Introduction to African American Studies  
Summer 2020 (Online)

Contact Information:

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<th>Instructor: Dr. Kameelah Martin</th>
<th>Email: <a href="mailto:MARTINKL2@cofc.edu">MARTINKL2@cofc.edu</a></th>
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<td></td>
<td>Office: 207C ECTR</td>
<td>Office Hours: MTW 1-3pm or make an appointment via email</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Use Professor Martin’s Appointment Calendar to request a virtual meeting via Google Meet</td>
<td>Phone: (843) 953-0675</td>
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<td>Class Meeting: Fully Online via OAKS</td>
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What will we learn?

This course is an interdisciplinary approach to the African American experience in the United States. Using a model developed by African American Studies pioneer Maulana Ron Karenga that focuses on history, religion, politics, economics, sociology, psychology and the creative arts as the essential topics in the study of the African American experience, this course provides students an understanding of the African American perspective in these areas. Primary sources by African American writers and scholars are also used to support this perspective and introduce students to the latest literature and research on the African American experience.

Course Goals:

Students in this course will demonstrate the ability to:

A. Apply concepts, terms, and theories from social science and humanities to the analysis of transnational black life and culture.

B. Identify major writers and movements in the African Diaspora intellectual tradition and major figures and events in African Diaspora history.

C. Make analytical connections between texts, literary and historical periods, and critical theories evolving from the Black intellectual tradition in written and oral communication.

D. Design and implement a research paper that interprets, analyzes, and synthesizes knowledge gained within the course.

What Materials are Required?
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Text book: *Not Just in February: Introduction to African American Studies* by CofC Staff (only available at CofC Bookstore)

Supplemental readings, lecturers, etc. provided by the instructor via OAKS

Texts: *Available online via OAKS

**Hardware**

★ A computer with Internet access, a sound card, microphone, and speakers.
  o You must have a **reliable** Internet connection. Having to rely on the public library or Starbucks, for example, will likely make it challenging to have a consistent presence inside OAKS. If you are concerned, please contact me within the first week so we can determine if this course will be manageable for you.

★ A webcam is recommended, but not required

★ A headset or earphones (optional)

**Software**

★ [Adobe Reader](#) (free)

★ [Adobe Flash Player](#) (free)

★ Word processing software (such as Microsoft Word, which you can download for free as a CofC student by clicking [here](#))

★ [Chrome](#) or Firefox Internet browsers (I strongly recommend you do not use Internet Explorer)

★ [Google Meet](#): is Google’s version of Skype, allowing us to communicate “face-to-face” but from a distance as needed. Use this [appointment calendar](#) to request a virtual meeting. This is an optional way to communicate with me. Refer to the section below on “communication.”

★ [Voicethread](#): is an online tool in which you can use images, slides, video that is accompanied by voice commentary. I will use this tool to present course lectures.

★ [Flipgrid](#): is an online tool in which students respond to questions, visuals, etc. using 90 second videos. This will be useful for helping to keep the course interactive and more personal. You will login to flipgrid via a link in OAKS. You must login with your CofC email address.

***Also see [www.continuity.cofc.edu/learning-remotely](#) for access to free learning software and tutorials***

**How Will I Earn My Grade?**

College is designed to be challenging and **grades are earned, not given.**
A grade of “C” is earned by students who complete average college work. Grades in the “B” range signify work that stands above the average. Grades in the “A” range are earned by students who do exceptional work and go ABOVE and BEYOND. Will you go above and beyond? I hope so and I want to help you achieve this!

Students often expect a higher grade because they “worked hard.” This will be my response if you tell me you worked hard: “That’s fantastic! I hope you continue to work diligently. Let’s talk about strategies to make your efforts more successful.” I expect you to put forth considerable effort to produce work that reflects your intellectual and creative capabilities.

If you are having difficulty with the class, please ask me for help. I want you to succeed, but I won’t be able to help if you ask for assistance the night before an assignment is due. Also, waiting until the end of the semester to express concern with your grade will not allow me to assist you.

I also use the OAKS gradebook, but will not update it immediately after every assignment is returned. So you should keep track of the points you earn during the semester so you always know how you’re progressing.

