African American History
Instructor: Dr. Kallman
Semester: Fall 2004
Department & Number: History 30A
Course Codes:

Catalog Description. This course examines African-American history from early West Africa to the Civil War. This course fulfills the Social Science group A requirement for an associate degree and applies toward the completion of California state requirements in US History and Institutions. (UC, CSU).

Required Textbooks.
Finkenbine, Roy. Sources of the African-American Past. 2nd ed.

Purposes and Goals of the Course

General:

1. To understand that history is not only an accumulation of facts but also a “way of thinking and understanding.”

2. To learn to apply that “way of thinking” to contemporary issues.
3. To realize that history is as much a question of interpretation as it is absolute truth or fact.

4. To develop skills (reading, research, note-taking, critical thinking, writing, and speaking) that will be useful to academic and professional success.

Specific:

1. To survey the African-American experience from its origins in Africa through the Civil War.

2. To become familiar with key themes, events and persons in African-American history.

3. To critically examine popular preconceptions, myths and misconceptions about African-American history.

4. To understand the contributions of African-Americans to the history of the United States.

Obligations of the Student

Withdrawal from class. IF A STUDENT STOPS PARTICIPATING IN THE CLASS, IT IS THE STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY TO DROP. Students who quit participating but do not officially withdraw will receive an “F” in the course.

Reading Assignments. Text reading assignments are given under each unit. Reading assignment should be completed when scheduled.

Examinations. Students will take a midterm exam and a final exam. Students are responsible for all material covered up to the time of each exam. The comprehensive final exam will cover the
entire course. You must take the exams during the time scheduled. No exceptions. Examinations will be essays and/or objective questions.

Class Participation. Class discussions are a required component of the course and will be graded.

Quizzes. I give brief quizzes based on the assigned reading or classroom discussions on a regular basis throughout the term. You must take the quizzes when scheduled. No exceptions. Quizzes will consist of objective questions.

Critical Book Review. In every course you take you should seek to improve your ability to read effectively, to think clearly, and to write coherently. All learning and all communication of what you have learned depend on these skills. I require each student to write an 1500 word paper. The paper will be a critical review of a book on African-American history taken from the bibliographies in the Hine and Finkenbine texts. The paper is a test of your ability to identify and summarize the most important information about a topic or book. If possible, you should relate your paper to the assigned readings in the class. Your papers must be 100 percent your own work. Plagiarism will result in a grade of "0". You must observe the following GUIDELINES.

The due date is listed in the schedule.

The paper MUST be submitted in MS Word, WordPerfect or Rich Text Format. It should be double-spaced with a margin of one inch all around. Do not use a font larger than 12 point. Do not use fancy fonts.
Use the title of the book reviewed as the title for your paper. Start the paper with a clear statement of a main point. Do not waste time on peripheral concerns.
Organize your paper into coherent paragraphs. Begin each paragraph with a clear topic sentence. Then elaborate with evidence, examples, and implications. No one-sentence paragraphs.
Make each sentence clear to a NAIVE READER--a person who does not know what you know about the topic and, therefore, depends on your paper to learn about it.
Summarize main points in YOUR OWN WORDS. Avoid long direct quotations. Avoid unnecessary jargon; define unfamiliar terms. Include proper citations.
Edit and rewrite until your paper is tight and clear. If you need help with your writing go to the Tutor Center or Writing Lab in Shima 217.
Put your name, the course number and title, the day and hours the class meets and the due date in the upper right-hand corner of your title page. On the last page, please give full bibliographic references in proper form for all sources used to write your paper. Title & bibliography pages do not count as pages of text.
Papers will be graded for both content and mechanics (spelling, grammar, etc.)

Late papers will be deducted 10 points per calendar day.

If you have questions about these directions, discuss them with me before you write. I am available by e-mail or during office hours, and by appointment to talk with you about your work in this course.

Cheating and Plagiarism. One deserves credit for work that is one's own; others must be given credit for their work. Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas (including your fellow students) and claiming them as your own. Be careful in writing papers to
identify all quoted material with quotation marks and a page citation. Passages that are not direct quotes should be in one's own words, not paraphrased from someone else's sentences. Paraphrasing is a form of plagiarism, as is failing to identify quotations properly (with quotation marks and a citation of the author). Any student guilty of cheating or plagiarism will receive a “0”.

Method of Evaluation. I grade as follows:
Quizzes/Classwork/Participation  25%
Midterm exam  25%
Book Review  25%
Final Exam  25%

In the grading system I use, A (90-100) is awarded for work that is exceptional in its quality and originality; B (80-89) represents work that rises above the minimum required; C (70-79) denotes work that is minimally acceptable in accuracy in understanding; while D (60-69) signifies work falling below minimal standards; F (below 60) = failure. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates specified. Late papers will not be accepted without a valid written excuse.

All assignments must be completed when scheduled.

Schedule

Fall Semester Dates: This class starts on August 16 and ends on December 17.

Due dates: All assignments must be completed by 11:00 PM on the assigned due date or closing date.

Book Review Due Date: November 26.
Unit Quizzes: Each unit quiz will be available during the entire time the unit is open. If you do not take the quiz during the assigned time, you will receive a "0" on that unit.

Examinations: The midterm examination and final examination must be taken on the dates allocated.

Unit 1: Aug. 16--Aug. 29  
Unit 2: Aug. 30--Sept. 12  
Unit 3: Sept. 13--Sept. 26  
Unit 4: Sept. 27--Oct. 10  
Unit 5: Oct. 13--Oct. 26  
Unit 6: Oct. 27--Nov. 9  
Unit 7: Nov. 10--Nov. 26  
Unit 8: Nov. 27--Dec. 10  
Final Exam: Dec. 14-Dec. 15

Discussion due dates: Discussions must be completed while their corresponding units are open.

Delta Online Technical Help: Questions related to class content (i.e., history questions, paper writing, etc.) should be directed to me using the Etudes "Message" system. Questions related to the operation of the Etudes program itself should be directed to the Delta Helpdesk by using the link below:

Delta Etudes Technical Assistance

I reserve the right to revise this syllabus if necessary and to announce such revisions in class.