History 4450-001, African-American History Since 1877
Spring 2011
M, W, F 11:00-11:50, Wooten Hall 210

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Jensen Wallach
Office: Wooten Hall 247
Telephone: 940-565-3395
Email: jennifer.wallach@unt.edu (Email is the best way to reach me.)
Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:00-4:00 or by appointment

Course Description/ Course Goals
This course will survey the major historical events in African American history from Reconstruction up through the present.

Major themes addressed in the course will include: the creation of African American identity, the construction of race in the context of the U.S., the relationship of people of African descent to American political and social institutions, black resistance, white oppression, the “long civil rights movement,” class v. caste issues, the impact of gender on the black historical experience, and African American cultural expression.

By the end of the semester, students should possess not only a broad familiarity with the experiences of black Americans during the time period but should also possess a more sophisticated understanding of how to interpret both primary sources and historiographical texts.

Required Reading
Holt, Thomas and Elsa Barkley Brown, Major Problems in African-American History, Volume II
Kelley, Robin D.G. Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination
Moye, Todd Freedom Flyers: The Tuskegee Airmen
Wright, Richard Black Boy
Various readings to be distributed via email

Class Format
The ethos of the class will be participatory and collaborative. My role as an instructor is to guide you through the process of gathering and analyzing data, not merely to dispense historical data and ask you to memorize it. Students are expected to come to class having read the material and ready to listen actively and to participate in discussions. The class will consist of lectures, discussions, and film screenings.

Academic Honesty
Students are expected to strictly adhere to the UNT Student Code of Conduct, which prohibits lying, cheating, and plagiarism. Honor code violations may result in a failing grade for an assignment on the first offense. The second offense will result in failure of the course.

Please be particularly careful to avoid plagiarism—taking credit for another person’s intellectual property without giving her proper credit.

The American Historical Association’s “Statement on Professional Conduct” defines plagiarism in the following way:

“The word plagiarism derives from Latin roots: plagiarus, an abductor, and plagiare, to steal. The expropriation of another author’s work, and the presentation of it as one’s own, constitutes plagiarism and is a serious violation of the ethics of scholarship. It seriously undermines the credibility of the plagiarist, and can do irreparable harm to a historian’s career.”
In addition to the harm that plagiarism does to the pursuit of truth, it can also be an offense against the literary rights of the original author and the property rights of the copyright owner... The real penalty for plagiarism is the abhorrence of the community of scholars.

Plagiarism includes more subtle abuses than simply expropriating the exact wording of another author without attribution. Plagiarism can also include the limited borrowing, without sufficient attribution, of another person’s distinctive and significant research findings or interpretations. Of course, historical knowledge is cumulative, and thus in some contexts—such as textbooks, encyclopedia articles, broad syntheses, and certain forms of public presentation—the form of attribution, and the permissible extent of dependence on prior scholarship, citation, and other forms of attribution will differ from what is expected in more limited monographs. As knowledge is disseminated to a wide public, it loses some of its personal reference. What belongs to whom becomes less distinct. But even in textbooks a historian should acknowledge the sources of recent or distinctive findings and interpretations, those not yet a part of the common understanding of the profession. Similarly, while some forms of historical work do not lend themselves to explicit attribution (e.g., films and exhibitions), every effort should be made to give due credit to scholarship informing such work.

Plagiarism, then, takes many forms. The clearest abuse is the use of another’s language without quotation marks and citation. More subtle abuses include the appropriation of concepts, data, or notes all disguised in newly crafted sentences, or reference to a borrowed work in an early note and then extensive further use without subsequent attribution. Borrowing unexamined primary source references from a secondary work without citing that work is likewise inappropriate. All such tactics reflect an unworthy disregard for the contributions of others.

No matter what the context, the best professional practice for avoiding a charge of plagiarism is always to be explicit, thorough, and generous in acknowledging one’s intellectual debts.”

(See: http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/professionalstandards.cfm#Plagiarism)

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism while you are in the process of writing your final exam, see me. Last semester I had to fail some students for plagiarism. I do not want to see that happen again.

**Grades and Assignments**
- **Quizzes:** 200 points
- **Midterm Exam:** 100 points
- **Final Paper:** 100 points
**Total:** 400 points

**Final Grades:**
- 360-400 = A
- 320-359 = B
- 280-249 = C
- 240-279 = D

**Quizzes:** There will be four scheduled quizzes (short tests) during the course of the semester. Each scheduled quiz is worth 40 points for 160 points total. Please see the schedule for specific dates. During the class period before each quiz, I will give you some clues about what you should review to prepare for the quiz. The quizzes will cover the lectures, the films we watch in class, and the reading assignments. The quizzes will consist of essay questions, short answer questions, and objective questions.
In addition to the scheduled quizzes, I will give several pop quizzes, which will be collectively worth 40 points. The pop quizzes are designed to encourage class attendance and accountability for the reading assignments.

**Midterm Examination:** You will complete a take home mid-term exam. More details will be available later.

**Final Paper:** You will be asked to write a 5-7 page paper answering the question “Was the civil rights movement a success?” More detailed guidelines will be distributed later in the semester. The paper will serve as your final examination and will be due on May 9 by 12:30 pm. I will not accept this paper late. I will not accept it via email.

**Late/ Missed Quizzes or Assignments**
I will allow you to make up quizzes only if arrangements are made in advance and proper documentation explaining your absence is provided. *Please do not ask me to make exceptions to this or any other stated policy. Out of fairness to the entire class, I must strictly adhere to the rules stated on this syllabus.*

I will accept the take home mid-term up to one week late with a one letter grade penalty. I will not accept it after that. I will not accept the mid-term via email.

I will not offer any extensions for the final paper. May 9 is the absolute deadline. I will not accept final papers via email.

