THE HISTORY OF RACIAL THOUGHT
(Syllabus for AA/HI 580 Spring 2012)

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Boston University
African American Studies Program
CAS AA/HH 580 (A1)
History of Racial Thought
Syllabus Spring 2012

Course Objectives

This research colloquium will explore racial thinking and feeling in Europe and the Americas since the sixteenth century, including comparative reference to that in other parts of the world. Special attention will be given to the relationship between changing conceptions of race and the major economic, political, social and cultural developments in the modern world.

Course Requirements

Opinion Essay on: “My First Awareness of Racial Thought” (2-p) 5%
9 book thesis statements with 2 discussion questions each 10%
-Students will complete a one-paragraph thesis statement and two discussion questions for each book read, and submit to the course website prior to the class meeting at which the book in question will first be discussed.

History Quiz 10%
Midterm Exam [take-home] 30%
Oral Report [on Research Paper] 5%
Discussion participation 15%

[For graduate students only: 5 additional 1-hour sessions that will occur every third week of the semester, at mutually convenient times. Students will lead discussions at these sessions. Each student will choose a work from a reading list provided by the instructor. All students will read the books selected for the discussion]

Students are expected to adhere to the highest writing standards for all work submitted, and when uncertain concerning form should consult references such as the Concise Wadsworth Handbook.

Attendance and missed assignments: Students are expected to attend and participate in every class session. This is especially crucial for a colloquium. Absences and late work will be treated as follows: With a medical excuse there will be no grade deduction. Other absences may be excused if permission is given in advance. In all other cases I will deduct one full grade point on written assignments from the earned grade, unless there are special circumstances that I feel justify a waiver of this rule. Normally I expect students to work independently on assignments, although they are encouraged to exchange ideas and information on sources.
This course falls under the provisions of the CAS Academic Code regarding plagiarism, with which I will expect each student to be familiar. I reserve the right to bring violations of the code to the attention of the pertinent academic authorities. For further guidance see: http://www.bu.edu/academics/files/2011/08/AcademicConductCode.pdf

**Required Texts**

**Available in the BU Barnes & Noble Bookstore:**

Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (CPA BK, 2009)

In addition to these works, relevant Internet links and excerpts from other sources will be available online on the course website at http://blackboard.bu.edu.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

19 January    Course Orientation

Review of course objectives and requirements

26 January    Theories and Definitions of Race

Reading: Michael Banton, *Racial Theories*

[Opinion Essay on “My First Awareness of Racial Thought ” Due]

2 February    Overview of the European Uses of “Race”

Reading: Neil Macmaster, *Racism in Europe*

[1-pg statement on proposed research paper topic and examples of sources due]
9 February  Historical Evolution of Racial Imagery
Reading: Blakely, *Blacks in the Dutch World*

16 February  The Coupling of Race and Science
Reading: Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, *Inequality of Human Races*

23 February  The Debunking of Scientific Racism
Reading: Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*

1 March  Planting Racism in the Americas
Reading: Bartholomé de las Casas, *A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies*

[History Quiz, 20-min]

[Mid-term Take-home Exam distributed]

8 March  Reinforcing Racism in America
Reading: Ronald Takaki, *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in Nineteenth-century America*

[Completed Mid-term Exam Due]

22 March  Reinforcing Racism in America  Cont’d
Film [in class]: D.W. Griffith, “Birth of a Nation”

29 March  Anti-Semitism at its Height
Reading: Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*
[Review related sections in Macmaster, *Racism in Europe]*

Global Dimensions of Racism in the Twentieth Century
Reading: John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*
5 April  Racial Thought in the Twenty-First Century

Reading: [on the Blackboard Course Website, Charles Johnson, “The End of the Black American Narrative;” and Robin Marantz Henig, “The Genome in Black and White (and Gray)]

12 April

[Research Paper Oral Reports]

19 April

[Oral Reports]

26 April

Course Summary

[Take-home Final Examination Distributed]

Course Evaluation