

**History 200: Historical Studies--African Diaspora Peoples and History**

**W 11:00-1:00, Humanities 5257**

**Professor: James H. Sweet**

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**Course Objectives:**

This section of Historical Studies fulfills Part B of the General Education Communication Requirement for graduation. Part B courses focus on enhancing the students' skills in research, writing, and oral communications as a primary part of the pedagogical mission of the course, and they must include a sequence of at least eight information-gathering and writing assignments that lead to the production of a total of 30 to 35 pages. They must also provide regular opportunities for individual consultation with the instructor, for receiving feedback on assignments, and for revising work. The workload is not trivial, but it is also not overwhelming; for example, the revision of a written assignment doubles the number of pages contributed by it to the ultimate total.

This course will allow students to pursue a research project of their own choosing that relates to some aspect of the history of the African diaspora. Research projects (10-15 pages) might be explicitly comparative, or might trace the movement of a particular group of African-descended peoples over time and space. Either way, in most cases, the emphasis should be on peoples rather than colonies or nation states. The only requirement will be that students choose a topic that links/compares peoples in at least two different geographic regions. Possible topics might include, but are not limited to: slavery and the slave trade, African religious forms, labor and working class history, kinship and family, gender, sexuality, language, oral tradition, resistance and rebellion, pan-Africanism, black nationalism, socialism, anti-colonial movements, and afrocentrism.

During the first half of the semester, we will read theoretical approaches to the diaspora by Colin Palmer, Paul Lovejoy, Patrick Manning, Kim Butler, Tiffany Patterson, and Robin Kelley, as well as more substantive approaches by John Thornton and Reid Andrews. We will also spend several weeks on how to create research questions and utilize primary sources. By week eleven students will be required to submit a short description of their research project, along with an annotated bibliography. During the final weeks of the semester, class discussions will center on individual problems with research, methodology, and so on. Students will make individual presentations of their research, emphasizing the paper's argument, its place in the historiography, and final conclusions. Final papers will be due on December 8, with revisions due during the exam period.

## **Procedures and Requirements:**

- 1) The course will ask you to concentrate your efforts on reading, writing, and discussion. As such, students will be expected to attend every class session and to participate actively in class discussions. Class participation and the quality of oral presentations will count 10% of your final grade.
- 2) There will be a total of six assignments over the course of the semester. These are as follows:
  - a) Paper #1 (10%)—Response to Thornton (4-6 pages)—10/13
  - b) Paper #2 (10%)—Response to Andrews (4-6 pages)—10/27
  - c) Library Assignment (5%)—Photocopy and oral report on primary source—11/3
  - d) Paper #3 (10%)—Response to book from research project (4-6 pages)—11/10
  - e) Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography (10%)—11/17
  - f) Final Revised Research Paper (45%)—12/20

## **Readings:**

The readings for the course will come from two books and a coursepack. The books are:

John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*. Cambridge, 1998.

George Reid Andrews, *Afro-Latin America*. Oxford, 2004.

Coursepack readings, in order of their assignment are:

- 1) Colin Palmer, "Defining and Studying the African Diaspora," *Perspectives* 36 (1998)
- 2) Kim D. Butler, "Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse," *Diaspora* 10 (2002): 189-219.
- 3) Patrick Manning, "Africa and the African Diaspora: New Directions of Study," *Journal of African History* 44 (2003): 487-506.
- 4) Paul Lovejoy, "The African Diaspora: Revisionist Interpretations of Ethnicity, Culture, and Religion Under Slavery," *Studies in the World History of Slavery, Abolition, and Emancipation* 1 (1997): 1-23.

5) Tiffany R. Patterson and Robin D.G. Kelley, "Unfinished Migrations: Reflections on the African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World," *African Studies Review* 43 (2000): 11-50.

6) Esteban Montejo, "Life in the Barracoons," in *Biography of a Runaway Slave*, ed. Miguel Barnet, trans. W. Nick Hill (Curbstone Press, 1994), 23-57.

7) "Soldiers and Africans Clash in Bahia's Streets (1835)," in Robert Edgar Conrad, *Children of God's Fire: A Documentary History of Slavery in Brazil* (Penn State Press, 1984), 406-411.

