This Time*, “Where Do We Go from Here?”—Wilkerson

W 9/21 Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies* Introduction*

Title

M 9/26 Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, Introduction

W 9/28 Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, Chapter 1

Title

M 10/3 Baldwin, Going to Meet the Man*

W 10/5 Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, Chapter 2

Pedagogy, Politics, and *Birth of A Nation*

M 10/10 Lorde, “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House”
Turner, “Confession of Nat Turner”

W 10/12 Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, Chapter 3

Social Movement(s): In Search of Equality

M 10/17 Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, Chapter 4

(Un)Justice System

M 10/24 Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, Chapter 5
Alexander, *New Jim Crow* Chapter 5*

W 10/26 Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, Chapter 6

Title

M 10/31 Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, Chapter 7

W 11/1 Lee, *Do the Right Thing*
Ward, *The Fire This Time*, “White Rage”—Anderson

Ward, *The Fire This Time*, “Cracking the Code”—Ward

#SayHerName

M 11/7 Crenshaw, SayHerName: Resisting Police Brutality Against Women

W 11/9 Crenshaw, SayHerName: Resisting Police Brutality Against Women
Creative Projects Due

Title

M 11/14 Davis, *Freedom Is A Constant Struggle* Chp 2

W 11/16 Davis, *Freedom Is A Constant Struggle* Chp 3

Title

M 11/21 Davis, *Freedom Is A Constant Struggle* Chp 6-9

W 11/23 Browne, *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness*, Intro*
Annotated Bibliographies Due

On Race, Icons, and Grandmoms

M 11/28 Fleetwood, *On Racial Icons: Blackness and the Public Imagination*, Chp1

W 11/30 Ward, *The Fire This Time*, “Black Than Thou”—Young
Ward, *The Fire This Time*, “Da Art of Storytelling’ (a Prequel)” —Laymon

Presentations:

M 12/5 **Presentations**

W 12/7 **Presentations**

W 12/14 **Final Paper Due**

University Memos

Academic Misconduct—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; 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 when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV’s function as an educational institution.

An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the Student Academic Misconduct Policy (approved December 9, 2005) located at:

<https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

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 employee or student 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 information can be found at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)—The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu/>, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

Religious Holidays Policy—Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

Transparency in Learning and Teaching—The University encourages application of the transparency method of constructing assignments for student success. Please see these two links for further information: <https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning>

<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency>

Incomplete Grades—The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student’s control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. 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 time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

Tutoring and Coaching—The Academic Success Center (ASC) 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, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call [702-895-3177](tel:702-895-3177). The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of the SSC (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TEB second floor.

UNLV Writing Center—One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 702-895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>.

Rebelmail—By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV's official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students' e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu. Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.

Final Examinations—The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: <http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

Library: Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. For this class, the Subject Librarian is ([https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians by subject](https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject)). UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students' access to information. Discovery, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at <https://www.library.unlv.edu/>.