



**AFAM 2010: *Introduction to African American Studies*
Fall Semester 2016**

Professor: Dr. Shannon M. Cochran
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Office Hrs: 12:30-1:30 pm on Tuesdays in
office, 6:00 pm-10:00 pm on Wednesdays/8:00
pm- 10:00 pm online in D2L (and also by app)

Please note: A syllabus is a contract between the university, an instructor, and you. All information in this syllabus is subject to changes that will meet the needs and interests of your particular class.

Course Description

Description: A course that introduces the field of African American Studies by focusing on social sciences, historical studies, literary studies, religious studies, and the arts, both music and visual art.

Required Texts (available at campus bookstore):

Introduction to African American Studies- Anderson and Stewart
Readings posted in Desire 2 Learn

Credit Hours: 3 Credit Hours (3-0-3)

Course Objectives

- To provide insight into the historical and cultural context of the peoples of the African Diaspora
- To teach, investigate, and analyze the knowledge and contributions of the descendants of African civilizations
- To further the university's mission to promote community-based learning
- To enhance communication skills, oral and written, and critical thinking skills

Program Learning Outcomes:

General Education Outcomes:

The following link provides the Clayton State University Core Curriculum outcomes (see Area E):

http://www.clayton.edu/Portals/5/core_curriculum_outcomes_clayton.pdf

At the end of the course each student will be able to:

- To further the university's mission statement to support practices and programs that promotes cultural, ethnic and gender diversity,
- To provide insight into the historical and cultural context of the peoples of the African Diaspora,
- To teach, investigate, and analyze the knowledge and contributions of the descendants of African civilizations,
- To further the knowledge of the connections of the African American community to Africa,
- To further the university's mission to promote community-based learning,
- To enhance communication skills, oral and written, and critical thinking skills.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

(PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU REGULARLY CHECK THE COURSE WEBPAGE ON DESIRE 2 LEARN FOR COURSE CONTENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS. THIS IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY). Claiming that you "did not see an assignment/responsibility on the webpage and/or syllabus" is NOT a viable excuse and will NOT be accepted. Students are required to learn the basics of Desire 2 Learn ON THEIR OWN and/or with the assistance of other CSU resources available to them.

Other Basic Undergraduate Responsibilities

Please read the information found on this page--

<http://a-s.clayton.edu/BasicUndergraduateStudentResponsibilities.htm>

Disruption of the Learning Environment

Behavior which disrupts the teaching–learning process during class activities will not tolerated. While a variety of behaviors can be disruptive in an online classroom setting, more serious examples include belligerent, abusive, profane, and/or threatening behavior. A student who fails to respond to reasonable faculty direction regarding classroom behavior and/or behavior while participating in classroom activities may be dismissed from class. A student who is dismissed is entitled to due process and will be afforded such rights as soon as possible following dismissal. If found in violation, a student may be administratively withdrawn and may receive a grade of WF.

A more detailed description of examples of disruptive behavior and appeal procedures is provided at: <http://a-s.clayton.edu/DisruptiveClassroomBehavior.htm>

Incomplete Grades: A grade of incomplete will only be granted in cases of dire hardships. Incomplete grades will only be granted by the approval of the department chair.

Midterm Grade Statement: Midterm grades will be posted before the deadline for withdrawal without academic penalty. They will be calculated by the average of each student's graded work at that time.

Academic Dishonesty: Any type of activity that is considered dishonest by reasonable standards may constitute academic misconduct. The most common forms of academic misconduct are cheating and plagiarism. All instances of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for the work involved. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Student Life/Judicial Affairs. Judicial procedures are described at <http://adminservices.clayton.edu/judicial/>

Plagiarism: Plagiarism involves copying another person's words or ideas without citing the source with appropriate documentation. Any student who plagiarizes fails the plagiarized assignment. A plagiarized paper is considered an incomplete assignment. Any student who plagiarizes will fail the course.

Accommodations: Individuals with disabilities who need to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Coordinator, Student Center 255 phone at 678-466-5445 or via e-mail at disabilityservices@mail.clayton.edu

Computer Policy: Each CSU student is required to have ready access throughout the semester to a notebook computer that meets faculty-approved hardware and software requirements for the student's academic program. Students will sign a statement attesting to such access. For further information on CSU's Official Notebook Computer Policy, please go to <http://www.clayton.edu/hub/itpchoice/notebookcomputerpolicy>. Student notebook computers will not be used in the classroom in this course. Computers will be required to access course materials and to communicate with your instructor. Refrain from surfing the net in class.

