

The Wire

AFA 3930 – Section 12B5 – Spring 2020
African American Studies Program – The University of Florida
Dr. Vincent Adejumo- Lecturer

Classroom Days: Tue	Office: Walker Hall
Class Webinar Period: Thurs	Building: Online
Class Time: Tues 10:40 AM – 11:30 AM Thurs 10:40 am – 12:35 pm	Phone: 352-392-0936
Office Hours: Tuesday 12 PM – 3 PM	Email: vadejumo3@ufl.edu
Credits: (03) Three Hours	Skype: vadejumo3
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Catalog Description

An integrated interdisciplinary study of the award-winning HBO series, *The Wire*, including examination of themes such as education, politics, sexuality, race, and criminality.

Course Description

In America today, there are many large urban municipalities that have experienced substantial transformation over time which in turn has affected different populations and institutions within their communities. *The Wire* is an American drama produced by HBO that chronicles the after effects of such transformation in the city of Baltimore. This course will critically examine various themes that are presented in the show as well as academic research and theories that correlates with those themes. Major topics that will be examined in both the show and correlating academic research include the illegal drug trade, race and ethnicity, sexuality, public policy and politics, K-12 education, and the news media. Each reading that is assigned throughout the course will contain theories from multiple disciplines which includes political science, sociology, African American studies, gender studies, and education.

Course Objectives

Students will 1) obtain a general introduction to various institutions in an urban setting 2) Identify theories and theorists that address various themes presented in the show and academic research 3) demonstrate an understanding of basic concepts common in discourse about urban education, politics, crime, and sexuality 4) be able to summarize a general overview of themes related to the academic research presented in the course within the context of African American culture 5) Explain some of the contemporary socio-cultural issues that are present in the show from a social science perspective.

Webinar Lectures

“The Wire” is taught in a synchronous online format which means you are required to view with a web camera the lectures LIVE online on Tuesday 10:40 AM to 11:30 AM and/or on Thursday

from 10:40 AM to 12:35 PM. The days in which Dr. Adejumo will be in the classroom or online is indicated in the specific schedule below. An invitation will be sent each Tuesday and/or Thursday before class starts to view the lectures. For attendance to count I will need to see your face via web cam for the entire lecture. Failure to do so will result in a significant impact for your participation grade. Please see the attendance policy for additional details.

Disability Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

Requirements and Evaluation

Module Discussion responses 25%

In each 2-week module, students will be expected to develop a critical analysis to the weekly discussion board question. Each discussion question will be a topic developed from the selected readings/videos in the module. In answering the question in an initial response, students will identify theories and concepts that are in the selected readings/episodes and explain why those theories and concepts answer the question.

In the first 5 modules, which focuses on the selected articles and *The Wire* episodes, students will be expected to develop a critical analysis to the weekly discussion board questions. Each discussion question will be a topic developed from the selected chapters in the module. In answering the question in an initial response, students will identify theories and concepts that are in the selected readings/episodes and explain why those theories and concepts answer the question.

Each initial response to the question will be 2 pages (350 words) in length, double spaced, 12-point font and includes at least 2 citations from the selected readings and 2 citations from the selected episodes. After the initial response to the question is posted, students will respond to at least 2 different initial responses of their classmates in at least 250 or more words using readings for that week and will be due the Saturday of Each Module!! Initial responses will be due on

Fridays at 11:00 PM of the week and response to peers will be due Saturdays at 11:00 PM of the week.

Each initial response to the question in modules 6 and 7 will be 2 pages 500 words in length, double spaced, 12-point font and includes at least *3 citations from selected readings!* Initial 2 page 500 word responses will be due on the Friday 11 PM of the first week of each module and will be graded on a 100-point scale. See the grading rubric for the discussion question on Canvas.

After the initial response to the question is posted, students will respond to at least 2 different initial responses of their classmates in at least 350 or more words using readings for that week and will be due the Saturday of each module. Failure to post initial 2-page double spaced response by 11:00 PM on Friday will result in a half grade deduction for the assignment. Failure to post 2 rebuttal statements by 11:00 PM by Saturday will also result in a half grade deduction for the assignment.