8) *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*, vol. 1, ed., Robert A. Hill (Univ. of California Press, 1984-), 40-51.

9) *A Hubert Harrison Reader*, ed. Jeffrey B. Perry (Wesleyan University Press, 2001), 1-10, 219-221, 234-238.

10) *Walter Rodney Speaks: The Making of an African Intellectual* (Africa World Press, 1990), 81-122.

### **Course Outline:**

9/8—Introduction to the course: syllabus, expectations, requirements. What is the African Diaspora?

9/15—Theories of the African Diaspora: A Singular Diaspora, Diasporas Apart, or Diaspora as Process? READINGS: Palmer, Butler, and Manning from Coursepack.

9/22—Reviews in the Practice of Diaspora History. READINGS: Lovejoy and Patterson/Kelley. Begin reading Thornton, 1-42.

9/29—Africans in Africa. READING: Thornton, 43-182.

10/6—Africans in the Americas. READING: Thornton, 183-334.

Paper #1—Write a 4-6 page paper analyzing Thornton's arguments. What does he say about the role of Africans in Africa during the era of the slave trade? How does he see the roles of Africans in the Americas? Is Thornton's conception of Diaspora closest to Palmer, Butler, Manning, Lovejoy, or Patterson/Kelley? Why?

10/13—Becoming Free, Becoming "American." READING: Andrews, 3-115. PAPER #1 DUE.

10/20—Race, Nation, and Labor in the Diaspora. READING: Andrews, 116-207.

Paper #2—Write a 4-6 page paper analyzing Andrews' arguments. According to Andrews, what is the relationship between blackness and nationhood in Latin America? How do African-descended peoples respond to their social, political, and economic marginality? Is Andrews' conception of Diaspora closest to Palmer, Butler, Manning, Lovejoy, or Patterson/Kelley? Why?

10/27—Primary Sources and Research Questions. Demonstration of TSTDB, as well as introduction to manuscript sources. Possible primary sources for research papers? Newspapers, microfilm collections, collected papers, etc., in UW libraries. READING: "Soldiers and Africans Clash in Bahia's Streets (1835)," "The Autobiography of a Runaway Slave," excerpts from Marcus Garvey/UNIA papers, excerpts from Hubert Henry Harrison Reader, excerpt from Walter Rodney Speaks. What kinds of questions are raised by each of the readings? How might you use these sources as a springboard to a larger project? PAPER #2 DUE.

PAPER #3—After consulting with the professor, each student should select a book that relates directly to his/her research interest. Write a 4-6 page paper summarizing the book's central arguments, its flaws (read book reviews), and how it relates to your specific project.

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT: Each student must go to the library and make a photocopy of at least one source that they will use in their research paper. These must be brought to the next class.

11/3—Primary Sources II. All students will bring to class a photocopy of the primary source they consulted. Each student will discuss the source and how it might relate to their research project.

11/10—Building a Bibliography. Each student will discuss the book that relates to his/her research project. You should summarize the central arguments of the book and explain how it will fit into your overall project. PAPER #3 DUE.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY: Your research proposal does not have to be lengthy. It should, however, introduce your problem, state the central question(s) you are trying to answer in your paper, and discuss possible ways of answering the question. Your annotated bibliography must include at least five secondary sources and two primary sources. Your annotations should be around two sentences each.

11/17—Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography. Students will discuss their research proposals and the sources they will use. All students must include at least five secondary sources and two primary sources in their bibliography. PROPOSAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE.

11/24—Individual appointments with the professor on research progress.

12/1—Class Discussion of Writing and Research Progress. Interesting findings? Problems? Sources?

12/8—Presentations of Research Papers. Each student will have 10 minutes to present his/her paper. You should introduce the problem/question you were trying to solve, discuss your findings/central argument, and make some reference to the sources you utilized. There will be five minutes at the end of your presentation for questions from your classmates and the instructor. **FINAL PAPERS DUE.**

12/15—Presentation of Research Papers II. Your papers will be returned today for revision. You will have until 12/20 at 2:30 to turn in your final draft.

12/20—**FINAL DRAFT OF PAPER DUE 2:30 in SWEET'S OFFICE**