

Contemporary African- American History



Miss. Bell
2009-2010
Room 216
Whetstone High School
Conference 1st period Monday through Friday by appointment only
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Course Description:

“If a race has no history, if it has no worthwhile tradition, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world, and it stands in danger of being exterminated.”

- [Carter G Woodson](#)

This is an introductory course in the history of African Americans in the United States. Beginning with Emancipation, the course traces the evolution of black culture and identity and the continuing struggle for freedom and equality. Topics will include the tragedies and triumphs of Reconstruction, interracial violence, black political and institutional responses to racism and violence, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. Students will be confronted with conflicting bodies of evidence and challenged to analyze these issues and arrive a conclusions for themselves. Music and film will supplement classroom lectures and discussions.

Required Readings:

- *Textbook: Darlene Clark Hine, *The African American Odyssey, vol. II*
- *John H. Franklin, *Three Negro Classics: Up from Slavery, The Souls of Black Folk, and The Autobiography of an Ex Colored Man*
- *Kevin Baker, *Striver’s Row*
- *Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*
- *John McWhorter, *Losing the Race*
- *Articles and occasional handouts.

Evaluation:

1. Class Participation and discussion 15%
2. Mid term examination 10% (Two examinations)
3. Non-cumulative final 10% (Two examinations)
4. Reflective Essays 20%
5. Harlem Renaissance Project 20%
6. Research paper and Oral Presentation 25%

Attendance: Each student is expected to attend class regularly and on time. Roll will be taken and more than three unexcused absences during the semester will result in the deduction of a full letter grade.

Class meetings: Students are expected to have read the assigned material, and to be fully prepared to discuss the same. The class participation grade will be based on student participation in classroom discussions, which will include a one-page response paper or other processing activities, on the major themes of each topic area.

Rules for Class Discussion:

We will discuss many topics in class. There may be controversial topics, but this must be handled only through reason and respect of the position of others. No personal attacks of any kind or on anyone will be tolerated in class. Various points of view are most welcome. You do not have to agree with any viewpoint expressed by anyone in class or even by the authors of various texts, but you are expected to offer an informed perspective at all times or raise questions that we all can discuss. You are also expected to refrain from chattering while others are participating in discussion or during lecture.

Group Guidelines:

1. The class will often divide into groups
2. Each group will meet for a separate group discussion
3. Talk only with your group unless instructed to do otherwise
4. Each group will select a discussion leader, recorder, time keeper, and presenter
5. The presenter will share the groups reflections with the class

Essay:

Each student will submit one, typed, 3-4 page reflective essay based on a topic discussed in class. The teacher will provide detailed guidelines for this assignment.

Harlem Renaissance Project:

Each student will work cooperatively with other students to create a 10-minute presentation that reflects some aspect of the Harlem Renaissance. Guidelines for this assignment will be presented at a later date.

Research Paper:

Each student will provide the instructor with a proposal for a double-spaced, 7-10 page research paper. Students may choose any topic, which is relevant to the issues and time period under examination. Papers must have a clear thesis and use both primary and secondary source materials. All sources should be cited in footnotes; footnotes and all other matters of style must conform to the MLA guidelines, please consult the *MLA Handbook* when completing research and/or documenting sources. All papers should be as follows:

1. Typed
2. Double-spaced
3. Times New Roman font (12 point)

4. One-inch margins on ALL sides
5. Last name and page numbers in the upper, right corner (except first page)
6. Stapled in the upper, left corner
7. Each paper must have a cover page

Grading of this paper will be based on the clarity of the thesis, the construction of the argument and grammar. I will review proposals/drafts, _____ provided they are submitted. This assignment is due on May 25, 2010.

Students should make a copy of their research paper for their own records, and to assist them when doing their oral presentation.

Examinations: Students should arrive on time with plenty paper, and pens with blue or black ink. Failure to attend class on an examination date without prior notice/permission will require the student to provide a note of excuse.

Late Work: All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Assignments received after this point will be downgraded 10 points. Exceptions will be granted in cases of dire circumstances. Talk to me immediately about any circumstances that could affect an assignment. If you are having difficulty with an assignment seek help immediately. You cannot afford to procrastinate!

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism and cheating are not tolerated in any form on any assignment. If a student is caught plagiarizing or cheating, he/she will receive a failing grade on the assignment and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Course Schedule:

To Be Black in America

Aug. 26-Sept. 4

Introduction to course
Film: “*Ethnic Notions*”
Film “*Bamboozed*”

The Meaning of Freedom: The Promise of Reconstruction, 1865-1868

Sept. 8-11

Hine, pp. 298-317
Discussion: “*Up From Slavery*”, chpts 1-5

The Meaning of Freedom: The Failure of Reconstruction

Sept 14-18

Hine, pp. 324-340
Sept 15 Discussion: Leon Litwack, *Trouble in Mind*, Preface, Ch. 1
Processing Activity (Research)

White Supremacy Triumphant: African Americans in the South in the Late 19th Century

Sept. 21-25

Hine, pp. 352- 374

Discussion “*Searching for Safe Spaces- The Returning Subjugation*”

Black Southerners Challenge White Supremacy

Sept. 29- Oct. 9

Hine 380-406

Discussion: “*Up From Slavery*”, chpts 5-17

Conciliation, Agitation, and Migration: African Americans in the Early Twentieth Century

Oct. 12-27

Hine, pp. 416-430

Discussion: Dubois, *Souls of Black Folk*

Oct. 28- Dubois/ Washington Essay Due

Oct. 29-30 Mid Term Review

Oct. 30 Mid-Term

Nov. 2- 13

Hine, pp. 430-442

Discussion: Litwack, Trouble in Mind- Chapter 6

Film: “Rosewood”

African Americans and the 1920s

Nov. 16- Dec. 8

Hine, pp. 448-468

Film “*Birth of a Nation*”

Film “*Brother to Brother*”

Dec. 10-15 Harlem Renaissance Research Days

Dec. 16-18 Presentations: Harlem Renaissance Projects

Black Protest, the Great Depression and the New Deal

Jan. 4-13

Hine, pp. 480-503

Film: “*Miss Evers Boys*”

Jan. 14 Final Exam Review

Jan. 15 Final Exam

Meanings of Freedom, Culture, and Society in the 1930s and 1940s

Jan. 19-26

Hine, pp. 510-531

Processing Activity

Discussion: “Strivers Row”

The World War II Era and the Seeds of a Revolution

Jan. 26- Feb. 5

Hine, pp 538-560

Discussion: Baker, "Strivers Row"

The Freedom Movement

Feb. 8-26

Hine, pp. 572-598

Discussion: Moody, Coming of Age in Mississippi

The Struggle Continues, 1965-1980

Mar. 1-17

Hine, pp. 606-608

Film "Malcolm X"

Processing Activity

Mar. 18 Mid-Term Review

Mar. 19 Mid-Term

Mar. 22-26

Hine pp. 608-633

Film "*Panther*"

Black Politics, White Backlash

Mar. 29-April 16

Hine, pp. 614-660

Discussion: McWhorter, Losing the Race

Apr. 19-23

Hine pp. 660-663

Film "*The Day the Levies Broke*"

African Americans at the Dawn of a New Millennium

Apr. 26-May 14

Hine, pp. 670-691

Film "American History X"

Research

May 17-24 Independent Research

May 25 Research Papers Due

May 26-28 Begin Presentations

May 28 Senior Exams

June 1-3 Final and Reflection

