COURSE OVERVIEW:

In this course we will examine major topics and themes in African-American history from the colonial era to the present day. Topics include the Middle Passage and the transatlantic slave trade; African-American slave culture(s) and communities; slave resistance; freedom struggles/movements during slavery; Jim Crowism; mass migrations and the “New Negro”; participation in international wars; Civil Rights, Black Power, and Black Feminist Movement(s); and challenges and manifestations of the contemporary “color line” in the United States. We will approach the subject matter utilizing a variety of primary and secondary sources (e.g., slave narratives, slave ships’ logs, ex-slave interviews, oral histories, speeches, essays, documentaries, and an autobiography). For this course, in addition to the midterm and final exam, students will write 2 (4-5 page) response papers during the course of the semester. Throughout the course, small groups of students will co-lead some sections of class discussions on selected reading assignments. Every student will also attend 2 academic public lectures/panels focused on African-American history. I will circulate information on possible events in the Barnard-CU community, as well as in New York City generally (e.g., at the African Burial Ground, Schomburg Center, etc.).

BARNARD HONOR CODE

“We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.”

You are expected to observe all aspects of the Barnard Honor Code. All work submitted for this course must be your own. Although you may discuss the assignments with your classmates, your short response papers must reflect your own ideas and arguments. If you include information from books, articles, and internet websites, such sources must be clearly identified in your footnotes/end notes and bibliography. Please let me know if you have any questions about the honor code as it relates to this course.
ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS:

If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodations, you must visit the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for assistance. Students requesting eligible accommodations in their courses will need to first meet with an ODS staff member for an intake meeting. Once registered, students are required to visit ODS each semester to set up new accommodations. Accommodations are not retroactive, so it is best to register with ODS early each semester to access your accommodations. If you are registered with ODS, please schedule a meeting to see me to discuss your accommodations for this course; and remember to bring your faculty notification letter. Barnard College’s ODS is located in Milbank Hall, Room 008, and Columbia University’s Disability Services is on the 7th Floor of Alfred Lerner Hall.

WELLNESS

It is important for undergraduates to recognize and identify the different pressures, burdens, and stressors you may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. We, as a community, urge you to make yourself—your own health, sanity, and wellness—your priority throughout this term, your career here, and beyond Barnard. Sleep, exercise, and eating well can all be a part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you in several sectors of your life, and we encourage you to make use of them. Should you have any questions about navigating these resources, please visit these sites:

- http://barnard.edu/primarycare
- http://barnard.edu/counseling
- http://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about
- Stressbusters Support Network <pdf>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Class participation (15% of final grade): Attendance as well as active, engaged class participation are crucial to the course experience. Every student will also be responsible for co-leading (with one or two other students) a section of a class discussion of selected assigned readings. Students will sign up for co-leading specific discussion sessions by the end of the third week of class. These discussion sessions are required for all students. The final class participation grades of students who miss more than 2 classes will be docked for each additional absence (e.g., from a B+ → B).

2 (4-5 page) response papers (each paper is worth 15% of final grade): Response papers should analyze specific issues regarding the required readings (with a focus on primary sources). Use these response papers as a tool for exploring your own questions and interpretations that have emerged as a result of the readings and class discussions. Students should submit 1 response paper before the midterm and 1 after the midterm.

Midterm (25% of final grade)

Take Home Final Exam (30% of final grade)
COURSE OBJECTIVES:

* Critically examine historical documents (primary sources) and scholarly interpretations (secondary sources) concerning key elements of African-American history

* Explore different methods and theories of historical analysis related to African-American historiography

* Analyze the impact of enslavement and discrimination, as well as ideologies of race, gender, sexuality, status, and domination, on the experiences of African-Americans

* Explain the causes and ramifications of mass migrations of African-Americans from rural to urban areas, as well as from southern to northern and western sites

* Analyze the effects of significant events on African-Americans (e.g., the Great Depression and world wars)

* Identify and compare strategies of organizations and movements focused on the human and civil rights of African-Americans

* Examine the “place” of race and the presence of the “color line” in the twenty-first century

* Hone and demonstrate critical analytical and writing skills in exams and two response papers

REQUIRED TEXTS:

NOTE: ALL REQUIRED TEXTS ARE ON RESERVE AT BARNARD’S LIBRARY


ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED TEXTS (AVAILABLE IN THE BARNARD COLLEGE-COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SYSTEM):


REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED FILMS (MOST OF THESE FILMS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE BARNARD COLLEGE-COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SYSTEM):


COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1: Introduction

September 9


Week 2: African Identities and (Re)Constructing Ethnicity, Gender, Nation, and Race in the Atlantic World during the Transatlantic Slave Trade

September 14: “Old World” Conceptions of “Race,” Femaleness/Womanhood, and Blackness


September 16: “Crossing the Danger Water”: The Transatlantic Slave Trade and the Middle Passage

* White, Bay, and Martin, Freedom on My Mind, Chapter 1—“From Africa to America, 1441-1808.”

