

African American Studies Senior Seminar (AFA 4937)

Dr. Sharon Austin

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Contact Information:

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Office Hours and Meeting Times:

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:45pm-2:45pm
Tuesdays 3-4:55pm; Thursdays 4:05-4:55pm (MAT 0014)

Course Description: This class is the African American Studies capstone that fulfills partial requirements for the African American Studies minor and/or major. This is a research intensive course that allows students to apply the knowledge gained from years of coursework in African American Studies to complete a major research project. The course is interdisciplinary and seeks to develop in students an ability to apply methodology, theory, and language from more than one discipline in examining central themes, issues, problems, topics, or experiences of people of African descent in the Americas.

The Reserve Articles:

These readings are on reserve on the www.uflib.ufl.edu web site. To read or print these articles, click on the course reserves link, type in my last name, and click on the article's title.

Your Grade will be Based on:

1)	Attendance	5%
2)	Participation or Optional Paper	20%
3)	Discussion Leader	10%
4)	First Short Paper	10%
5)	Second Short Paper	10%
6)	Third Short Paper	10%
7)	Research Paper	30%
8)	Defense of Paper	5%

Descriptions:

1) Attendance Policy and Missed Work:

After three unexcused classes are missed, you will not receive the percentage points for class participation (and will not have the option of submitting an optional paper). It is your responsibility to sign the attendance roster that will be given out at the beginning of each class session. If you forget to, sign it during the next class. Also, try to get to class on time. The policy for missed work in this class is consistent with the university's policy (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>).

2) **Class Participation and the Optional Paper Assignment:**

We will discuss a number of issues pertaining to African Americans and the discipline of African American Studies during the course of the semester. I understand that some students are more comfortable participating in class discussions than others. Therefore, I am giving you the option of either participating in our class discussions on a regular basis or writing a paper.

If you participate verbally (or attempt to and I don't call on you for some reason), email me on the day that you've participated so that I can keep a record of it. Throughout the semester, I will email the class listserv to let each of you know if you have participated regularly. If you participate in our discussions, you will not have to write a paper. If not, a 5-8 page typed, double-spaced paper is due on the last day of class. You can write an analysis which gives your opinion on any topic(s) we've discussed in class.

3) **Discussion Leader:**

Each student will lead discussions of **one** article of their choice. Summarize three main points about the article, the significance of the research, the clarity of the writing, and the overall quality of the article – i.e., did the author(s) prove his point in a way that others can understand it?

- 4) **Short Papers:** Write a four page paper on **one** of the two topics below. In the paper summarize the main points of three articles on the topic. Your paper will be graded on the basis of your knowledge of the articles (proof that you read them). Also, did the author(s) support his/her arguments well? Upload your papers to canvas on the dates below.

The first paper is due September 13th.

- 1) African American Activism
- 2) Public Health

The second paper is due October 11th

- 1) Black conservatism
- 2) African American film and popular culture

The third is due November 17th.

- 1) African American political activism
- 2) Black Public Intellectuals

5) 10-15 page research paper (Due on December 6th)

Your paper is due on the last day of class. It must examine the same topic as the proposal you completed in Senior Seminar 1. The paper should be a minimum of 10-15 pages of text (not including an endnote page), an endnote page that lists citations, and a bibliography page.

All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced using Times Roman 12 point font in MS Word. You must use a standard **one-inch** margin - no boldfaced fonts. Use the style APA, MLA or Chicago. All pages should be numbered and stapled. Also, use a title page that includes your name, the title of your paper, the due date, and the name of this class. *UF has an online writing for students. Visit their site at <http://web.cwoc.ufl.edu/owl>.*

The paper should include: 1) an introduction that gives a description of the paper, the research question(s), and a thesis statement; 2) a theoretical framework/literature review that includes a summary of the literature you applied in your research; 3) a data and methods section; 4) a bibliography page(s); and 5) survey questions (if applicable). Your paper will be graded on the basis of the clarity of the analysis and the overall writing style (lack of grammatical, punctuation, and other errors).

6) Presentations will be given on November 29th, December 1st, and December 6th

Each student must give an approximately 10 minute power-point presentation. In the presentation, describe your research topic, explain its significance to the discipline of African American Studies, provide a description of literature on this topic, and explain the data and methods you used to analyze this topic. After the last presentation, we will have a reception and brief ceremony to honor our graduating seniors. Good luck!