Failure to complete both tasks in the allotted time frame will result in a zero for the assignment unless there is an acceptable reason. Acceptable reasons for missing an assignment include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved at the discretion of Dr. Adejumo.

Module Quizzes

25%

In the first 5 modules, students will be expected to demonstrate mastery of the material for the module via a multiple choice quiz during the third week of the Module. The allotted time for the quiz is 30 minutes and can be started at anytime from noon Monday of the second week of the module until Sunday Night 11 PM. Failure to complete the quiz by 11:00 PM Sunday Night will result in a zero for the assignment unless there is an acceptable reason. Acceptable reasons for missing an assignment include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved at the discretion of Dr. Adejumo.

Final Project

25%

The final project will require students to choose 1 exercise from the following list below:

1. Interview at least 5 students about their perceptions/experiences of politics, sexuality, education, and the media based on the plot lines in the show themes in the readings. Your final packet will entail at-least 5 informed consents, New Protocol submission form (I am

the principle investigator), the 10 question questionnaire, and a 1,200-word paper in either APA, MLA, or Chicago style format that synthesizes the perceptions/experiences of the participants of black individuals with at least five peer-reviewed sources that is presented in the course.

2. Create a musical/spoken word album of at least 13 tracks that focuses on the contemporary issues of politics, education, sexuality, and the media based on plot lines in the show and themes in the readings. In addition to the album, you will submit a 1,200-word paper in either APA, MLA, or Chicago style format that synthesizes the contemporary issues of black masculinity that is present in the album with at least five peer-reviewed sources that is presented in the course.
3. Create a WordPress blog or Facebook profile with at least 10 separate entries spanning 10 weeks that highlight 10 episodes from the show and focus on specific theme that is present not only in the show but also in the academic research. Include a picture or screen cap from a specific moment in the show, a brief background summary, and a lengthy entry as to how the theme is presented in the show, in the academic research, and how it relates to society today. Each entry should be at least 300 words. In addition to the WordPress Blog, you will submit a 1,200-word paper in either APA, MLA, or Chicago style format that synthesizes the information in the WordPress blogs with at least five peer-reviewed sources that is presented in the course.
4. Create a professional poster board with a dimension of at least 42X63 using visual and textual content presented in the show and selected readings. The content should be presented in story form to effectively chronical the information. In addition to the professional poster board, you will submit a 1,200-word paper in either APA, MLA, or Chicago style format that synthesizes the information in the poster board with at least five peer-reviewed sources that is presented in the course.
5. Create a 15-minute movie loosely based on the figures and themes that are presented in the show and academic readings. In addition to the 15-minute movie, you will submit a 1,200-word paper in either APA, MLA, or Chicago style format that synthesizes the information in the movie with at least five peer-reviewed sources that is presented in the course.
6. Create an alternative ending for one of the main characters of The Wire. The story must be at least 8 pages and include at least 6 references from the academic material (Articles/Books) that are presented in the course.

Create-an-Episode Group Project

25%

Each group will create an episode via a 15 slide Powerpoint based on the themes in the show that relate to current events today. So for example, the death of Freddie Gray may relate to the theme of police brutality in the show so that episode will encompass facts from the case as well as examples of police brutality in the show. Your group can also use material from a reputable news organization or academic website to bolster your episode. The episode must be clear, concise,

and at least 15 Powerpoint slides containing a brief introduction and at least two main points from a combination of material that is presented in the course.

Requirements and Evaluation at a Glance

1. Module Quizzes	25%
2. Module Discussion Responses	25%
3. Final Project	25%
4. Lead Discussion	25%

Grading Scale

94% - 100% = A, 90% - 93% = A-, 87% - 89% = B+, 83% - 86% = B, 80% - 82% = B-, 77% - 79% = C+, 73% - 76% = C, 70% - 72% = C-, 67% - 69% = D+, 63% - 66% = D, 60% - 62% = D-, 59% and below = F

Presentation of Work

All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced using Times Roman 12-point font in MS Word with 250 words per page. You must use a standard **one-inch** margin – no **Bold-faced** or large fonts. Use the style APA, MLA or Chicago that is used in your academic discipline. All pages should be numbered. Do not include a cover sheet. Put identifying information in the top, right corner, single spaced. The assignment title or paper title may be centered.

