

**AFA 4936 African American Studies Senior Integrative Seminar**  
Spring 2025  
African American Studies Program – University of Florida  
Dr. Alyssa Cole

**Class Days/Time:** M.W.F. 12:50 – 1:40

**Class Location:** WEIL 0273

**Office Hours:** MW 9:30-10:30 & by appointment

**Email:** cole.alyssa@ku.edu

**Office:** 1012D Turlington

**Course Description:**

This course fulfills the requirement for minors and majors in African American Studies. Students must complete papers, and research, design, and develop significant research projects. The course seeks to enhance students' ability to apply concepts, methodology, and theories from multiple disciplines in examining the issues, problems, and experiences of people of African descent in the Americas. Students will develop major research projects on key themes or topics in African American Studies through readings, literature reviews, and class discussions. Additionally, students will engage with experts across the UF community in professional development workshops.

**Course Objectives:**

1. Describe major themes in African American Studies
2. Interpret documents and other forms of evidence
3. Formulate and support research questions
4. Employ multiple forms of evidence and articulate a well-structured argument
5. Conduct original research and develop a substantial research project/paper
6. Engage in an ongoing process of writing and revision and report orally on research

**Required Books:**

Research Methods in Africana Studies, Serie McDougal.

**Requirements and Evaluation of Grades:**

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Due Dates</u>	<u>Points</u>
Research Project Proposal	1/30	150
Journals		250
Literature Review	2/21	150
Participation		250
Final Research Project	4/28	<u>250</u>
		1050

<b>GRADE/POINT SCALE</b> Grading Scale Score	Percent	Grade	Grade Points
934-1000	93.4-100	A	4.00
900-933	90.0-93.3	A-	3.67
867-899	86.7-89.9	B+	3.33
834-866	83.4-86.6	B	3.00
800-833	80.0-83.3	B-	2.67
767-799	76.7-79.9	C+	2.33
734-766	73.4-76.6	C	2.00
700-733	70.0-73.3	C-	1.67
667-699	66.7-69.9	D+	1.33
634-666	63.4-66.6	D	1.00
600-633	60.0-63.3	D-	0.67
0-599	0-59.9	E	0.00

## **REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION**

**Any use of generative AI in any of your work will result in an automatic failure of the assignment and a report to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.**

<https://policy.ufl.edu/regulation/4-040/>

**Attendance and Class Participation:** Students are expected to attend all classes. Absences count from the first class meeting. The university recognizes the right of the instructor to make attendance mandatory and require documentation for absences (except for religious holidays), missed work, or inability to fully engage in class. After due warning, an instructor can prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade for excessive absences. <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Following two **unexcused** absences, each subsequent absence will result in a letter grade deduction from your final grade.

Students are expected to participate in each class. This includes discussions of readings, in-class work, and class visits to various campus programs. A participation rubric is included at the end of the syllabus.

**Research Project Proposal:** This assignment asks you to produce a formal proposal of at least 1200 words describing the research project you intend to pursue. **Paper format:** 1200 +words; double spaced; separate title page including name, title, and date; page numbers; in---Chicago Manual of Style citations and footnotes; 1” margins; visual evidence (as appropriate) with captions. **Grading:** Anyone who receives a grade below a B **must** resubmit this assignment one week after feedback is provided. Anyone who receives below an A has the choice to resubmit for a higher grade.

As a part of your proposal, **you must submit a content advisor form.** Identify a content advisor in African American Studies or affiliated departments/programs who can assist in reviewing the content you produce for your project. You must receive verbal approval from

me prior to asking your advisor to advise on your project. Your advisor must agree to advise your project, sign the form provided to you in class, and review your project prior to final submission. The content advisor form is worth 5% of your proposal grade. Additional details will be provided in class. **Proposal due January 30, 2025 by 11:59pm.**

**Book Reports:** Throughout the semester, each student will be assigned a section of our required reading to report on during class discussion. Each student should come to class with three prepared questions on that day's reading. The discussion leader will present for 10-15 minutes, which will be followed by classroom discussion. Below are additional details.

Included in your participation grade will be a presentation of an assigned chapter during the semester. This presentation will comprise 5% of your participation grade. Your presentation should include the following elements:

1. Brief introduction of the author
2. Synopsis of the chapter/assigned reading, including the author's argument
3. 4 discussion questions to pose to the class
4. A visual element - Canva, powerpoint, google slides, etc.

