

**HISTORY 250: AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY TO 1877**

Winter 2020  
TR 12:00-1:20  
Tykeson Hall 204

Instructor: Professor Austin  
Office: 301 McKenzie Hall  
Office Hours: Thursdays 3:30-4:30 and by appointment  
Phone: 541-346-7179  
Email: caustin@uoregon.edu

Some course materials, including exam review sheets, will be available on Canvas.

Graduate Employees:

Aziza Baker  
Office: 340K McKenzie Hall  
Office Hours: Mondays, 10:00-11:00 a.m. and Tuesdays, 3:00-4:00 p.m.  
Email: abaker12@uoregon.edu

Nanosh Lucas  
Office: 340C McKenzie Hall  
Office Hours: Fridays, 11:00-1:00 p.m.  
Email: nanoshl@uoregon.edu

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The history of African peoples in the United States has primarily been a chronicle of strivings for liberation, justice, and equality. Much of this story represents Black peoples' desires to retain their racial identity and autonomy, to build community, and to create a sense of nationalism, while simultaneously asserting their right to be treated as equal American citizens. Thus, this course examines the lives, labors, and culture of Africans during enslavement and their ongoing struggle for freedom and equality. We will begin by exploring the process and justification for slavery by focusing on the structure of slavery in the United States, and the differing conditions for Black people in the Northern and Southern regions of the country. During this section, students will also be introduced to the legacy of African heritage in the development of Black cultural institutions, labor systems, and methods of resistance.

In the second half of the course, students will not only expand their understanding of slavery, but will gain insight into the conditions of free Blacks and their quest for social and political inclusion. As a result, we will discuss the ways in which free Blacks protested against racism in the United States by forming associations, building institutions, and engaging in various emigration schemes. We will conclude with the Civil War and Reconstruction, focusing on the ramifications of the Emancipation Proclamation and the participation of Black soldiers. Students

in this course will learn how all of these issues represent larger narratives in which Black people fought and persevered in the United States.

*The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu).*

## **REQUIRED READING**

The following books are required for the course. They may be purchased from the Duck Store, Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, or other booksellers.

Darlene Clark Hine et al., *Revel for The African American Odyssey*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition. The Duck Store has a cost friendly e-book version of this text known as the Access Card 7<sup>th</sup> edition.

Solomon Northrop, *12 Years A Slave*

Sherley Anne Williams, *Dessa Rose*

Additional Materials—available on Canvas—include excerpts from the following books:

James Turner, editor, *David Walker's Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*

Philip S. Foner and Robert James Branham, eds., *Lift Every Voice: African American Oratory, 1787-1900*

Charles Johnson, *Africans in America: America's Journey Through Slavery*

Winthrop Jordan, *The White Man's Burden*

## **CLASSROOM PHILOSOPHY**

Your instructor holds the perspective that all classes are essentially *intercultural encounters*—among individuals in the class, between the readers and any given author, and among the authors, the students, and the professor. We are all trying to understand how to effectively learn from one another. Such a classroom requires particular capacities and commitments on our part. It also requires a *mutual effort* in helping each other both understand the course material and the differing interpretative positions we may bring to a more complex understanding of the material. While each of us seeks to advance our own knowledge, we are also a community in which we are each responsible to help the other members of the community learn effectively.

In an effort to enhance our learning experience, we expect that students and instructors will commit to do the following:

- acquire and utilize intellectual skills and capacities that will enable us to work effectively with the complexities of the course material;
- develop increased self-knowledge and knowledge of others;
- understand how the material we are studying relates to our own previous learning, backgrounds, and experiences, and how we can use and apply our new knowledge effectively;
- develop the ability to critique material in a mature manner using our own previous learning and experiences as part of the critique when appropriate;
- develop the communication skills that facilitate our learning and our ability to listen, read, reflect, and study to understand;
- remain engaged and in communication even when the course material or discussion is confusing or upsetting, by recognizing that understanding does *not* imply agreement
- respect everyone's ideas and values even when we disagree

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

History courses develop students' knowledge of how past events influence today's society and help them understand how human beings view themselves. By the conclusion of the term:

- (1) Students will acquire a perspective on history and an understanding of the factors that shape human activity.
- (2) Students will be able to display knowledge about the origins and nature of contemporary issues and develop a foundation for future comparative understanding.
- (3) Students will be able to think, speak, and write critically about primary and secondary historical sources by examining diverse interpretations of past events and ideas in their historical contexts.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

The final course grade will be determined as follows:

