

HIST 3240.002: African American History and Culture to 1865

Instructor Information

Instructor: Brianna Mangrum

Email: Brianna.Mangrum@unt.edu

Office hours: Monday & Wednesday, 12:00–1:00 PM, or by Zoom appointment

Land Acknowledgment

Acknowledging the land is an Indigenous protocol, and it is important to note that the University of North Texas is located on the unceded territory of the Wichita and Caddo Affiliated Tribes. It is important to study the long processes that have brought us all to reside on this land, and to seek to better understand our places within these histories.

Course Information

Course Description

This course investigates African American history from African origins of history and culture through the Civil War. Themes addressed in the course will include: the creation of an African American identity, African cultural continuity and transformation, the relationship of people of African descent to American political and social institutions, early Black resistance movements, the impact of gender on the Black historical experience, African American cultural expression, and Black community life in both enslaved and free communities in the North and in the South. We will also discuss how a deep understanding of Black history has altered and shaped broader narratives of American history. Finally, we will contemplate the historical memory of slavery as it is represented in popular culture and in ongoing discussions about the issue of reparations.

Course Prerequisites

No prerequisites for the course.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify recurring motifs in African American history.

2. Interpret watershed moments and movements that shape the Black community and broader American society.
3. Utilize methods of cultural critique to understand African American history through a cultural lens.
4. Articulate the importance of studying African American history and its significance to broader American history.

Note: specific Unit Objectives will be included in each module.

Course Structure

This is a 100% online course. There is a total of ten units you will work through in this course. Because we will be employing various approaches to historical study this semester, your engagement with each component included in your modules should aid you in gaining a deeper understanding of historical analysis as well as a more personal connection to history.

Course Conduct

History necessarily involves the study of how systems of power have evolved over time, as well as how those forces continue to exert their power in the present. I urge every student in this class to be attentive and self-reflective about behaviors and comments that could have a negative impact on feelings of belonging in this space. As your professor, this self-reflection applies to me as well. We are all in the process of learning and unlearning the logics that structure our society and our modes of communication. No one is perfect. What I ask is that we all strive to be mindful and, above all else, empathetic in our interactions in this course. See these [Engagement Guidelines](#) for more information.

Course Materials

Expensive readings lists contribute to the inaccessibility of education. Therefore, any readings and experiences you have for this course will all be posted on Canvas for your free access. Information for our digitally available textbook is provided below:

- White, Deborah Gray, Mia Bay, and Waldo E., Jr Martin. *Freedom on My Mind: A History of African Americans, with Documents*. 3rd ed. New York: Bedford/Saint Martin's, 2020. Access the digital textbook through [UNT Library](#).

Attendance

This is an online course, but student participation and presence is imperative to getting the most out of this course. Please communicate with me as early as possible if your presence or participation in the course will be impacted by illness, caregiving responsibilities, or any other events.

Participation

This course is highly collaborative and participatory. It is imperative that you are engaging in all course components and that you are ready to contribute to discussions to nurture both personal and communal growth in the class. Conversations that take place in discussion posts, or topics that we discuss may be uncomfortable to some. My hope is that you will approach this course with a sense of intellectual wonder and adventure. Please keep in mind that academic investigation need not be either stodgy, boring, tiresome, or dull. This requires, however, that you take as much responsibility for your own education as I do in creating an environment where learning can occur for everyone. The class will be as enlightening and exciting as you help make it. History is not fixed, and I approach this work as a mutual exchange of ideas and theories.

Communication Expectations

In this class, email is our primary mode for communication. I want to be as accessible to you as I can be. Email me with any questions or concerns you have. I try my best to respond within a 24-hour period. I will also hold regular office hours for at least two hours per week on a first-come, first-served basis. I encourage you to meet with me over Zoom to discuss any aspect of this course or whatever else is on your mind. I have an open-door policy and want to be a resource and support for you in any way possible. If you can't visit during office hours, please email me. I will do my best to respond immediately.

Preferred Name/Pronouns Policy

If your preferred name and pronouns are not the same as what appears on the class roster provided to me by UNT, please let me know so that I can use your preferred name and pronouns.

Caregiver Responsibilities Policy

Many students balance the pursuit of their education with the responsibilities of caring for children, or for other family or community members. If you run into challenges that require you to miss class, or if your caregiving responsibilities interfere with your ability to meet a deadline, please contact me or your teaching assistant and we can discuss ways we may be able to support your learning with more flexibility.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Withdrawal Policy

If you are unable to complete the course, you must withdraw by the 12th University class day for a refund. A student wishing to withdraw from a course before the end of the semester must

initiate the process by filling out the official withdrawal form, which can be found on the University's website or at the Registrar's office.

Course Technology & Skills

AI Policy

This course has a generative AI policy to acknowledge that technology, including AI, can play a supportive role in the learning and feedback process. While I don't mandate the use of generative AI, I am open to its application as long as you provide proper citations and acknowledge the assistance received from AI tools. The goal is to encourage you to explore various learning aids, including generative AI-powered tools, while still maintaining academic integrity.

The use of generative AI in this course is allowed as long as you properly cite the AI-generated content and use it responsibly. While it is not a requirement, I recognize that AI can serve as a useful tool to support your learning experience. You may choose to use generative AI to gain insights, receive feedback, or generate ideas, but always remember to give credit where it's due and ensure the work you submit reflects your own originality and words.

