

**AFA3110 (23470) - (25896)Section (RS10- RSUF) Online- Key Issues In Black Atlantic Thought-
Fall 2025**

Dr. Robert L. Stevenson, Jr. Assistant Instructional Professor

Contact Information:

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Remote Office Hours via Zoom:

Tuesday & Thursday: TBA
or by appointment

Classes Begin August 21, 2025-December 3, 2025

Class times:

Tuesday Period 2-3 (8:30AM-10:15AM)

Thursday Period 3 (9:30AM-10:25AM)

Location: Turlington 2322

Course Description:

This survey course examines key themes in the intellectual and social history of African American and African diasporic experiences that intersect in the United States and other national contexts in the transatlantic world. We will examine the prevailing trends in the social interactions of Black people by engaging in questions about, enslavement, discrimination, education, social theory, gender politics, economics and spirituality, in diasporic, and international affairs. We will interrogate the criminal justice system and focus on how it mirrors the reconstruction period and the convict lease system. We will discuss the interventions of leading social activists voices, such as Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells, Pauli Murray, Bayard Rustin, Fannie Lou Hamer, Ella Baker, the Me Too Movement, and Fusion Politics. We will interrogate the voices of those who have promoted multiple dimensional forms of resistance and social change via public consciousness and social activism.

Note: This syllabus is a general outline of the course, but it is subject to change. I will let you know if modifications are made.

Student Learning Objectives:

1. Students will understand the historical and cultural thematic foundations of the African American experience and their contributions to education and social justice.
2. Students will analyze the social, political, and economic factors that have influenced African American history and culture.
3. Students will develop critical thinking and interdisciplinary analysis skills through essays, projects, and class discussions that reflect a comprehensive understanding of African American studies.
4. Explain how slavery, reconstruction, civil rights and social constructions of ethnicity/race and gender became challenges that helped to shape group and individual identities.

Required Texts:

DeGruy, Joy, Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy Of Enduring Injury and Healing, Uptown Press, 2005. ISBN 978-0-9852171-6-6

Supplemental Reading:

Articles will be assigned throughout the semester as well. Students will be expected to access those readings online or using the UF library catalog.

Course Assignments and Assessments:

My courses have firm deadlines for assignment submissions, exams, and course end dates. While most deadlines are 11:59 pm, **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO SUBMIT WORK AS YOU RISK NOT HAVING YOUR WORK PROPERLY SUBMITTED FOR CREDIT.**

Self Introductions:

Please create a short video and upload to canvas. The video should include, your name major, why you chose this class and what you expect to learn. The video should be no longer than 2.00 minutes and will be due by May 17, 2025.

Discussion Posts-(15%): Each student is expected to participate in course discussion board posts. The discussion question will come from the lectures. You are expected to reply and respond to discussion questions assigned to each module. There are 5 required posts; each post must be a minimum of 150 words in length. **(Due: Varies by module)**

Please note responses are graded based on:

- Historical content incorporated
- Ability to critically engage the material & support argument with, evidence, facts & contemporary examples
- Response to at least TWO of your classmates' discussion posts

Research proposal & paper (25%): (PLEASE READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY!)

1. Proposal - 10%: Select a topic and ask a research question related to some aspect of the African American Studies. The proposal must include a.) tentative title, b.) a clear research question, c.) an outline, d.) bibliography with no fewer than five references – **only scholarly books and journal articles will be accepted.**

The finished product should consist of 300-600 words. (You may not change your topic unless you submit a new proposal and get clearance from the instructor) **(Due:)**

2. Paper- 15%: Research and write an informative and organized 1500-1800 word essay- not including the references. The final paper must include a cover sheet and no fewer than 6 references. Your paper will not be accepted if you have not turned in a satisfactory proposal. **(Date: 2025)**

Learning in Action: Social-Community Responsibility Project (20%) (1500-1800 words)

Virtual Online Research Paper Presentation- 20%:

Beginning on,(Dates TBA) each student must give an approximately 8-10 minute presentation. The presentation can be an oral submission or a power point presentation. In the presentation, describe your research topic, explain its significance to the discipline of African American Studies, provide a literature review, and explain the methods you used to acquire and analyze your sources. We will go in alphabetical order and you will receive a zero if you are not prepared to give your presentation when your time has arrived. (Date: TBA)**(Due:)**

Final Exam- (15%) Exam will assess your knowledge of the material engaged over the semester.
(Due: TBA)

Note: More specific guidelines for writing assignments will be given as their due dates approach.