University of Florida Honor Code

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University of Florida's Student Honor Code and Code of Conduct. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work. Do not plagiarize. All work must be cited. Students suspected of academic dishonesty or of violating the Honor Code will be reported to the Dean of Students Office. To learn more about the UF policy regarding Academic Honesty, please visit:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php>

Evaluation of all Assignments Criteria

1) Quality, scope and organization of documentation; 2) Clarity and coherence of expression; 3) Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation; 4) Quality of critical analysis; 5) Demonstration of an understanding of information and concepts addressed in the readings and/or discussed in class; 6) Following directions and completing assignments on time. See Grading rubric for specified distribution of points. *UF has an online writing for students Visit their site at*

<http://web.cwoc.ufl.edu/owl>

Required Books and Materials

The Wire and Philosophy: This America, Man (Popular Culture and Philosophy)
ISBN-10: 0812698231 ISBN-13: 978-0812698237

The Wire: The Complete Series: Can order the complete DVD boxset or stream via Amazon Prime or HBO GO.

Required Articles

Richardson, Joseph, and Christopher St. Vil. “Putting in Work: Black Male Youth Joblessness, Violence, Crime, and the Code of the Street.” *Spectrum: A Journal on Black Men*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2015, pp. 71–98.

www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/spectrum.3.2.71.

Chaddha, Anmol, and William Julius Wilson. “‘Way Down in the Hole’: Systemic Urban Inequality and *The Wire*.” *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2011, pp. 164–188. www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/661647.

Covert, Bryce. “The Economic Devastation Fueling The Anger In Baltimore”

Wallach, Lori “NAFTA at 20: One Million U.S. Jobs Lost, Higher Income Inequality”

Discoverthenetworks.org “Baltimore’s Decline”

Caraley, Demetrios. “Washington Abandons the Cities.” *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 107, no. 1, 1992, pp. 1–30. www.jstor.org/stable/2152132.

Black students' school success: Coping with the "burden of acting White."
Fordham, Signithia; Ogbu, John U. *The Urban Review*, Vol 18(3), 1986, 176-206. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/BF01112192>

Wilson, William Julius. “The Obama Administration's Proposals to Address Concentrated Urban Poverty” © 2010 American Sociological Association, *Harvard University* DOI: [10.1111/j.1540-6040.2009.01315.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6040.2009.01315.x)

Hurley, R. J., Jensen, J. J., Weaver, A., & Dixon, T. (2015). *Viewer Ethnicity Matters: Black Crime in TV News and Its Impact on Decisions Regarding Public Policy*. *Journal of Social Issues*, 71(1), 155-170. DOI: [10.1111/josi.12102](https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12102)

McCoy, Terrance. “Baltimore riots ‘Hero Mom’ struggling despite sudden fame”
Copyright © 2015, Chicago Tribune

Attendance Policy

Attendance via Web Cam for *The Wire* Course is **mandatory**! Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by Dr. Adejumo. Absences count from the first class meeting. In general, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class via web cam include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, and professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from the webinar lectures for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Three or more unexcused absences in the course can result in a drop in grade at the discretion of Dr. Adejumo.