Please do not ask your parents to contact me regarding your grades. You are responsible for your grades, not your parents. Furthermore, federal legislation (FERPA) prohibits me from discussing your academic record with your family.

**Required Course Assignments:**

- Quizzes: 10%
- Reading Responses: 15%
- Discussion board/Activities: 20%
- Midterm Exam: 20%
- Critical Essay: 15%
- Final Exam: 20%

Total: 100%

**Required Assignments:**

**Reading response:** There will be a total of 5 reading response journals required for the semester to assess your synthesis of the reading material. Journals should be thoughtful and reflect the depth of your critical thought process. Journals are a place for you to explore your thoughts on a given text or topic. Each journal will correspond to a text being explored during the semester. Each journal will provide a discussion question related to the required reading material. Be sure to answer the question fully and thoughtfully. You must submit original work. Each journal should be a minimum of 500 words (1.5 double-spaced pages).
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**Essays (1):** Each student will submit ONE 5-page critical essay in which they will use two scholarly sources (journal article, book, or book chapter—NOT a book review) that compare two critical debates within African American Studies: See Oaks for detailed explanation of the assignment.

**Exams:** Students will be evaluated on two exams for the semester. Exams will be administered online. See OAKS for more detail.

**Grading Scale**

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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>94 – 100%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90 – 93%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87 – 89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>83 – 86%</td>
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<td>67 – 60%</td>
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<td>Below 60%</td>
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**Communication: How Should I Communicate with the Instructor?**

*Ask Three, Then Me!*

I receive hundreds of emails every week, many from students asking questions that could easily be answered by reading the syllabus or asking a classmate. Thus, before emailing me, please follow these steps:

1. Consult the class schedule and syllabus.
2. Check OAKS for announcements and instructions, including the Course Lounge discussion board.
3. Confer with three classmates.

If you still don’t know the answer to your question, you may email me directly at martinkl2@cofc.edu.

**Email:**

Most organizations are dependent on email for internal and external communications. The way you present yourself in emails says a lot about your work ethic and your priorities. When corresponding with me, please:

- Include AAST 200 DE in the subject line
- Include a respectful greeting (e.g., “Hi Dr. Martin” or “Dear Dr. Martin”)
- Fully sign your name
- Use complete sentences
- Proofread your email

Typically, I will respond to your email within 24 hours, although my response time will be slower on weekends (24–36 hours). I stop responding to emails after 7pm. If
you do not receive a reply within 48 hours, please re-send your message (unless, of course, you haven’t followed the “ask three, then me” policy).

**Face to Face Meetings:**
If an email will not suffice, I’d be happy to schedule a video chat. Use this [appointment calendar](#) to request a virtual meeting. If you don’t have a webcam, we can use the chat feature inside OAKS. Please be sure to schedule face to face meetings at least 24-48 hours in advance to ensure availability. Please keep this in mind when requesting a meeting.

**What Do You Expect from Me?**
Please review the following policies to ensure that you have a clear understanding of what I expect from every student.

**Course Structure:**
This course will be taught exclusively online via OAKS. All course materials are available and assignments will be uploaded and graded via OAKS. It is your responsibility to make sure your account is functioning! This course contains seven [learning modules or units](#), including the Orientation unit. Each module represents a unit of instruction taking place over the course of four days—in a few instances, more days will be allotted. The course modules are located in the [Content](#) tool in OAKS. Everything you need for instruction is located inside each module (required reading, assignments, lectures, etc.)

**Schedule:**
The course will be conducted asynchronously via OAKS; however, it is NOT self-paced. That means you can work through each module at your own pace, but you will not be able to move on to the next module until it is opened to the entire class. A new module will open every four days—in accordance with the course schedule. Also, due to the collaborative nature of the course, there are due dates assigned to the learning activities that must be met.

New **Modules open every four days** and will remain open for the duration of the course. Begin with the Module Checklist and proceed sequentially through the content listed.