Grading Scale:

94-100 A	90-93 A-	87-89 B+	84-86 B	80-83 B-	77-79 C+
74-76 C	70-73 C-	67-69 D+	64-66 D	60-63 D-	Below 60 E

A C- will not be a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, Gordon Rule or College Basic Distribution credit.

Optional Extra Credit Assignments: If you complete a two page, typed, double-spaced paper on any of these, five points will be added to your lowest scores.

- 1) On **September 7th**, there will be a “**Tupac Shakur**” Forum from 7-9pm in the Rion Ballroom featuring **Professors Tanya Saunders, UF Associate Professor of Women’s Studies and Latin American Studies, and Vincent Adejumo, UF Lecturer of African American Studies. The movie “Juice”** will air continuously on **September 8th** in the Rion Ballroom from 6pm-1:30am.
- 2) On **October 4th**, the documentary, “**Agents of Change,**” will be shown at 2pm. Location tba. After the documentary, a question and answer session will take place with the filmmaker **Abby Ginzburg and Professor Ibram Kendi, UF Assistant Professor of African American Studies and History.**
- 3) On **November 3rd**, **Professor Kathleen Cleaver**, of Emory University and former member of Black Panther Party, will give a lecture at 6pm in the University Auditorium.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism and cheating on examinations. The penalty for cheating is a grade of 0 on the assignment. In addition, the Dean of Student's office may choose to administer a harsher punishment such as a temporary suspension from this class or a permanent expulsion from the university.

Classroom Behavior (Cell Phones and Laptops):

In the past, several of my students have forgotten to turn off their cell phones in class. I am asking you to please turn off your phones before our class begins. Remember, a student who takes his/her work seriously will make sure that his/her phone is off during class meetings.

Also, if you engage in behavior such as texting, browsing the internet, sleeping, loud yawning, or any other behavior that I consider to be disrespectful to me or to your classmates, you may not receive all of the percentage points for class participation. I expect you to pay attention at all times in class especially when films are shown. You do not have my permission to do the work in your other classes when films are shown. If I find out that you’re doing this, I have the right to deduct points from your participation grade.

Disabilities Statement:

Students requiring accommodations must first register with the Dean of Student’s office, Disability Resource Center. The Dean of Student’s office will provide documentation, which the student will then give to the instructor. For more information, see [HTTP://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc)

The Internship and Fellowship Information:

I receive a lot of information about internships, undergraduate scholarships, and law and graduate school fellowships. At the beginning of most of our classes, I will share this

information with you because I strongly encourage you to apply for these things. In the past, several of my students have received a variety of internships and fellowships. You can also look at the careers or scholarships links on the afam.clas.ufl.edu site for internship and scholarship information.

Class Schedule: (Films will be shown at the end of classes.)

The Current State of African American Studies and Activism

8-23 Introduction; We will watch:

A Short History of Black Lives Matter (11 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zp-RswgpjD8>

Marc Lamont Hill w/Sheriff David Clarke; #BlackLivesMatter; CNN; 8-31-2015 (10 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBS8YIDTApA>

Bill O'Reilly vs Two Black Lives Matter Supporters (9 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E5HsBVmGKB8>

8-25 Reserve Readings:

#Ferguson: Digital protest, hashtag ethnography, and the racial politics of social media in the United States

The Class Politics of Black Lives Matter

Public Health

8-30 We will watch: The Deadly Deception (55 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNa8CnC4sSU>

Click on the link to access the article below:

Black Lives Matter: A Commentary on Racism and Public Health

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4504294/>

Reserve Reading:

The African American Minister as a Source of Help for Serious Personal Crises: Bridge or Barrier to Mental Health?

Ethnic, Women's, and African American Studies Majors in U.S. Institutions of Higher Education

9-1 Reserve Readings:

African American Views on Research and the Tuskegee Syphilis Study

AIDS in Haitian Americans: A Reassessment

The Stigma of Being Named AIDS Carriers on Haitian-American Women

Black Conservatism

9-6 We will watch: A Question of Fairness (45 minutes) examines the lawsuits challenging the undergraduate and law school admissions processes at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. In June 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court issued 2 landmark rulings in cases that will have a major impact on the future use of affirmative action in university admissions. The film includes a reference to Ward Connerly.