**Literature Review:** A literature review is a comprehensive survey of scholarly sources on a specific topic. It provides an overview of current knowledge, including substantive findings as well as theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic. It should critically evaluate and compare published material on your chosen topic in African American Studies. Place these works in conversation with one another, identifying their similarities or differences. You should evaluate how each author addresses your topic, how they fit into the larger field of African American Studies, and if they offer any suggestions for future research on the topic. Identify trends or gaps in the literature and elaborate on how these works provide context for your research project. Additional information and handouts will be provided in class. **Your literature review is due on February 21 by 11:59 pm on Canvas.**

**Research Project:** A Senior Seminar Research Project is a culminating academic endeavor that allows students to delve deeply into a specific problem or area of interest. This project is designed to demonstrate the integration and application of knowledge and skills acquired throughout their educational journey. Students are expected to:

- **Identify and investigate a unique problem or topic:** This involves selecting a subject that is both meaningful and challenging.
- **Showcase mastery of program goals:** Students must display a thorough understanding of the core objectives of their academic program.

- **Conduct comprehensive research:** This includes gathering and analyzing relevant information to support their project.
- **Synthesize and apply learned skills:** The project should reflect the culmination of the student’s learning experience, integrating various skills and knowledge areas.

The capstone project is an opportunity for students to demonstrate their academic growth, critical thinking, and ability to conduct independent research. It often involves a written report, presentation, or practical application, depending on your discipline.

As a part of your final project, you are required to make an appointment with the UF Writing Studio to review your final project draft. Please provide documentation once you have completed this aspect of your project. UF Writing Program Appointments should take place anytime between March 24 and April 12. April 12 is the last day you can submit your writing studio notes for credit. Contact the writing center early to schedule your appointment.

<https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/for-students/schedule-an-appointment/>

Additional details will be provided in class. Your project is due on **April 28 by 11:59pm.**

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Week 1:**

Monday, January 13: Introduction to Course, Syllabus

Wednesday, January 15: Reading – Research Methods in Africana Studies, Preface – Chapter 1

Friday, January 17: Journal 1 Research due by 11:59pm.

### **Week 2:**

Monday, January 20: Holiday – NO CLASS

Wednesday, January 22: Research Methods in Africana Studies, Chapter 2

Friday, January 24: Journal 2 Research due by 11:59pm.

### **Week 3:**

Monday, January 27: Reading: “The Idea of Black Sociology: Its Cultural and Political Significance” by Wilbur Watson – Article located on Canvas.

Wednesday, January 29: Research Methods in Africana Studies, Chapter 3

Friday, January 31: Journal 3 Research due by 11:59pm.

### **Week 4:**

Monday, February 3: Research Methods in Africana Studies, Chapter 4

Wednesday, February 5: “Black History Is American History: Teaching African American History in the Twenty First Century” by Allison Dorsey – Article located on Canvas

Friday, February 7: Journal 4 Research due by 11:59pm

**Week 5:**

Monday, February 10: Research Methods in Africana Studies, Chapter 5

Wednesday, February 12: Reading: “African American Anthropology and the Pedagogy of Activist Community Research” by Cheryl Rodriguez – Reading located on Canvas.

Friday, February 14: Meet in AFA Conference Room – Turlington 1012. Annual Douglass Day Transcription event. Journal 5 due by 11:59pm

**Week 6:**

Monday, February 17: Research Methods in Africana Studies, Chapter 6

Wednesday, February 19: Reading – “Doing a Literature Review” by Jeffrey Knopf – Reading located on Canvas.

Friday, February 21: **Journal 6 due by 11:59pm – Literature Review due by 11:59pm.**

**Week 7:**

Monday, February 24: Research Methods in Africana Studies, Chapter 7, Research project class update and check in.

Wednesday, February 26: “The African-American Legacy in American Literature” by Abu Abarry – Reading located in Canvas.

Friday, February 28: Journal 7 due by 11:59pm

**Week 8:**

Monday, March 3: “Dear political science: tools for the study of black (life and)politics” by Elizabeth Jordie Davies – Reading located on Canvas.

Wednesday, March 5: Research Methods in Africana Studies, Chapter 8

Friday, March 7: Journal 8 due by 11:59pm.

**Week 9**

Monday, March 10: Research Methods in Africana Studies, Chapter 9

Wednesday, March 12: “Introduction: Wild Seed in the Machine” by Neal Johnson – Reading located on Canvas.

Friday, March 14: Journal 9 due by 11:59pm.

**Week 10:**

Monday, March 24: Research Methods in Africana Studies, Chapter 10

Wednesday, March 26: No Class

Friday, March 28: Journal 10 due by 11:59pm.