The Wire Course Outline

Content/Meeting time subject to change at Dr. Adejumo's discretion

Module 1- I got that work (January 7th – January 26th)

Date	Webinar Lecture	Readings Due	Assignment Due	Episodes due	In class/Online
January 7th	Syllabus				In class
January 9th	Episode			Season 1: Episode 1	In class
January 14th	Inequality	Systematic Urban Inequality and the Wire		Season 1: Episode 2 -4	In class
January 16th	Inequality			Season 1: Episode 5 - 8	Online
January 17th			<i>Discussion 1</i>		
January 18th			<i>Rebuttal</i>		
January 21st	Put in Work	Putting in Work: Black Male Youth Joblessness, Violence, Crime, and the Code of the Street		Season 1: Episode 9 -11	Online
January 23rd	Put in Work			Season 1: Episode 12 - 13	In class
January 24th			<i>Discussion 2</i>		
January 25th			<i>Rebuttal</i>		

January 26th			Quiz 1		
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Module 2- The Jolly Roger (January 27th – February 9th)

Date	Lecture	Readings Due	Assignment Due	Episodes due	In class/Online
January 28th	Baltimore	The Economic Devastation Fueling The Anger In Baltimore		Season 2: Episode 1-2	In class
January 30th	Baltimore			Season 2: Episode 3	Online
January 31st			Initial Discussion 1	Season 2: Episode 4-6	
February 1st			Rebuttal		
February 4th	Agreements	Trade Agreements and U.S. Hegemony		Season 2: Episode 7-8	In class
February 6th				Season 2: Episode 9-10	Online
February 7th			Initial Discussion 2	Season 2: Episode 11- 12	
February 8th			Rebuttal		
February 9th			Quiz 2		

Module 3- Politics as Usual (February 10th – February 23rd)

Date	Lecture	Readings Due	Assignment Due	Episodes due	In class/Online
February 11th	Bodymore, Murderland	Baltimore Decline		Season 3: Episode 1-3	In class
February 13th				Season 3: Episode 4-5	Online
February 14th			Initial Discussion	Season 3: Episode 6-8	
February 15th			Rebuttal		
February 18th	Cookie Crumble	Washington Abandons the Cities		Season 3: Episode 9-10	In Class

February 20th				Season 3: Episode 11-12	Online
February 21st			<i>Initial Discussion</i>		
February 22nd			<i>Rebuttal</i>		
February 23rd			Quiz 3		

***Module 4 Will Open a day early for Spring Break

Module 4- No Child Left Behind (February 24th – March 15th)

Date	Lecture	Readings Due	Assignment Due	Episodes due	In class/Online
February 25th	Oreo	Black Students' School Success: Coping with the "Burden of 'Acting White'		Season 4: Episode 1 - 2	In class
February 27th	Oreo			Season 4: Episode 3 - 4	Online
February 28th			<i>Initial Discussion</i>	Season 4: Episode 5 - 6	
February 28th			<i>Rebuttal</i>		
February 29 - March 7: Spring Break					
March 10th	The 'hood	The Obama Administration's Proposals to Address Concentrated Urban Poverty		Season 4: Episode 7 - 9	In class
March 12th	The 'hood			Season 4: Episode 10 - 13	Online
March 13th			<i>Rebuttal Discussion</i>		
March 14th			<i>Rebuttal</i>		
March 15th			<i>Quiz 4</i>		

Module 5- Breaking News (March 16th – March 29th)

Date	Lecture	Readings Due	Assignment Due	Episodes due	In class/Online
March 17th	Views from the 6	Viewer Ethnicity Matters: Black Crime in TV News and Its Impact on Decisions Regarding Public Policy		Season 5: Episode 1-2	In class

March 19th	Views from the 6			Season 5: Episode 3-5	Online
March 20th			<i>Initial Discussion</i>	Season 5: Episode 6-7	
March 21st			<i>Rebuttal</i>		
March 24th	The Single Parent	Baltimore Mom		Season 5: Episode 8-10	In class
March 26th					Online
March 27th			<i>Rebuttal Discussion</i>		
March 28th			<i>Rebuttal</i>		
March 29th			<i>Quiz 5</i>		

Module 6- Gamecube (March 30th – April 11th)

Date	Lecture	Readings Due	Assignment Due	In class/Online
March 31		Line 2: All in the Game		In class
April 2nd		Line 15: The Wire as American Tragedy		Online
April 3rd			<i>Initial Response Due</i>	
April 4th			<i>Rebuttals Due</i>	
April 7th		Line 6: Came to Do Good, Stayed to do Well		Online
April 9th		Line 18: Class Projects and the Project Class		In class
April 10th			<i>Initial response due</i>	
April 11th			<i>Rebuttals due</i>	