If you choose to use generative AI as a learning aid, it is essential to disclose its use on your assignments to maintain academic integrity. If you use generative AI, make sure to add "Generative AI Disclosure:" at the bottom of your assignment. Your disclosure should share what program you used and how you used it. Properly citing the AI-generated content allows me to understand your process better and gives credit to the assistance received from these tools. If a student is suspected of using AI inappropriately without proper disclosure, I will conduct a fair and transparent investigation into the matter. It is essential for students to be open and honest about their use of AI in assignments. If the suspicion is confirmed and the student failed to disclose the AI use, the appropriate course of action will be taken. This may involve discussing the issue with the student, providing guidance on proper AI usage, and potentially a revision of the assignment with proper disclosure. My goal is to help students understand the importance of academic integrity and responsible use of AI.

Minimum Technology Requirements

- Computer
- Reliable internet access
- Speakers
- Microphone
- Plug-ins
- Microsoft Office Suite

Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

- Using Canvas

- Using email with attachments
- Downloading and installing software
- Using spreadsheet programs
- Using presentation and graphics programs
- [Canvas Technical Requirements](#)

Technical Assistance

- For technical assistance in Canvas, please go to the [UNT Help Desk](#).

Web Accessibility, Privacy, & Copyright Notice

UNT

- [Web Accessibility Policy](#)
- [Privacy Statement](#)

CLEAR-Supported Technologies

- See [CLEAR's Supported Technologies](#) web page for links to Accessibility Statements and Privacy Policies.

Copyright Notice

- Materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection. Materials may include, but are not limited to: documents, slides, images, audio, and video. Materials in this course Web site are only for the use of students enrolled in this course, for purposes associated with this course, and may not be retained for longer than the class term. Unauthorized retention, duplication, distribution, or modification of copyrighted materials is strictly prohibited by law. For more information, visit the [UNT Policy Office](#) or [U.S. Copyright Office | U.S. Copyright Office](#).

Assignment Policies and Grading

Expectations

The attached class schedule lists weekly reading assignments, which you should complete before the first lecture of that week. Whether or not you can complete reading assignments before I deliver the corresponding lectures, I do expect you to keep up with the readings. Your grade depends in part upon your ability to participate meaningfully in discussions.

Assignment Policy

All assignments will be submitted through our course platform online. You can find all assignment due dates in the syllabus. You can also find the due dates and instructions when clicking on each assignment for details in Canvas. Any written assignments should be submitted as either .DOC or .PDF.

- **Technical Difficulties:** The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: email at helpdesk@unt.edu or call 940.565.2324 and obtain a ticket number. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

Exam Policy

There will be no exams in this course. I want all the work you put into the class to move you closer towards understanding this field, self-growth, and practically applying the knowledge and skillset you gain in both public and professional contexts.

Late Work

Late assignments will lose points each day they are not turned in. To not lose any late points on assignments or exams, students must provide the instructor with a documented [university-excused absence](#), within 48 hours of the due date. As long as you communicate with me, I am willing to work with you depending on the circumstances.

Course Assignments

Assignment list	
Assignment	Percentage
Discussion Posts (8)	30%
Cultural Reaction Papers (2)	20%
Final Project Presentation Video	10%
Final Project Paper	40%
Total	100%

Course Grade Breakdown

A - 90-100 D - 60-69

B - 80-89 F - below 60

C - 70-79

Discussion Posts

These are discussion posts that give you an opportunity to critically reflect on what you're learning about in the units. You will submit 8 Discussion Posts that are tied to unit material. These entries can be either written (250-350 words) or video (2-3 minute) submissions. Because the spirit of these discussions is a somewhat personal reflection on what you're learning, the format and voice can be informal. However, be sure you are implementing critical analysis and engaging with specific unit material in your responses. More detailed instructions are included on the assignment page in Canvas.

Cultural Reaction Papers

You will submit two reaction papers throughout the course that synthesize specific eras of African American history and culture. More detailed instructions are included on the assignment page in Canvas.

Final Project

This course attempts to spur the broad dissemination of Black history to larger audiences, and it is also designed to reflect the diversity of careers in history through differentiated assessment. Students will be encouraged to select the final assessment that is most relevant to their professional ambitions, whether it is a historical research paper, teaching portfolio, community project, or creative project. The goal is to find a project that could actually be practically implemented after this course. More detailed instructions are included on the assignment page in Canvas.

Final Project Presentation Video

Each student will submit a video discussing the creation of their final project.

Course Weekly Schedule

Course Units and Assignments

Week/Module	Course Unit	Assignments
Week 1 Module 1	Unit 1: African Origins, Beginnings to ca. 1600 C.E.	Discussion Post #1

Week 2 Module 2	Unit 2: From Africa to America, 1441-1808	Discussion Post #2
Week 3 Module 3	Unit 3: Slavery in North America, 1619–1740	Discussion Post #3
Week 4 Module 4	Research Consultations #1	No assignment
Week 5 Module 5	Unit 4: African Americans in the Age of Revolution, 1741–1783	Discussion Post #4
Week 6 Module 6	Unit 5: Slavery and Freedom in the New Republic, 1775–1820	Discussion Post #5
Week 7 Module 7	Cultural Reaction Paper #1	Cultural Reaction Paper #1
Week 8 Module 8	Unit 6: Black Life in the Slave South, 1820–1860	Discussion Post #6
Week 9 Module 9	Unit 7: The Northern Black Freedom Struggle and the Coming of the Civil War, 1830–1860	Discussion Post #7
Week 10 Module 10	Unit 8: Freedom Rising: The Civil War, 1861–1865	Discussion Post #8

Week 11 Module 11	Unit 8: Freedom Rising: The Civil War, 1861–1865 continued	No assignment
Week 12 Module 12	Cultural Reaction Paper #2	Cultural Reaction Paper #2
Week 13 Module 13	Research Consultations #2	No assignment
Week 14 Module 14	Work on Final Project	No assignment
Week 15 Module 15	Work on Final Project	No assignment
Week 16 Module 16	Final Exam Week	Final Project and Final Project Presentation Video