**How can I be successful in this Course?**
- Log into OAKS a minimum of 5 days a week during the summer term. Be an active learner and participant in our online community. Set a weekly schedule for this course as with your other courses; put it in your calendar and have dedicated time to work on this course. I recommend 7-10 hours a week to complete reading, lectures, and other assignments. Remember that summer
courses are intensive, condensed versions of semester long courses. Keeping pace will be imperative!

★ Maintain your virtual presence—this entire experience will be a bore if students are not willing to participate in discussion boards and other activities meant to keep the course interesting. Don’t troll—let us know you are present by being an active participant in the class. Besides, part of your grade relies on this.

★ *Don’t let the digital realm fool you*—this course will cover the same amount of material as in a face to face course and will likely be more challenging in a digital environment. Please expect the same academic rigor in this course as in any other—perhaps even more.

★ Time management is key. Procrastination is your enemy. Students tend to wait until the last possible moment to complete and submit work. This is the easiest way to fall behind in class and sabotage your grade. Don’t be that person. Stay AHEAD of the course schedule.

★ Use technology to your advantage—OAKS, smart phones, and cloud services allow us to stay organized with numerous apps, sync ability, reminders, alerts, etc. Please make use of all the technology to help you stay on task.

**Discussion Boards and Flipgrid:**

The OAKS Discussion forums are the first place you should visit when you have questions related to the course. For general questions about the course, schedule, assignments, etc. please post questions to the Course Lounge Discussion Board. You are highly encouraged to respond to other participants’ questions if you know the answer to their query.

All content–related questions should be posted to the Module Specific Discussion Boards. This is where you post questions, comments, and ideas related to the information shared in each module.

**Discussion Board/Flipgrid Decorum:**

- Students are required to post written responses or Flipgrid videos to the module specific discussion boards for part of their participation grade. The discussion threads or Flipgrid prompts will be associated with each module and a specific required reading/viewing.
- Discussion posts are due **by 11:59pm on the due date**.
- You are also required to respond to three of your peers’ comments. Responses are also due by **11:59pm on the indicated due date**. This means you need to post early enough in the day to allow time for others to respond to you and for you to respond to three other posts before midnight. Please do not wait until 11pm to post. This is counter–productive for the entire class.
- Remember it is good netiquette to subscribe to and maintain the discussion in threads you create.
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- Discussion boards are a place for you to reflect and respond to what you have learned by reading/ reviewing the required course material. I will provide an open-ended topic to start the discussion—be sure to address the question in your response!
- Comments should be substantive, not simply suggesting that a reading was “good”. You will need to explain your position/opinion and support it with evidence from the course material. 300 word minimum is a good place to start.
  - Basic, superficial, insubstantial comments will earn a basic grade (C or below). If you give the bare minimum, you will earn the bare minimum.
- I am expecting students to demonstrate the depth of their thought process and to synthesize how the material connects to the overall objectives of the course and/or life experience.
- While comments can be informal, you will refrain from using obscene, profane, or discriminatory language. Remember, this is ALWAYS a professional, learning environment.
- Please avoid inflammatory or overly aggressive language and abbreviations that are often used on social media. If you would not say it in a traditional classroom space, you probably should not say it on the discussion board.

**Attendance:**
Just like any organization, this class is a community whose success is dependent on everyone’s participation. Your performance is tied to how frequently you log into the course and how actively you participate.

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Failure to participate in our OAKS class for SEVEN (7) days in a row during any point in the semester will result in a WA, which is equivalent to failing the course.
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Please keep in mind that OAKS allows me to view your online activity. This includes number of logins, materials accessed, and time spent. ***Please keep me informed of any emergencies or hardships related to the Covid-19 pandemic***

**Submitting Assignments**
☆ All written assignments should be submitted electronically to the Drop Box in OAKS.

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Assignments that are emailed, left in my mailbox, slid under my office door, or have file extensions other than .pdf will not be accepted.
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☆ *Murphy’s Law:* “Anything that can go wrong, will go wrong.” Laptops are stolen. Hard drives crash. Your wireless connection fails. So, do not wait until the last minute to submit your assignments and SAVE OFTEN.
☆ Always save duplicates of your work on an external source (e.g., thumb drive, Google Drive, Dropbox.com). Every single semester, a student loses their work because of a hard drive crash or the Library computer logging off unexpectedly.
☆ For your protection, keep all assignments that are graded and handed back to you until final grades have been submitted at the end of the semester.