1. Discussion Section Attendance and Participation (10% of final grade): Regular attendance is mandatory.
2. Lecture Course Attendance (10% of final grade): Regular attendance is mandatory. A portion of a student's attendance grade will be reduced for each unexcused absence. **Any student who has more than 4 unexcused absences will receive a "zero" for the attendance grade.** Tardiness is disruptive and is strongly discouraged. Two (2) tardies is equal to one absence. More than three (3) tardies will result in the loss of all attendance points.
3. Midterm Examination (25% of final grade): The midterm, held on **Thursday, February 6**, will be an in-class examination covering lectures and readings. There will be a term identification section, and a series of short-answer questions. During the week prior to the exam, the professor will circulate a review sheet containing a selected list of terms and topics to study in preparation for the test.

4. Writing Assignments: (25% of final grade): There will be two writing assignments. The first writing assignment is a 3-page book review of the novel *Dessa Rose*. This assignment is worth **15%** of your final grade and will be due on **Thursday, February 21**. Instructions for writing the review will be posted on Canvas. The second assignment, due **Tuesday, March 5**, will be a 2-3 page essay comparing the book *12 Years A Slave* with the film of the same name. This assignment is worth **10%** of your final grade.

Papers will be graded according to the content and aptness of your ideas and the quality and accuracy of your prose. Your papers should be written in a clear, concise manner, and when appropriate, should make direct reference to course readings and lectures. They should be typed, double-spaced, using 1 inch margins and Times New Roman 12 point font. Please be sure to pay careful attention to spelling and grammar.

5. Final Examination (30% of final grade): The final examination will be a cumulative exam, covering material from the entire quarter. The final exam will be held on **Wednesday, March 18 at 8:00 a.m.** As with the midterm, there will be term identification and short answer sections. Approximately one week before the exam, students will be given a review sheet to assist in the process of studying.

\*Unless the instructor grants prior permission to do otherwise, all assignments are due by the due date. Each day a paper is late, it will be reduced by one letter grade. Failure to turn in an assignment will result in a zero for that assignment. **Failure to complete two or more assignments** will result in a failing grade, regardless of performance on completed assignments.

Grades are based on a 100-point scale and will be distributed as follows:

A+	97-100
A	93-96.9
A-	90 - 92.9
B+	87 - 89.9
B	83 - 86.9
B-	80 - 82.9
C+	77-79.9
C	73-76.9
C-	70-72.9
D+	67-69.9
D	63-66.9
D-	60-62.9

Anything below a 60 is an F.

## GRADING POLICY

What follows is meant to help students understand the departmental consensus, to the degree that there is one, regarding the grading of individual assignments. Each faculty member in the Department of History, however, will have her or his own interpretation of this consensus.

It is the student's responsibility to attend closely to the course syllabus, assignment descriptions, oral indications in class and in conference, and written comments on graded assignments in order to gain a more precise understanding of the interpretation that guides a given course.

A+: Work of unusual distinction. Therefore, in the History Department, this grade is rarely awarded.

A: Work that distinguishes itself by the excellence of its grasp of the material and the precision and insight of its argument, in addition to being well executed and reasonably free of errors.

B: Work that satisfies main criteria of the assignment, and demonstrates command of the material, but does not achieve the level of excellence that characterizes work of A quality.

C: Work that demonstrates a rudimentary grasp of the material and satisfies at least some of the assigned criteria reasonably well.

D: Work that demonstrates a poor grasp of the material and/or is executed with little regard for college standards, but which exhibits some engagement with the material.

F: Work that is weak in every aspect, demonstrating a basic misunderstanding of the material and/or disregard for the assigned question.

### NOTE ON PLAGIARISM

All work that you turn in must be your own. Any work submitted for credit that includes the words or ideas of anyone else must fully and accurately identify your source with a citation. Note that replacing words with synonyms, changing verb tense, stringing together phrases from a source, or other minor alterations does not qualify as paraphrasing. Even with a citation, failure to put quotation marks around direct quotations constitutes plagiarism, because it implies that the writing is your own. (By the way, submitting the same paper to more than one class for credit is also academic misconduct.) In the event of an act of plagiarism or other academic misconduct, I will impose sanctions, as provided in the Student Code of Conduct. The minimum sanction will be a 0 on the assignment, but plagiarism can also merit an F in the course, even for a first offense. See <https://policies.uoregon.edu/vol-3-administration-student-affairs/ch-1-conduct/student-conduct-code>. If you are confused about this or do not understand the consequences of academic dishonesty at the UO—or the ethical issues behind these university policies—please read these guidelines: <https://dos.uoregon.edu/files/faculty-guide.pdf>.

**CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:** Cell phones, Ipods/Ipads, and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. Laptops may be used for note taking purposes only. Any student found in violation of this policy will receive a warning. A second offense will result in a loss of 5 points from the student's final grade point average. Any student with more than two offenses will lose all attendance and participation points.

**ALL STUDENTS** are required to be awake and attentive during class. Distracting behavior, including excessively talking to classmates while the professor lectures, ringing or vibrating cell phones, leaving and returning to class during lecture or exams, sleeping, and other disruptive behaviors are expressly prohibited. Students who violate this policy will be asked to leave the class and risk being permanently removed from the course.

**EMAIL ETIQUETTE:** Please address email correspondence properly and end your post with a proper salutation, then sign your name. I will not reply to emails that begin with "Yo," "Hey," "Hey Prof," "Hey Doc," "Hi" with no name after it, "What's up," or other such unprofessional constructions. Emails without a proper salutation will not be answered, including those sent with attachments. I will usually respond within 24 hours, though it will often be sooner.

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS\*

#### **Week 1**

Tuesday, January 7

**Course Introduction**

Thursday, January 9

Lecture: **Society and Culture in West Africa**

Read and Discuss: African American Odyssey, Chapter 1

#### **Week 2**

Tuesday, January 14

Lecture: **European Expansion**

Read and Discuss: Africans in America, Chapter 1

Thursday, January 16

Lecture: **The Ideology of Slavery and the Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Trade**

Read and Discuss: The White Man's Burden, Chapter 1

### **Week 3**

Tuesday, January 21

Lecture: **The Middle Passage**

Read and Discuss: African American Odyssey, Chapter 2

Thursday, January 23

Lecture: **The “Racialization” of Slavery**

Read and Discuss: African American Odyssey, Chapter 3

### **Week 4**

Tuesday, January 28

Lecture: **Slavery in the Colonial Era**

Read and Discuss: Africans in America, Chapter 3

Thursday, January 30

Lecture: **Culture and Resistance in the Colonial Era**

Read and Discuss: Felix’s Petition; Belinda’s Petition and other petitions from the colonial and Revolutionary Era

### **Week 5**

Tuesday, February 4

Lecture: **The Age of Revolution**

Read and Discuss: African American Odyssey, Chapter 4;  
Africans in America, pages 249-258, 265-266

Thursday, February 6

**MIDTERM**

### **Week 6**

Tuesday, February 11

Lecture: **“King Cotton” and Southern Slavery**

Read and Discuss: African American Odyssey, Chapter 6

Thursday, February 13

Lecture: **Family, Community, and Culture During Enslavement**

Read and Discuss: Dessa Rose and excerpts from fugitive slave database

### **Week 7**

Tuesday, February 18

**View *12 Years A Slave***

Read: 12 Years A Slave

Thursday, February 20

**View *12 Years A Slave***

Read and Discuss: 12 Years A Slave

## **Week 8**

Tuesday, February 25

Lecture: **Free Blacks and Early Black Nationalism**

Read and Discuss: excerpts from David Walker's Appeal

Thursday, February 27

Lecture: **Abolition and the Struggle for Black Citizenship**

Read and Discuss: African American Odyssey, Chapter 9

## **Week 9**

Tuesday, March 3

Lecture: **The American Nation Divided: Sectionalism and the Argument over Slavery**

Read and Discuss: African American Odyssey, Chapter 10

Thursday, March 5

Lecture: **Civil War: African Americans and the Emancipation Proclamation**

Read and Discuss: African American Odyssey, Chapters 11-12

## **Week 10**

Tuesday, March 10

Lecture: **Reconstruction: The Fall and Rise of the South**

Read and Discuss: African American Odyssey, Chapter 13

Thursday, March 12

**Course Wrap Up**

**Final Exam: 8:00 a.m. Wednesday March 18, 2020**

\*Please be aware that due to the nature and pace of courses like this one, there is sometimes a need to extend our work beyond the day on which a particular topic or reading is assigned. For this reason, the professor may change the syllabus to accommodate these circumstances.

The following suggestions will help you preserve academic integrity by avoiding situations where you might be tempted to cheat or you might be perceived to be cheating.