Make-up exams will be permitted ONLY at the instructor's discretion

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.

Course Policies:(Policies adapted from <http://ufonline.ufl.edu/academics/>)

You should expect to devote as much time to this class as traditional on-campus students spend on their course work. This means that in addition to time spent on Canvas participating in online activities, students should expect to spend at least 3 hours of study time per credit hour per week. This includes reading materials (textbooks, eTexts, etc.), problem sets, researching and writing papers, and other assignments from your course instructor.

There are also documentaries and films that accompany each weekly module. It is imperative that you view this material as students will be tested on this information too.

Attendance Policy: While you have the flexibility to "attend" class whenever you have time, **I encourage you to log in daily as well as sign up to receive Notifications from Canvas** to ensure you stay abreast of all due dates and changes to the course.

Communication: Contact me through Canvas. I do my best to respond to your comments/emails in a timely manner during business hours (evenings are excluded). ***Allow 24 hours*** during the week for a response to course concerns/emails. ***Weekends, I do not check email, so it is imperative that you submit any questions to me before noon on Fridays.***

Written work format and submission: (PLEASE READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY)

All assignments should be

- Written in standard English and demonstrate competence of grammar, sentence structure, and paragraph structure
- Typed, double-spaced with Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, 1" margins
- Information with your name, date, and course should be in the top corner, single-spaced, on the first page only **or** on a cover page
- **All work must be properly documented. Students may use APA, MLA, or Turabian.**

I will provide feedback on all written assignments; these comments are intended to **strengthen** your writing skills. They should be taken as constructive feedback, as I am evaluating clarity, content, structure, and sources. **(RECEIVING FEEDBACK FROM ME DOES NOT MEAN THAT YOUR GRADE OR GPA WILL BE LOWERED.)**

Five Short Papers

Write a one to two page paper on the five topics below. In the paper summarize the main points the paper. Critique the methodology and explain why you think this method was successful. Your paper will be graded on the basis of your knowledge of the video and the author(s) support argument. Your analysis should examine how these data have affected African American Studies and people of African descent socially.

The first paper is due: () Write a 1 page paper on Film "Timbuktu Saving the World's Oldest Library." (Look up the video or you can research the topic for your paper.)

The second paper is due: (.) Write a 1 page paper on the Film "The United Daughters of the Confederacy." (Look up the video or you can research the topic for your paper.)

The third paper is due: (.) (Racial injustice and police brutality) Write a 1 page paper on the Film "The Ocoee Massacre: The Truth Laid Bare". (Look up the video or you can research the topic for your paper.)

The fourth paper is due: (.) Write a 1 page paper the Film "The Lynching of Henry 'Peg' Gilbert" (Look up the video or you can research the topic for your paper.)

The Fifth paper is due: () Write a paper on the Film "The Black Panther Party's 10 Point Program", (Look up the video or you can research the topic for your paper.)

Gordon Rule: "The Writing Requirement (Gordon Rule) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning." This is a Gordon Rule course with a 4000-word minimum writing requirement. Your writing will be evaluated and you will receive feedback on assignments that are intended to fulfill this writing requirement. You will be evaluated based on grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.

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

Policy on late/make-up work: Given the brevity of the term and the fact that all assignments are known well in advance, **LATE WORK IS NOT ACCEPTED UNLESS THERE ARE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES** (i.e. death of a close family member or hospitalization). Documentation will be required to prove those circumstances.

Academic Honesty: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Conduct Code](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

Extra Credit Policy: Extra Credit opportunities are offered during the semester at the instructor’s discretion. Reference course modules for specific activities. All extra points earned will be added to a grade the lecturer selects at the end of the term.