Reserve Readings:

Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired: The Politics of Black Women's Health by Angela Davis

From the Closet to a Place at the Table

The Attitudes of Black and White College Students toward Gays and Lesbians

9-8 NO CLASS

9-13 **First Short Paper is due tonight.**

We will watch: Black Hollywood: Blaxploitation and Advancing an Independent Black Cinema (60 minutes) explores the Blaxploitation era and the challenges for black filmmakers in Hollywood. This film contains profanity.

http://www.snagfilms.com/films/title/black_hollywood_blaxploitation_and_advancing_a_n_independent_black_cinema

Reserve Readings:

A Love Story: Media and an (New) Exceptional Haitian-American Political Subject Conclusion

Myths, Distortions, and History: Affirmative Action by Ward Connerly

Rights Behind Bars: The Distinctive Viewpoint of Justice Clarence Thomas

African American Film and Popular Culture

9-15 Reserve Reading:

The Rise and Fall of Blaxploitation

9-20 Click on the link:

ASPIRational: Black Cable Television and the Ideology of Uplift
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15295036.2015.1023328>

Documenting Social Issues

9-22 Reserve Reading:

Spike Lee and the Fever in the Racial Jungle

9-27 Reserve Reading:

Tyler Perry and the Weight of Misrepresentation

9-29 Reserve Reading:

Conversations with Ava DuVernay—"A Call to Action": Organizing Principles of an Activist Cinematic Practice

10-4 We will meet in the room where the film, Agents of Change, will be shown (tba).

10-6 NO CLASS (Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History)

Interracial Dating

10-11 **Second Short Paper is due tonight.**

Reserve Readings:

A Qualitative Study of Interracial Dating Among College Students

Ebony & Ivory?: Interracial Dating Intentions and Behaviors of Disadvantaged African American Women in Kentucky

Looking Beyond the Stereotypes of the 'Angry Black Woman': An Exploration of Black Women's Responses to Interracial Relationships

10-13 Class will meet in the atrium on the second floor of Ustler Hall for the "Women, Race, and the U.S. Presidency" panel.

Criminal Justice: The Racial Hoax

10-18 We will watch:

The Tawana Brawley Story (14 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T78DwdFUq0c>

Presumed Guilty: Due Process Lessons of the Duke Lacrosse Case (12 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mqt9OX-oAtU>

Reserve Reading: The Racial Hoax as Crime

10-20 Reserve Reading:

Innocent Until Proven Innocent: In Defense of Duke Lacrosse and White Power (and Against Menacing Black Student-Athletes, a Black Stripper, Activists, and the Jewish Media)

African American Political Activism and Black Power

- 10-25 We will watch: Eyes on the Prize Ain't Gonna Shuffle No More (50 minutes) World heavyweight champion Cassius Clay challenges America to accept him as Muhammad Ali, a minister of Islam who refuses to fight in Vietnam. Students at Howard University in Washington, D.C., fight to bring the growing black consciousness movement and their African heritage inside the walls of this prominent black institution. Black elected officials and community activists organize the National Black Political Convention in Gary, Indiana, in an attempt to create a unified black response to growing repression against the movement.

Reserve Readings:

Black Criminal Stereotypes of Racial Profiling
In Search of White Crime

- 10-27 Click on the link:

United States of America v. Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr.
<https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/403/698>

- 11-1 Reserve Readings:

Women, Power and Revolution by Kathleen Cleaver

At the end of class we will watch Kathleen Cleaver: Evolution of a Black Panther (13 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHujst3NZCg>

- 11-3 NO CLASS Lecture by Professor Kathleen Cleaver is at 6pm tonight at the University Auditorium.

- 11-8 We will watch: The Choice 2016 provides a description of the backgrounds of Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/the-choice-2016/>

Reserve Readings:

Race and Politics in the Age of Obama
When Whites Love a Black Leader: Race Matters in Obamerica

- 11-10 Discussion of election results and of the film

Black Public Intellectuals: Cornel West, Shelby Steele, and Michael Eric Dyson

11-15 Reserve Reading:

An Aristocrat in Winter by Michael Eric Dyson

Cornel West's Representation of the Intellectual: But Some of Us Are Brave?

ResponsiBILLity: Cosby's Conservative Turn

Too Little Thought, Too Little Action? Black Leaders and Intellectuals by Jesse Jackson

11-17 **Third Short Paper is due tonight.**

Discussion continued

11-22 NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

11-24 NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

11-29 Presentations

12-1 Presentations

12-6 **Research Paper is due tonight;** Presentations