**How to Reach Me**
Please always feel free to come and see me during my office hours if you have any comments, questions, or concerns. E-mail is the best way to reach me to set up an appointment or to ask a quick question.

**Special Needs**
Any student requiring instructional modifications due to a documented disability should make an appointment to meet with the instructor as soon as possible. An official letter documenting the disability will be expected in order to receive accommodations.

**Student Evaluations**
The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SETE to be an important part of your participation in this class.

**Schedule**
****Please note: This schedule is tentative and may be adjusted. ****

**Week 1—Introduction to the Course; Reconstruction**
Class meetings:
January 19—Introduction

**Week 2—Defining Freedom in the Aftermath of Slavery**
Class meetings:
January 24—Film: *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow*, Episode 1 “Promises Betrayed, 1865-1896”
January 28—Lecture: Segregation and Disenfranchisement; Read *Major Problems*, Chapter 3, “Richmond Planet Reports a Streetcar Boycott, 1904-1905”

Week 3—Case Study: Richard Wright
Class meetings:
- **January 31—** Lecture: Biography of Richard Wright; Read *Black Boy*, Chapters 1-5
- **February 2—** Read, *Black Boy*, Chapters 6-14
- **February 4** — Quiz #1

Week 4—African-American History Month Lecture
Class meetings:
- **February 7** — Instead of meeting during regular class time, please attend the Black History Month Lecture this evening. This is a required event. Please plan your schedules accordingly.

****Black History Month Lecture: Monday, February 7, 2011, ESSC 255, 6pm
John David Smith, “The Language of Reparations and the Meaning of Emancipation, 1865-1917”****

- **February 9** — Read, *Kelley*, *Freedom Dreams*, “‘A Day of Reckoning’: Dreams of Reparations”;
- **February 9** — John David Smith “The Enduring Myth of ‘Forty Acres and a Mule,’” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *February 21, 2003*, B11 (The Smith article will be emailed to you and is also available electronically via ProQuest, one of the UNT library’s electronic resources.)
- **February 11** — Lecture: Racial Violence in the Early Part of the Twentieth Century

Week 5—African American Responses to Racial Violence and Discrimination
Class meetings:
- **February 16** — Read, *Kelley*, *Freedom Dreams*, “‘The Negro Question’: Red Dreams of Black Liberation”
- **February 18** — Read, *Black Boy*, Chapters 15-20

Week 6—More African Americans Responses to Jim Crow
Class meetings:
- **February 21** — Read, *Kelley*, *Freedom Dreams*, “‘The Negro Question’: Red Dreams of Black Liberation”
- **February 23** — Quiz #2, Take home midterm exams distributed.

Week 7—African American Life and Culture during the Jazz Age
Class meetings:
- **February 28** — Lecture: The Harlem Renaissance
- **March 2** — Film: *The Harlem Renaissance: The Music and Rhythms that Started a Cultural Revolution*

March 4 — No class. Take home midterms due in the box on my office door (Wooten Hall 247) by 5pm.

Week 8—The Harlem Renaissance Fades into the Great Depression
Class meetings:
- **March 7** — Read, *Major Problems* Chapter 6, Tera W. Hunter, “The Blues Aesthetic and Black Vernacular Dance,” and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, “Constructing Working-Class Culture”


Week 9—Spring Break
Class meetings:
March 14—No class
March 16—No class
March 18—No class

Week 10—World War II and the Origins of the Civil Rights Movement
Class meetings:

March 23—Read Moye, Freedom Flyers, pp. 1-97
March 25—Read Moye, Freedom Flyers, pp. 98-187

Week 11—The Classical Phase of the Civil Rights Movement
March 28—Quiz #3
March 30—Lecture: The Civil Rights Movement Unfolds in Montgomery and Little Rock

April 1—Lecture: Confrontations in Birmingham, Albany, and Selma, Read Major Problems, Chapter 9 “James Bevel, an SCLC Organizer, Mobilizes Birmingham's Young People, 1963,” “Martin Luther King, Jr., Writes from His Jail Cell, 1963”

Week 12—The Movement Heats Up
Class meetings:

April 6—Film: Eyes on the Prize, “Mississippi: Is this America? (1962-1964)
April 8—Read Major Problems, Chapter 9, Clayborne Carson, “A Leader Who Stood Out in a Forest of Trees” and Charles M. Payne, “Challenging the Politics of Spokesmanship”

Week 13—The Evolving Movement
Class meetings:

April 13—Film: Negroes with Guns: Rob Williams and Black Power


Week 14: Black Power and Repression
Class meetings:
April 18—Final Paper Assignment Distributed; Read Kelley, Freedom Dreams, “ ‘Roaring from the East’: Third World Dreaming”

April 20—Film, Eyes on the Prize, “A Nation of Law? (1968-1971)
April 22 — Read Kelley, *Freedom Dreams*, “‘This Battlefield Called Life’: Black Feminist Dreams,” and *Major Problems*, Chapter 10 “Combahee River Collective Statement”

**Week 15 — African-American Culture and Politics after the Classic Phase of the Civil Rights Movement**

Class meetings:


**April 27** — Lecture: Guest lecturer: Charles Bitter of *The Nation* magazine “Race and the Criminal Justice System”


**April 29** — Discussion: Significance of Obama’s election; Read, Barack Obama, “A More Perfect Union,” Text/video available here: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2008/03/18/obama-race-speech-read-t_n_92077.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2008/03/18/obama-race-speech-read-t_n_92077.html)

**Week 16 — Conclusion**

Class meetings:

**May 2** — Quiz #4

**May 4** — Lecture/discussion: How to write the final paper

**Final Papers due in my office Wooten 247 by 12:30pm on Monday, May 9. Please note: I will not accept final papers late. I will not accept final papers via email.**