1. **ACKNOWLEDGE THE SOURCES THAT YOU USE WHEN COMPLETING ASSIGNMENTS:** If you use another person's thoughts, ideas, or words in your work, you must acknowledge this fact. This applies regardless of whose thoughts, ideas, or words you use as well as the source of the information. If you do not acknowledge the work of others, you are implying that another person's work is your own, and such actions constitute plagiarism. Plagiarism is the theft of another's intellectual property, and plagiarism is a serious form of academic misconduct. If you are ever in doubt about whether or not you should acknowledge a source, err on the side of caution and acknowledge it.
2. **AVOID SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR:** Do not put yourself in a position where an instructor might suspect that you are cheating or that you have cheated. Even if you have not cheated, the mere suspicion of dishonesty might undermine an instructor's confidence in your work. Avoiding some of the most common types of suspicious behavior is simple. Before an examination, check your surroundings carefully and make sure that all of your notes are put away and your books are closed. An errant page of notes on the floor or an open book could be construed as a "cheat sheet." Keep your eyes on your own work. Unconscious habits, such as looking around the room aimlessly or talking with a classmate, could be misinterpreted as cheating.
3. **DO NOT FABRICATE INFORMATION:** Never make up data, literature citations, experimental results, or any other type of information that is used in an academic or scholarly assignment.
4. **DO NOT FALSIFY ANY TYPE OF RECORD:** Do not alter, misuse, produce, or reproduce any University form or document or other type of form or document. Do not sign another person's name to any form or record (University or otherwise), and do not sign your name to any form or record that contains inaccurate or fraudulent information. Once an assignment has been graded and returned to you, do not alter it and ask that it be graded again. Many instructors routinely photocopy assignments and/or tests before returning them to students, thus making it easy to identify an altered document.
5. **DO NOT GIVE IN TO PEER PRESSURE:** Friends can be a tremendous help to one another when studying for exams or completing course assignments. However, don't let your friendships with others jeopardize your college career. Before lending or giving any type of information to a friend or acquaintance, consider carefully what you are lending (giving), what your friend might do with it, and what the consequences might be if your friend misuses it. Even something seemingly innocent, such as giving a friend an old term paper or last year's homework assignments, could result in an allegation of academic misconduct if the friend copies your work and turns it in as his/her own.

6. **DO NOT SUBMIT THE SAME WORK FOR CREDIT IN TWO COURSES:** Instructors do not give grades in a course, rather students earn their grades. Thus, instructors expect that students will earn their grades by completing all course requirements (assignments) while they are actually enrolled in the course. If a student uses his/her work from one course to satisfy the requirements of a different course, that student is not only violating the spirit of the assignment, but he/she is also putting other students in the course at a disadvantage. Even though it might be your own work, you are not permitted to turn in the same work to meet the requirements of more than one course. You should note that this applies even if you have to take the same course twice, and you are given the same or similar assignments the second time you take the course; all assignments for the second taking of the course must be started from scratch.
7. **DO YOUR OWN WORK:** When you turn in an assignment with only your name on it, then the work on that assignment should be yours and yours alone. This means that you should not copy any work done by or work together with another student (or other person). For some assignments, you might be expected to "work in groups" for part of the assignment and then turn in some type of independent report. In such cases, make sure that you know and understand where authorized collaboration (working in a group) ends and collusion (working together in an unauthorized manner) begins.
8. **MANAGE YOUR TIME:** Do not put off your assignments until the last minute. If you do, you might put yourself in a position where your only options are to turn in an incomplete (or no) assignment or to cheat. Should you find yourself in this situation and turn in an incomplete (or no) assignment, you might get a failing grade (or even a zero) on the assignment. However, if you cheat, the consequences could be much worse, such as a disciplinary record, failure of the course, and/or dismissal from the University.
9. **PROTECT YOUR WORK AND THE WORK OF OTHERS:** The assignments that you complete as a student are your "intellectual property," and you should protect your intellectual property just as you would any of your other property. Never give another student access to your intellectual property unless you are certain why the student wants it and what he/she will do with it. Similarly, you should protect the work of other students by reporting any suspicious conduct to the course instructor.
10. **READ THE COURSE SYLLABUS AND ASK QUESTIONS:** Many instructors prepare and distribute (or make available on a web site) a course syllabus. Read the course syllabus for every course you take! Students often do not realize that different courses have different requirements and/or guidelines, and that what is permissible in one course might not be permissible in another. "I didn't read the course syllabus" is never an excuse for academic misconduct. If after reading the course syllabus you have questions about what is or is not permissible, ask questions!