* Equiano, The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano: Introduction and Chapters 1-2. (THE ENTIRE NARRATIVE IS AVAILABLE ONLINE)


* Stephanie E. Smallwood, Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007). (RECOMMENDED)

Week 3: Race and Power in the “Strange New Land”: Africans in Colonial America

September 21


September 23


Week 4: Race and National Identities in the Revolutionary Era

September 28

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 3—“African Americans in the Age of Revolution, 1741-1783.”


September 30


* In class viewing and discussion of parts of *Unearthing Secret America* (PBS Video, 2002).

* Digging for Slaves (1989). (RECOMMENDED)
**Week 5: Enslaver-Enslaved Relations, Slave Resistance, and “The World the Slaves Made”**

**October 5**


**October 7**


**Week 6: “Let Your Motto Be Resistance! Resistance! Resistance!”**

**October 12**

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 6—“The Northern Black Freedom Struggle and the Coming of the Civil War, 1830-1860.”

**October 14**

* Walker, *David Walker’s Appeal* (1829).

Week 7: Free at Last?

October 19

* White, Bay, and Martin, Freedom on My Mind, Chapter 7—“Freedom Rising: The Civil War, 1861-1865.”

NOTE: Chapter 10—“Emancipation” (AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)

* White, Ar’n’t I a Woman?, Chapter 6—“From Slavery to Freedom.” (RECOMMENDED)

October 21: MIDTERM

Week 8: The Color Line and Jim Crowism

October 26


October 28

* White, Bay, and Martin, Freedom on My Mind, Chapter 9—“Black Life and Culture during the Nadir, 1880-1915.”

* W.E.B. DuBois, The Souls of Black Folk—“The Forethought,” and “Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others.” (AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)

* Booker T. Washington, Up From Slavery, “Two Thousand Miles for a Five-Minute Speech” and “The Atlanta Exposition Address.” (AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)


* Before this class session, view Ida B. Wells: A Passion for Justice (1989). (ON RESERVE AT BARNARD’S LIBRARY)
Week 9: The Great Migration, World War I, the “New Negro” and the Great Depression

November 2: NO CLASS—ACADEMIC HOLIDAY

November 4

* White, Bay, and Martin, Freedom on My Mind, Chapter 10—“The New Negro Comes of Age, 1915-1940.”

* Before this class session, view Marcus Garvey: Look for Me in the Whirlwind (2002). (ON RESERVE AT BARNARD’S LIBRARY AND ALSO AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE)

Week 10

November 9: World War II

* White, Bay, and Martin, Freedom on My Mind, Chapter 11—“Fighting for a Double Victory in the World War II Era, 1939-1945.”

* Maggi M. Morehouse, Fighting in the Jim Crow Army: Black Men and Women Remember World War II (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000), Chapter 1—“We’re in the Army Now,” Chapter 4—“The ‘Good Fight’” and Chapter 5—“Coming Home.” (ON RESERVE)

* Before this class session, view The Negro Soldier, Mad Phat Enterprises, 2009. Issued in 1944 by the War Department as a 16-mm. motion picture. (ON RESERVE AT BARNARD’S LIBRARY AND ALSO AVAILABLE ON ARCHIVE.ORG)

November 11: The Civil Rights Movement(s)

* White, Bay, and Martin, Freedom on My Mind, Chapter 12—“The Early Civil Rights Movement, 1945-1963.”

* Before this class session, view I am Not Your Negro, Magnolia Home Entertainment, 2017, 94 minutes.

Week 11: Cont. The Civil Rights Movement(s)

November 16: “Catch-up/Catch our Breath” Day

November 18

* Moody, Coming of Age in Mississippi.

* Eyes on the Prize, Part 4 “No Easy Walk.” (RECOMMENDED—ON RESERVE AT BARNARD’S LIBRARY AND ALSO AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE)
**Week 12: Black Power, Black Panthers, and Black Feminism(s)**

**November 23**


* Selections regarding the Black Power Movement, Black Panthers, and Combahee River Collective (AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)

**November 25: NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY BREAK**

**Week 13:***

**November 30: The Vietnam War—On the Homefront and on the Front Lines**


* Before this class session, view *No Vietnamese Ever Called Me Nigger,* Cinema Guild, 1968. (AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE)

**December 2: The Politics of Progress and Poverty at the End of the Twentieth Century**


* Jones and Newman, *Our America: Life and Death on the South Side of Chicago.*

**Week 14: The Twenty-First-Century “Color Line” in the Age of Obama and Trump**

**December 7**


* Selected articles regarding recent shootings, #Black Lives Matter Movement and #Say Her Name Movement. (AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)

**December 9**

Week 15:

December 14

“Show and Tell” Class Discussion

Each student will bring to class one document (poem, cartoon, photograph, song, etc.) and briefly discuss (3 minutes maximum) why they believe the item reflects this moment in the history of African-Americans in the United States.