**Week 11:**

Monday, March 31: “Making the Case for the Black Digital Humanities” by Gallon – Reading located on Canvas.

Wednesday, April 2: Research Methods in Africana Studies, Chapter 11, Research project updates.

Friday, April 4: Independent Research

**Week 12:**

Monday, April 7: “Black studies and/as media theory: A conversation with Armond Towns” by Russill C. Towns – Reading located on Canvas.

Wednesday, April 9: Research Methods in Africana Studies, Chapter 12

Friday, April 11: Independent Research

**Week 13:**

Monday, April 14: Final Presentations

Wednesday, April 16: Final Presentations

Friday, April 18: Independent Research

**Week 14:**

Monday, April 21: Final Presentations

Wednesday, April 23: Final Presentations

**Final Due April 28, 2025 by 11:59pm.**

**Course Policies**

**ATTENDANCE POLICY** (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>)  
“Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Absences count from the first class meeting.” Please see the UF policies on acceptable reasons for absences and UF’s Illness Policies

(<https://shcc.ufl.edu/forms-records/excuse-notes/>). “The university recognizes the right of the instructor to ... require documentation for absences (except for religious holidays), missed work, or inability to fully engage in class.”

I will provide make-up work for documented and approved absences, usually to be completed within one week of the missed assignment.

Missed work due to technology problems will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, but completing work at least one hour before the deadline is the best way to accommodate challenges.

For issues with technical difficulties for Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (<https://it.ufl.edu/helpdesk/>)

- (352) 392-HELP (4357)
- [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)
- Walk-in: The Hub, 1765 Stadium Road

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Communication: Please allow up to 48 hours for a response to your email, excluding weekends and holidays.

UF POLICIES:

**UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

Students

with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. To get started with the Disability Resource Center: <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

**UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS:** 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.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

**UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC CONDUCT:** 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. UF’s Conduct Code: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/> . If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

**AI USE POLICY:** AI-generated content for this class refers to text generated by artificial intelligence in response to your prompting. Students are **NOT ALLOWED** to use AI-generated content in their discussion posts or reply posts for their journal entries, primary source analyses, essays, final, or any additional written assignment. Use of AI-generated content is considered to be in violation of UF’s Academic Conduct policy.

**CLASS DEMEANOR:** All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats, and in person discussions.

## **CAMPUS RESOURCES:**

### **Health and Wellness**

**U Matter, We Care:** If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

**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.

**University Police Department:** Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

**UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:** For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

**GatorWell Health Promotion Services:** For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.



## Academic Resources

**E-learning technical support:** Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392- 1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

**Library Support:** Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call 866-281-6309 or email [ask@ufl.libanswers.com](mailto:ask@ufl.libanswers.com) for more information.

**Teaching Center:** 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

**Writing Studio:** Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

**Academic Complaints:** Office of the Ombuds; Visit the Complaint Portal webpage for more information.

**Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions):** View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage for more information.

## Rubric for Assessing Student Participation

	<b>Exemplary (90%- 100%)</b>	<b>Proficient (80%-90%)</b>	<b>Developing (70%-80%)</b>	<b>Unacceptable (&lt;70%)</b>
<b>Frequency of participation in class</b>	Student initiates contributions more than once in each recitation.	Student initiates contribution once in each recitation.	Student initiates contribution at least in half of the recitations	Student does not initiate contribution & needs instructor to solicit input.
<b>Quality of comments</b>	Comments always insightful & constructive; uses appropriate terminology. Comments balanced between general impressions, opinions & specific, thoughtful criticisms or contributions.	Comments mostly insightful & constructive; mostly uses appropriate terminology. Occasionally comments are too general or not relevant to the discussion.	Comments are sometimes constructive, with occasional signs of insight. Student does not use appropriate terminology; comments not always relevant to the discussion.	Comments are uninformative, lacking in appropriate terminology. Heavy reliance on opinion & personal taste, e.g., "I love it", "I hate it", "It's bad" etc.
<b>Listening Skills</b>	Student listens attentively when others present materials, perspectives, as indicated by comments that build on others' remarks, i.e., student hears what others say & contributes to the dialogue.	Student is mostly attentive when others present ideas, materials, as indicated by comments that reflect & build on others' remarks. Occasionally needs encouragement or reminder from T.A of focus of comment.	Student is often inattentive and needs reminder of focus of class. Occasionally makes disruptive comments while others are speaking.	Does not listen to others; regularly talks while others speak or does not pay attention while others speak; detracts from discussion; sleeps, etc.