Module 7- Discretion (April 12th – December 2nd)

Date	Lecture	Readings Due	Assignment Due	Episodes due
April 14th		Line 13: Capital Noir		In class
April 16th		Line 21: Stop Snitching, Screw the system		Online
April 17th			<i>Initial Response Due</i>	
April 18th			<i>Rebuttals due</i>	
April 21st		Line 10: The Best of Boys and Lads		In class
April 21st		Line 12: Women Up in the Game		In class
April 22nd			<i>Initial Response and Rebuttals Due</i>	

April 28th			Final Project Due 11:59 PM	
April 28th			Create an Episode PowerPoint Due 11:59 PM	

Final Project and Episode Presentations

Final Project due December 2nd

Final Episode due December 3rd

Selected Websites

www.blackpast.org

<http://www.jstor.org/>

<http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/>

Access JSTOR Database

1. Go to <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/>
2. If off campus, click on Off-Campus Access link under *Services*
3. Under option 1: UF proxy service, click **Follow this link to login with the UF proxy server.**
4. Input your username and password or library card information on left
5. After successful logging in, click UF Smathers Library
6. Click on the database & Journals tab
7. Under find online databases, click databases A-Z, then type in JSTOR in the search box
8. Click on JSTOR-ALL..Website will reroute to the JSTOR website
9. Use the general or advance search option to research journal articles

Security

Remember that your password is the only thing protecting you from pranks or more serious harm.

- Don't share your password with anyone
- Change your password if you think someone else might know it
- Always logout when you are finished using the system

General Guidelines

When communicating online, you should always:

- Treat instructor with respect, even in email or in any other online communication
- Always use your professors' proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if you in doubt use Mr. or Ms.
- Unless specifically invited, don't refer to them by first name.
- Use clear and concise language
- Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar
- Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you"
- Use standard fonts such as Times New Roman and use a size 12 or 14 pt. font
- Avoid using the caps lock feature AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETTED AS YELLING

- Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons like :) or ☺
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or offensive
- Be careful with personal information (both yours and other's)
- Do not send confidential patient information via e-mail

Email Netiquette

When you send an email to your instructor, teaching assistant, or classmates, you should:

- Use a descriptive subject line
- Be brief
- Avoid attachments unless you are sure your recipients can open them
- Avoid HTML in favor of plain text
- Sign your message with your name and return e-mail address
- Think before you send the e-mail to more than one person. Does everyone really need to see your message?
- Be sure you REALLY want everyone to receive your response when you click, "reply all"
- Be sure that the message author intended for the information to be passed along before you click the "forward" button

Message Board Netiquette and Guidelines

When posting on the Discussion Board in your online class, you should:

- Make posts that are on topic and within the scope of the course material
- Take your posts seriously and review and edit your posts before sending
- Be as brief as possible while still making a thorough comment
- Always give proper credit when referencing or quoting another source
- Be sure to read all messages in a thread before replying
- Don't repeat someone else's post without adding something of your own to it
- Avoid short, generic replies such as, "I agree." You should include why you agree or add to the previous point
- Always be respectful of others' opinions even when they differ from your own
- When you disagree with someone, you should express your differing opinion in a respectful, non-critical way
- Do not make personal or insulting remarks
- Be open-minded

Course Do's and Don't's

- Do check the announcements page every Monday and Tuesday for assignment updates
- Do check syllabus page on canvas for due dates of assignments
- Do email if you have any questions or concerns regarding an assignment
- Do complete every assignment in full and on-time to increase your chance to receive maximum points on an assignment
- Don't assume if you are unsure about an assignment
- Don't request extra credit, especially if you missed or made an unsatisfactory grade on an assignment

***Explicit content is presented in the course and Dr. Adejumo will set the parameters of profane language during the first week classes. Course assignment requirements, dates, and times are subject to change at anytime at the discretion of Dr. Adejumo.