Computer Skill Prerequisites

Able to use the Windows™ operating system
Able to use Microsoft Word™ word processing
Able to send and receive e-mail using Outlook™ or Outlook Express™
Able to attach and retrieve attached files via email
Able to use a Web browser.
Able to use Skype/instant messaging
Able to use Desire 2 Learn to participate in, and retrieve/submit information, for the course

Software Requirements:

To properly access the course content you will need to download the following free software:

- Adobe Reader (needed to access files in PDF format): <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>
- Adobe Flash (needed to access video content): <http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>

Copies: Always keep copies of all important work--including print copies of electronic files--until after you receive your final grade in the course. Your instructor will retain your final exam, and may retain the

originals or copies of your other papers, but the responsibility for document preservation (for grade appeals or other reasons) is yours.

Surveys or Testing: From time to time, students in any educational institution may be asked to participate in surveys or testing whose primary purpose is to gather information relevant to measuring and increasing the quality of education. If your class is selected for such surveying or testing, your participation is required.

Questions or Concerns: If you have questions or concerns about your class, you must attempt to resolve those with your instructor as soon as possible.

Other Sources of Help

- The **Library** staff can help you locate information to use in your writing. Library resources are also available online at <http://adminsivices.clayton.edu/library/>.
- The **Center for Academic Success** located on the lower floor of the Library, is available for help with writing or reading problems either on a drop-in basis or by referral from your instructor. Information about the CAS is available on the Internet at <http://caa.clayton.edu>.
- The Department of English homepage (<http://a-s.clayton.edu/langlit/>) contains links to information on the Regents' Test and other useful materials such as the "mini-handbook" guide to the Clayton State University Writing Guidelines.
- The **Office of Enrollment Services**, reached in the Student Center, room 226, can direct you to sources of academic, career, and personal counseling, as well as to information about financial aid and student organizations and activities. The Internet address for this office is <http://adminsivices.clayton.edu/provost/enrollmentservices.htm>.
- For concerns or questions about Disability Services, contact the office at disabilityservices@clayton.edu or the Disability Services Coordinator at (678) 466-5445. Course materials may be made available alternative formats through consultation with this office.
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- **Writing Assistance**
The Writers' Studio 224 is located in the A&S building, room 224. There you can talk with trained writing tutors about your writing projects. They are available to work with you at any stage of your paper, from generating ideas to organizing your paper to understanding how to format it correctly. The service is free; you may drop in and wait for a tutor or sign up for a regular appointment. But remember: you, not your tutor, are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the papers you submit.
- <http://a-s.clayton.edu/english/Writers%20Studio/index.html>
- **Operation Study:** At Clayton State University, we expect and support high motivation and academic achievement. Look for Operation Study activities and programs this semester that are designed to enhance your academic success such as study sessions, study breaks, workshops, and opportunities to earn Study Bucks (for use in the University Bookstore) and other items.

Midterm Progress Report:

There will be a mid-term grade reported for this course. This grade reflects approximately 40% of the entire course grade. Based on this grade, students may choose to withdraw from the course and receive a grade of "W." Students pursuing this option must fill out an official withdrawal form, available in the Office of the Registrar, or withdraw on-line using the Swan by mid-term. Instructions for withdrawing are provided at this link.

Class Participation (5%)

The format for the class will be a combination of online lecture and discussion, with an emphasis on a sharing of perspectives. This class is based on the educational premise that knowledge is constructed through an (inter) active process rather than absorbed passively. Online **Class attendance, therefore, is critically important, and you are expected to be an active and informed participant in class discussions.** In order to do this, all reading assignments must be completed. You are responsible for any assignments and announcements that are made. Students must keep up with the class and they are held responsible for **any** announcement and dialogue during the semester. **(In all, students should take responsibility for their education).**

Overall Classroom Code of Conduct:

1) Have an open mind and remember that all human beings do not share the same experience and reality. This is perfectly alright because we should learn from each other in order to grow as human beings in a diverse and constantly evolving world. That being said, racism and other “isms” do exist in today’s world. Denying this fact is counterproductive to our growth as humans.

2) Refrain from using abusive language.