Accommodations: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access

GatorEvals:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluer.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

Campus Resources:

- *Counseling and Wellness Center:* [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center:* Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *Library Support:* Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- *Teaching Center:* Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- *Writing Studio:* 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Course Expectations and Etiquette:

Courteous and appropriate behavior is expected. Therefore, please be mindful that we are dealing with material that may be sensitive in terms of race, gender, class, sexuality, violence, and/or political perspective.

By remaining enrolled in the course, you are agreeing to complete all assignments and participate during discussions.

PLEASE KEEP THE DIALOG RESPECTFUL AND RELEVANT. I encourage students to keep an open mind, and I expect you to **COMMUNICATE YOUR IDEAS WITHOUT HARSHLY OFFENDING YOUR PEERS. ALL ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES WILL BE RESPECTED BY THE INSTRUCTOR AND BY ALL CLASS MEMBERS AT ALL TIMES.**

Module/Weekly Course Outline:
See Assignments, Posts and Discussion Board Posts on Canvas.

Module/Week 1: Introduction to PTSS and Historical Foundations

Lecture: Defining Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: Origins, Scope, and Key Concepts

Reading: Prologue, Introduction, Chapter 1 ("I Don't Even Notice Race")

Discussion Questions:

1. How does DeGruy frame the "triple mission" (cultural grounding, academic excellence, social responsibility) in confronting slavery's legacy?
2. Analyze the significance of dismissing race-awareness ("I don't even notice race") as a barrier to addressing PTSS.
3. Why is historical context essential for understanding contemporary African American experiences?

Module/Week 2: Dehumanization and Its Legacy

Lecture: From "Whole to Three-Fifths": Systems of Dehumanization in Slavery

Reading: Chapter 2 (Whole to Three-Fifths: Dehumanization)

Discussion Questions:

1. How did pseudoscientific racism (e.g., phrenology) legitimize chattel slavery's brutality?
2. Discuss the psychological impact of legally classifying humans as property.
3. In what ways do modern institutions perpetuate dehumanizing frameworks?

Module/Week 3: Crimes Against Humanity

Lecture: Slavery as a Sustained Human Rights Violation

Reading: Chapter 3 (Crimes Against Humanity)

Discussion Questions:

1. Compare slavery's atrocities to modern human rights standards (e.g., UN definitions).
2. How did slave codes weaponize law to enforce racial hierarchy?
3. Why is acknowledging slavery as a "crime against humanity" critical for reparative justice?

Module/Week 4: Defining PTSS and the M.A.P. Model

Lecture: Multigenerational Trauma, Absence of Opportunity, and PTSS

Reading: Chapter 4 (Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome)

Discussion Questions:

1. Explain the M.A.P. acronym (Multigenerational trauma + Absence of opportunity → PTSS).
2. How does PTSS differ from PTSD in etiology and manifestation?
3. Discuss how PTSS reframes "adaptive" survival behaviors (e.g., hypervigilance) as trauma responses.

Module/Week 5: Slavery's Children – Intergenerational Trauma

Lecture: Family Structures, Cultural Disruption, and Identity Formation

Reading: Chapter 5 (Slavery's Children)

Discussion Questions:

1. How did slavery fracture African kinship systems and communal values?
2. Analyze "learned helplessness" as a consequence of systemic disenfranchisement.
3. In what ways do cultural traditions (e.g., storytelling) resist intergenerational trauma?

Module/Week 6: Key Pattern 1 – Vacant Esteem

Lecture: Self-Worth, Depression, and Self-Destructive Behaviors

Reading: Chapter 5 (Slavery's Children – cont.) + PTSS Key Patterns section

Discussion Questions:

1. Define "vacant esteem" and its link to internalized oppression.
2. How do educational inequities perpetuate cycles of diminished self-worth?
3. Identify community-driven strategies to rebuild primary esteem.

Module/Week 7: Key Pattern 2 – Anger and Violence

Lecture: Structural Rage, Suspicion, and Community Violence

Reading: PTSS Key Patterns section (Marked Propensity for Anger and Violence)

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is anger a "rational" response to oppression, per DeGruy?
2. Discuss the connection between systemic neglect (e.g., food deserts) and violence.
3. How can trauma-informed interventions redirect anger into advocacy?