**Late Work**
I expect you to treat this class like a job and deadlines must be met. **LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** Please don’t make things awkward by asking for an extension.
☆ Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due by 11:59 PM EST on the due date listed in the course schedule.
  ➢ If you are in a time zone other than EST, make sure you pay very close attention to dates/times. I recommend changing your time zone setting in OAKS to Eastern Standard Time to prevent confusion. You can accomplish this by clicking on your name in the upper right corner of OAKS, then choose Account Settings.
☆ If *extraordinary* circumstances arise (e.g., hospitalization), notify me as soon as possible so arrangements can be made.
☆ If you know you will not have access to OAKS when an assignment is due, it is your responsibility to turn in the assignment early.

**Classroom Etiquette:**
The classroom is first and foremost a learning environment. Students should feel safe and comfortable to speak freely on their ideas and opinions. We will be courteous to each other and display the utmost respect for everyone in the class. I will not tolerate profane, distasteful, or discriminatory language even in an online environment. Conduct your netiquette accordingly!

**Netiquette** is a combination of the words “network” and “etiquette” and refers to codes of online conduct. Because online communication generally lacks visual cues present in face-to-face interactions, misunderstandings and conflict can easily arise. Thus, please abide by the following netiquette rules when communicating with me and your peers during this class:
☆ Tend your threads. If you post a question or comment to the discussion boards, reply to everyone who has contributed to the conversation you started.
☆ Use appropriate capitalization. Using all capital letters is the equivalent of yelling (aside from acronyms).
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★ Be mindful of “flames” -- These are outbursts of extreme emotion or opinion.
★ Think before you hit the post (enter/reply) button. Once posted, you can't take it back!
★ Use clear subject lines in emails and discussion board posts.
★ Use abbreviations or acronyms only if the entire class knows them. If not, define them. Avoid distasteful acronyms used in texts and social media. This is not the appropriate space for it.
★ Be forgiving. Anyone can make a mistake. We’re all learning together.
★ Keep the dialog collegial and professional. We each have different teaching philosophies and opinions about online education. We do not have to agree to learn from one another or engage in discussion.

Technical Difficulties:
If you have questions or problems related to the course, please follow the communication procedures noted above. If you have technical problems, please contact Student Computing Support or Helpdesk using these methods:
  • Student Computing Support
    ○ 843-953-5457
    ○ studentcomputingsupport@cofc.edu
    ○ blogs.cofc.edu/scs
  • Helpdesk
    ○ 843-953-3375
    ○ helpdesk@cofc.edu
    ○ it.cofc.edu/help/helpdesk

It’s important to resolve technical problems swiftly, so do not delay getting support.
  • Please Note: Computer failure/unavailability and internet inconsistency/unavailability do not constitute an excuse for not completing assignments by the due dates.

American Disabilities Act:
The College of Charleston is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities, as required under federal law. Students who require academic adjustments in the classroom should apply at the Center for Disability Services / SNAP, located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104.

☆ Students with approved SNAP accommodations must email me the Professor Notification Letter and discuss your needs during the first week of class via email or a phone call. I want you to be successful, so please talk with me!

☆ Students approved to receive accommodations are responsible for contacting me at least one week before any accommodation is needed. Please plan ahead.
**Academic Honor Code:**
The academic honor code forbids lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as presenting the work of others as your own and copying sources without citation. Plagiarism or cheating on an exam will result in an XF grade for the course. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration -- working together without permission -- is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others’ exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance. Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor. Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at [http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php](http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php)

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**Course Schedule:**

**Module 1: Orientation (Due June 6, 2020)**
- **See:** Instructor Introduction video
- **Read:** Course Syllabus, Academic Honesty Policy, Turnitin.com Statement
- **Apply:** Complete Syllabus Quiz, Post “Selfie” Introduction Video (via Flipgrid), complete Academic honesty quiz

