

**HI 698/AA871**  
**African American History**  
**MWF 10:00-11:00**  
**Room CAS 226**  
**Fall Semester 2015**

Prof. Linda M. Heywood  
Office: African American Studies

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Office Hours:  
Mondays/Wednesdays 11:00-12:00  
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**Course Description:** The course is a survey of African American History and covers the period from the African background to the end of the Obama presidency. The course takes both a thematic and conceptual approach to the African American experience in colonial North America and the United States. The readings and lectures will highlight the following issues and themes: the conditions in Africa that led to the enslavement and sale of captives to European traders; the Middle Passage experience of the enslaved Africans; the emergence of slavery as an institution in Colonial North America; the transformation of African identities and the origins of African American communities; slavery, race and resistance; the search for freedom-global and national perspectives from Civil War to today.

The course offers students the opportunity to study the African American experience from a national and global perspective. The readings portray African Americans as makers of their own history as well as participants in the major national and global events that shaped the history of the British North America and the United States.

**Books available for purchase at the University Bookstore:**

Pamela Newkirk, *Spectacle: The Astonishing Life of Oto Benga* (Amistad, 2015.)  
James Brewer Stewart, *Venture Smith and the Business of Slavery and Freedom* (Massachusetts,  
Linda Heywood and John Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas* (Cambridge, 2007).  
Linda Heywood et al., *African Americans in U.S. Foreign Policy: From the Era of Frederick Douglas to the Age of Obama* (Illinois, 2015).  
Joseph William Trotter, *The African American Experience* (Houghton Mifflin, 2001).  
Manning Marable, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X as Told By Alex Haley* (Ballantine Books, 1997).

**E Journals**

*Journal of Negro History/ The Journal of African American History*  
*Journal of American History*  
*The American Historical Review*  
*Journal of Southern History*

*Phylon*  
*William and Mary Quarterly*  
*American Legacy: Magazine of African American History and Culture*  
*Crisis*  
*Slavery and Abolition*  
*Journal of African American Studies*

**Additional Readings are available on Blackboard Learn (BL)**

**Course Requirements:** Graduate students are expected to attend all classes and offer critical comments on the assigned reading during class discussions. Graduate students are also expected to write a historiographic essay on a theme in African American History, take in-class midterm and final exams, and submit a final research paper of between 7,700-9,000 words. The paper should be thesis driven, and reflect a thorough grasp of the historiography to support the thesis. Students are expected to consult and use in their papers evidence from a range of printed primary and secondary sources.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** Each student is expected to author his/her own work. Students should familiarize themselves with the CAS Conduct Code. Students who submit plagiarized papers or other assignments that they have not authored will be subject to the penalties imposed by [GRS Academic Conduct Code](#).

**Grading will be as follows:**

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Midterm	20%	(Fri Oct.16)
Final exam	20%	(Time-TBA)
Research Paper	40%	(Dec. 11)
Historiographic Paper (Topic to be selected by students)	10%	(Week 5)
Attendance and Participation	10%	

**Weekly Assignments:**

**Week 1 (9/2-9/7) West and West Central Africa and Early European Contacts**

- A. Central African Societies and Europeans
- B. West African Societies and Europeans
- C. Warfare and Enslavement

Readings: Trotter, *African American Experience*, 2-54.

Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles*, Chpts 1-3.

Stewart, *Venture Smith Narrative* and Chpts 1-2.

**Week 2 (9/9-9/14) Africans in America 1**

- A. The Middle Passage Experience
- B. The Charter Generation

Readings: Trotter, *African American Experience*, 55-79

Stewart, *Venture Smith*, Chapters 3 and 5.  
Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles*, Chpts 4-5.

**Week 3 (9/16-9/21) Africans in America 11**

A. Africans and the slave Experience

B. Africans, African Americans and the Making of Identity

Readings: Stewart, *Venture Smith*, Chpts 6-9.

Huggins, "The Deforming Mirror of the Truth" **BL**

Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles*, Chpt 6.

**Friday 9/19: Lecture and Discussion**

**Week 4 (9/23-9/28) Against All Odds: Resistance and Institution Building in a Developed Slave**

A. African Americans: Leadership, Ideology and Community

B. African Americans and the American Revolution

Readings: Carson et al., *Struggle for Freedom*, pp. 99-123; 169-174.