Module/Week 8: Key Pattern 3 – Internalized Racism

Lecture: Self-Hatred, Colorism, and Cultural Aversion

Reading: PTSS Key Patterns section (Racist Socialization/Internalized Racism)

Discussion Questions:

1. How does internalized racism manifest in beauty standards or intra-community bias?
2. Analyze "literacy deprivation" as a tool of cultural erasure.
3. What role does re-education play in dismantling internalized racism?

Module/Week 9: Adaptive Behaviors – Survival vs. Maladaptation

Lecture: Coping Mechanisms Across Generations

Reading: Chapter 6 (Healing) – Adaptive Behaviors section

Discussion Questions:

1. Contrast "positive" (e.g., communal care) and "negative" (e.g., respectability politics) adaptations.
2. How did coded spirituals or quilts serve as resistance tools?
3. Why must healing address both historical and contemporary traumas?

Module/Week 10: Healing Frameworks – Individual and Collective

Lecture: Culturally Grounded Therapy and Community Restoration

Reading: Chapter 6 (Healing) – Strategies section

Discussion Questions:

1. Evaluate "Ubuntu" ("I am because we are") as a healing philosophy.
2. How can truth-telling initiatives (e.g., Tulsa reparations) foster collective recovery?
3. Discuss barriers to accessing mental health resources in Black communities.

Module/Week 11: Institutional Complicity and Accountability

Lecture: Education, Policy, and the Role of Allyship

Reading: Epilogue + Study Guide (Institutional Transformation)

Discussion Questions:

1. How do schools/media perpetuate PTSS through Eurocentric curricula?
2. What policy reforms (e.g., reparations, anti-redlining) address "absence of opportunity"?
3. Define meaningful allyship beyond performative gestures.

Module/Week 12: Resilience and Cultural Reclamation

Lecture: Art, Spirituality, and Oral Traditions as Resistance

Reading: Study Guide (Cultural Strengths)

Discussion Questions:

1. How do African cosmologies (e.g., ancestor veneration) support resilience?
2. Analyze hip-hop or Black literature as modern-day griot traditions.
3. Why is cultural reclamation a political act?

Module/Week 13: Case Studies – PTSS in Practice

Lecture: Mass Incarceration, Health Disparities, and Wealth Gaps

Reading: Study Guide (Applied Analysis)

Discussion Questions:

1. Connect PTSS to racial disparities in maternal mortality or COVID-19 outcomes.
2. How does the "school-to-prison pipeline" reflect multigenerational trauma?
3. Propose solutions using DeGruy's healing framework.

Module/Week 14: Global Black Trauma and Solidarity

Lecture: Diasporic Connections – From Brazil to the Caribbean

Reading: Study Guide (Global Perspectives)

Discussion Questions:

1. Compare PTSS to post-colonial trauma in Haiti or Jamaica.
2. How does Pan-Africanism offer a counter-narrative to internalized racism?
3. Discuss transnational healing movements (e.g., CARICOM reparations).

Module/Week 15: Student-Led Healing Workshops

Lecture: Designing Community Action Plans

Reading: Study Guide (Practical Tools)

Discussion Questions:

1. Share peer proposals for PTSS-informed school/workplace interventions.
2. Role-play: Facilitate a dialogue on internalized racism using DeGruy's techniques.
3. How can art/music therapy transform vacant esteem?

Module/Week 16: Final Projects – Advocacy and Restitution

Lecture: Presenting Policy Briefs, Art, or Healing Initiatives

Reading: Epilogue + Key Takeaways

Discussion Questions:

1. Defend your project's alignment with PTSS healing principles.
2. How can your work advance institutional restitution?
3. Reflect: What does "social responsibility" demand of PTSS-aware citizens?

Key Features:

- Integrates all PTSS pillars: M (Multigenerational trauma), A (Absence of opportunity), P (PTSS).
- Uses the Study Guide for applied analysis (Weeks 9–16).
- Discussion questions emphasize critical self-reflection, historical reckoning, and actionable healing.
- Final project (Week 16) translates theory into advocacy.

"Healing requires replacing maladaptive behaviors with ones that sustain advancement."

— Joy DeGruy, PTSS (Epilogue)

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