3) Always use an appropriate greeting and salutation when corresponding with your professors via email or in person. Do not refer to Dr. Cochran with “Hey,” “Ms.,” or any other unprofessional language that is not appropriate for collegiate decorum. An email that begins with “Hey.....”, or without any proper and professional greeting, will not be answered. Make your college experience an appropriate part of your professional development.

4) No discussion of grades will be made in discussion and “notes” forums or via email. Correspond with Dr. Cochran via an appointment.

5) Be responsible for the quality of class discussions and dialogue. Remember to critique ideas and approaches and not individuals. Remember that we are simply exploring and learning. Do not monopolize the discussion. Do not become distracted and shy away from discussion because we are all interrelated. Therefore, actively listen and participate;

- **Because this is an online classroom, the more you participate and share ideas, the more I will get a thorough sense of your understanding of, and progress in, the course. I RECOMMEND THAT STUDENTS DO NOT SIMPLY DO THE MINIMUM BUT SHOW ENTHUSIASM FOR YOUR LEARNING EXPERIENCE. However, students are required to compose four (4) original and thought-provoking posts (not including required assignments such as artifacts and responses), along with four (4) thought-provoking and subject matter reflective responses, to other posts in discussion forums.**
- Responses such as “I agree” or “I feel the same way” are not thought-provoking and will **NOT** count toward the required number of posts by the student. Also, posts/responses that simply regurgitate what a previous post stated will not be counted toward the grade of the student.
- Again, it is ok and healthy to disagree with one another; however, we must do so respectfully and avoid inappropriate online arguments. People tend to get bold when they are not in the physical presence of others, but remember that this is still a university “classroom”. Therefore, students

will be held accountable for ANY disruptive and counterproductive behavior, language and gestures.

5) Do not approach Dr. Cochran and plead for a higher or specific grade because otherwise you will (a) lose your scholarship/financial aid, (b) be dismissed from school, (c) be kicked off the (fill in the blank) athletic team, (d) lose your "4.0 GPA", etc. Such requests are insulting and nothing more than indirect, yet straightforward requests for me to be dishonest about grading and my profession. I will never do it, so do not put yourself in this situation.

6) "My printer/computer is not working" will NOT be accepted as an excuse for missed work. I encourage students to make arrangements so that she/he is not submitting work and taking quizzes directly before deadlines. DO NOT tell a professor that you did not do an assignment or put effort into his/her class because you were doing work for another class. This simply implies your overall effort and engagement in the course and your academic career. Have written assignments stapled so that you do not need to ask the professor to use a stapler during class.

7) Please give Dr. Cochran at LEAST (minimum) 48 hours for a return email.

8) Simply, always remain respectful of classmates and Dr. Cochran.

Critical Responses (10%)

During the semester you will be given an opportunity to improve your analytical and critical thinking skills. The topic and formats of these assignments will consist of a combination of the following: critical responses (Including **Reflective Inquiries- discussion prompts**) and **quizzes**. These are intended to help you keep up with the reading. Response papers are one typed double-space page, 10 or 12-point font, one-inch margins (one written page minimum for in-class response papers). Full credit will not be given for critical responses that do not meet the minimum length requirement or do not present a focused analysis of the topic. I will be looking for a thorough and thought-provoking analysis of the presented topic. Mere summary of readings, lectures or class discussions will not gain the student credit for responses. These writing assignments will help you develop the analytical skills that you use in your everyday life. Papers will be "graded" in terms of completion; if you *successfully* complete the work on time and according to the requirements, you receive full credit. **No make-ups or late papers will be accepted.**

Mid-Term Examination (40%) and Final Examination (40%)

There will be one mid-term and one final examination on the dates noted in the syllabus.

Media/Cultural Artifacts (5%)

Students will collect artifacts from media and culture that are relevant to the course. Therefore, students should be engaged in their surroundings as they observe the multiple ways that race is an agent and factor in our world. The artifacts can be as creative as the student desires and should be accompanied by a written paragraph on its relevance to the course subject matter/African American Studies (according to the student). These will be collected and handed back to the student. **STUDENTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO POST A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF EACH ARTIFACT IN THE DESIGNATED DISCUSSION FORUM TO SHARE WITH THE CLASS AND TO RECEIVE CREDIT (THIS ACTION COMPLETES THE ASSIGNMENT)**

Grading Scale

90-100% A
80-89% B
70-79% C
60-69% D
59 and Below F

Course Schedule (Specific schedule on D2L course site for registered students)