

History 600--African Diaspora Peoples and History

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 (25-30 pages) might be explicitly comparative, or might trace the movement 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. Students should view the course as an opportunity to produce an original piece of scholarship, ideally one that will eventually be publishable. The only requirements will be: a) that the student choose a topic that links/compares peoples in at least two different geographic regions; and b) that the student utilize primary source materials for the core of their research. 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.

Weekly class meetings will operate as a workshop aimed at sharing research ideas and critiquing one another's work. During the first three weeks of class, 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 Paul Gilroy. We will also spend time discussing possible primary sources. By week four students will be required to submit a short description of their research project, along with an annotated bibliography. This bibliography will identify both primary and secondary source materials to be used in the project. During weeks 5-10, students should complete the first draft of their papers. Class discussions during these weeks will center on individual problems with research, methodology, and so on. Beginning in week 11, students will make individual presentations of their research, emphasizing the paper's argument, its place in the historiography, and final conclusions. Each student will be required to write a 2-3 page response for two papers. Thus, each student will have two colleagues responding directly to his/her paper presentation, identifying strengths, weaknesses, and possibilities for improvement. Final papers will be due on the last day of class.

All students are **STRONGLY** encouraged to contact Prof. Sweet to discuss potential research topics before registering for the course. This is not a design to discourage students from registering. Rather, since Sweet will be new next year, he simply wants to touch base with those interested in the course, make sure their research interests fit the course description, and perhaps most importantly, make sure that students begin thinking about possible topics and primary sources now. Sweet can be reached at: sweetj@fiu.edu