**Module 2: Africa and the Ancestors (Due June 10, 2020)**

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Identify major figures, cultural heritage, and historical movements in pre-colonial African history.
- **See:** Voicethread Lectures:
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- Africa and the Ancestors, Part I  
  - Flipgrid Discussion
- Africa and the Ancestors, Part II  
  - Flipgrid Discussion

View: Lost Kingdoms of Africa: Asante Kingdom (documentary, 58 minutes)
- Reading Response #1
- Module Exit Quiz

Module 3: Creating the Black Atlantic  (Due: June 14, 2020)

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Analyze and recognize the cultural transformation and retentions of the African Diaspora during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade
- See: The Black Atlantic (58 mins.)
- Read: Olaudah Equiano Ch. 1-2  
  - Discussion Board assignment  
  - Voicethread images from Elmina Castle (Ghana)
- See: Voicethread Lecture about Gullah Geechee Culture
- See: “The Language You Cry In” (58 mins)  
  - Flipgrid Discussion assignment
- Module Exit Quiz

Module 4: Black Intellectuals and New Negroes  (Due June 18, 2020)

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Make analytical connections between texts, literary/historical periods, and critical debates evolving from the Black Intellectual Tradition in written communication
- Reading: Booker T. Washington, “Atlanta Cotton Exposition Speech” (Text Book)
- Reading: W.E.B. DuBois, “Of Mr. Washington & Others” (1903)  
  - Reading Response #2 assignment
- Reading: Ida B. Wells, “Ch.1: The Case Stated” from A Red Record  
  - Flipgrid Discussion assignment
- Reading: Richard Wright, “The Ethics of Living Jim Crow” (TEXT BOOK)  
  - Flipgrid Discussion Assignment  
  - Midterm Exam (Asynchronous) June 19, 2020

Module 5: Black Transnationals & Pan-Africanism  (Due June 22, 2020)

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Synthesize social and cultural politics of freedom, creativity, and racial uplift to the analysis of transnational black life and culture.
- Film: Marcus Garvey documentary  
  - Discussion Board Assignment
- Reading: Kamau Brathewait’s “Nation Languages” and Geneva Smitherman’s “Black Modes of Discourse”  
  - Video: Yoruba v. Lukumi (OAKS)
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- Voicethread Lecture: Black Modes of Discourse or Black English
- Flipgrid Discussion Assignment
- Film: Blacks in Latin America (Dominican Republic & Haiti)  
  Flipgrid Discussion Assignment
- Reading: Julia Alvarez, “A White Woman of Color”  
  - Reading Response #3 Assignment

Module 6: Black Power, Black Studies and Black Art [Due June 26, 2020]

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Understand the historical and social context from which Black Studies as a discipline evolved and recognize its major questions and debates

- View: Rise! (1940–1960)
- Video: Malcolm X, “The Ballot or the Bullet” (Full speech in Text Book)  
  - Reading Response #4--Analyzing Malcolm’s speech
  - Discussion Board Assignment
- Reading: “Black Panther Party 10-point Platform”  
  - Flipgrid Discussion Assignment
- Film: The Black Power Mixtape 1965–1972  
  - Flipgrid Discussion Assignment
- **Essay Assignment due**
- Reading: Maulana Karenga “Black Art: Mute Matter Given Force”
  - Flipgrid Discussion Assignment

Module 7: Black Feminism: [Due June 30, 2020]

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Analyze and synthesize the impact of black feminism on Black Studies as a discipline; comprehend the intersectionality of being black and female.

- Reading: “Combahee River Collective: A Black Feminist Statement”
- Video: June Jordan, “Poem About My Rights”  
  - Flipgrid Discussion Assignment
- Reading: Alice Walker, “In Search of Our Mother’s Gardens” and “Womanism”  
  - Discussion Board Assignment
- Video: Audre Lorde, “The Uses of the Erotic: Erotic as Power”  
  - Flipgrid Discussion Assignment
  - Video: Beyonce’s 2017 Grammy Performance
  - Reading Response Journal#5
- Reading: Angela Davis and Ice Cube Interview  
  - Discussion Board Assignment: Black Feminism and Hip Hop?
- **Final Exam (Asynchronous) July 1, 2020.**