"Belinda's Petition", (Handout)

Rucker, *The River Flows On*, pp. 123-141. **BL**

Stewart, *Venture Smith*, Chpts 4, 6.

**Friday 9/28: Lecture and Discussion**

**Week 5 (9/30-10/5) Against All Odds: African Americans and the Construction of an American Identity**

Readings: Sylvia Frey, "The Visible Church" (**BL**)  
(**BL**)

Stuckey, "Through the Prism of Folklore" **BL**

Rucker, *The River Flows On*, pp. 180-198 (**BL**)

Stewart, *Venture Smith*, Chpts 7-9.

**Friday, 10/5: Lecture and Discussion**

**Week 6 (10/7-10/12) Evolving Leadership and the Race Factor**

Readings: Klassen, "Religion and African American Women" (**BL**)

Trotter, *African American Experience*, 103-148.

Christa Dierksheide, "The Great Improvement and Civilization of that Race" (**BL**)

Fields, "Of Rogues and Geldings" (**BL**)

**Friday, 10/12: Debate on readings**

**Week 7 (10/14-10/19) Freedom and Slavery in Ante Bellum America**

Readings: Trotter, *African American Experience*, pp. 149-236

Mitch Kachun, "Antebellum Americans, Public Commemorations,

and the Haitian Revolution” (BL)  
Polgar, “To Raise them to an Equal Participation.” (BL)  
Friday: **Midterm Exam**

**Week 8 (10/21-10/26) Civil War and Reconstruction**

Readings: Trotter: *African American Experience*, pp. 237-292.  
Heywood et al., *African Americans...Foreign Policy*, 83-108  
Andre Fleche, “Shoulder to Shoulder as Comrades We Tried”  
Newkirk, *Spectacle: Life of Oto Benga* (Part One)  
(BL)

**Friday 10/26: Lecture and Discussion**

**Week 9 (10/28-11/2) Identity, Labor and Community Building to 1914**

Readings: Heywood et al., *African Americans...Foreign Policy*, pp. 13-30.  
Newkirk, *Spectacle: Life of Ota Benga* (Part Two).  
Trotter, *African American Experience*, pp. 293-334

**Friday, 10/28: Lecture and Discussion**

**Week 10 (11/4-11/9) Black Americans in the Age of Empire to 1914**

Readings: Heywood et al., *African Americans...Foreign Policy*, pp. 109-128.  
Newkirk, *Spectacle: Life of Ota Benga* (Part Three).  
Trotter, *African American Experience*, pp. 334-372.

**Friday, 11/9 Lecture and Discussion**

**Week 11 (11/11-11/16) African American Leadership: Road to civil Rights 1**

Readings: Manning, *Malcolm X* (Begin).  
Trotter, *African American Experience*, pp. 466-509.  
Heywood et al., *African Americans...Foreign Policy*, pp. 30-81

**Friday, 11/9 Debate on Civil Rights**

**Weeks 12 (11/86-11/23) The Civil Rights Movement**

**Readings:** Manning, *Malcolm X* (Continue).  
Trotter, *African American Experience*, pp. 509-557.  
Heywood et al., *African Americans...Foreign Policy*, pp. 129-176.

**Friday Nov. 21: Guest Jim Marshall, author- *Student Activism and Civil Rights in Mississippi: 1960-65*; 11/23 Debate on Readings**

**Week 13 (11/25-12/2) Civil Rights and Black Power**

**Readings:** Manning, *Malcolm X* (Continue).  
Trotter, *African American Experience*, pp. 509-557.  
Heywood et al., *African Americans...Foreign Policy*, pp. 129-176.  
Video: Busing: A Rough Ride in Southie (Video Library, BU)

## **Discussion of Readings and Video**

### **Week 14 (12/4-12/9) Black Power to Post-Racial America?**

Readings: Manning, *Malcolm X* (Continue to End).

Trotter, *African American Experience*, pp. 558-end.

Heywood et al., *African Americans...Foreign Policy*, pp. 177-213.

### **Wednesday 12/10 Debate**