

HIST4357: Topics in African and African American History

Trans-Atlantic Communities

Section 501, Mondays & Wednesdays 5:30-6:45 pm, JO 4.102

Professor:

Dr. Kimberly Hill
B.A., U.T. Austin and U. Cape Town, 2002
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Office Hours:

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*I've known rivers:
I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the
flow of human blood in human veins.
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.
I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.
I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.
I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln
went down to New Orleans, and I've seen its muddy
bosom turn all golden in the sunset.
I've known rivers:
Ancient, dusky rivers.
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.
- Langston Hughes, 1926*

COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

Subject matter will vary from semester to semester. May be repeated for credit as topics vary (9 semester credit hours maximum). Prerequisite: [HIST 1301](#) or [HIST 1302](#) or [HIST 2301](#) or [HIST 2330](#) or [HIST 2331](#) or equivalent. (3-0) R

PURPOSE:

Much has been said and assumed regarding the cultural losses inflicted by the trans-Atlantic African slave trade. Less well publicized are the many ways that people of African descent maintained or renewed connections despite the geographic obstacles. Each week of this course will highlight a specific event that helped to foster a sense of community among people of African descent who lived on different continents sometime between 1700 and 1970.

Our goals are to analyze the strategies behind these events, understand the historical contexts, and compare the results of these events over time. Some of the communities we will observe had a literal political and physical presence; others were based on intangible commonalities such as religion and musical traditions. Studying these communities and the events that shaped them will help us understand the social and cultural history often obscured by colonial politics and slave societies.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Our reading material will include a textbook by the nation's most notable black historian and a selection of primary sources from a companion book.

- Baldwin, Lewis. *Toward the Beloved Community: Martin Luther King, Jr. and South Africa*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1995. ISBN: 978-0829811087
- Harris, Joseph E., ed. *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*. Second Edition. Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1993. ISBN: 978-0882581491
- Horne, Gerald. *Race Woman: The Lives of Shirley Graham Du Bois*. New York: NYU Press, 2002. ISBN: 9780814736487
- Kennedy, Pagan. *Black Livingstone: A True Tale of Adventure in the Nineteenth-Century Congo*. Santa Fe: Santa Fe Writer's Project, 2013. ISBN: 978-0988225268. You may also choose the e-book version.
- Mariners Museum. *Captive Passage: The Transatlantic Slave Trade and the Making of the Americas*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002. ISBN: 978-1588340177

ASSIGNMENTS:	GRADE PERCENTAGE	DUE DATE
Attendance and Participation	10%	Based on activities throughout the semester
Three Response Essays (one page each)	15%	Sept. 13, Oct. 4, & Nov. 29
Visual Map Exercise	20%	Oct. 18
Four-page Comparative Essay	15%	Nov. 8
Final Assignment (Your Choice of an Essay or Presentation)	40%	See Date of Final Exam

Each assignment helps you practice skills that will be useful in later assignments. In each **response essay**, you will use evidence from one of the assigned readings to answer one of the main questions from the syllabus. The **in-class activities** will help you review and compare the readings through group work. The **map exercise** will ask you to identify the locations and characteristics of two communities that influenced African and African American relations any time from the 1700s through the 1960s. Those details will help you write a **comparative essay** combining class material with your own research into a specific aspect of Trans-Atlantic Communities.

And for the **final essay assignment**, you will revise your earlier arguments to present a relevant research question that was not posed in the syllabus. The format will be a model "lesson plan" designed for college or secondary students. You may choose one of three formats: a seven-page essay, a multimedia lesson in blog format, or a 10-minute presentation in the classroom. More details will be provided later in the semester.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

The class schedule may change during the semester. If so, changes will be announced ahead of time.

Week 1: Aug. 21-23

What is the African Diaspora?

Read:

- John Hope Franklin and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *From Slavery to Freedom*, Ch. 2 “Africans in the Atlantic World” (provided in class)

Week 2: Aug. 28-30

What types of communities formed out of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade?

Read:

- Ch. 8 of *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*: “Afro-Mexican Culture and Consciousness During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” p. 125-135

Week 3: Wed. Sept.6

How did people involved in the slave trade communicate?

Read:

- Ch. 5 of *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*: “The Middle Passage and Personality Change Among Diaspora Africans,” p. 83-94

Week 4: Sept.
11-13

How did enslavement alter African identities?

Read:

- Mariners Museum, *Captive Passage*, Ch. 6, p. 123-146
- Ch. 1 of *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*: “The Dialectic Between Diasporas and Homelands,” p. 11-37

ASSIGNMENT: Response Essay #1 due Wed.

Week 5: Sept. 18-20

Where did people of the African Diaspora travel?

Read:

- Mariners Museum, *Captive Passage*, Ch. 8, p. 171-185
- Ch. 24 of *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*: “Garvey and Scattered Africa,” p. 441-447

Week 6: Sept. 25-27

What motivated some African Americans to emigrate to Africa?

Read:

- Ch. 20 of *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*: "The Role of African American Women in the Founding of Liberia," p. 369-383

Week 7: Oct. 2- 4

How did Africans contribute to international campaigns for abolition?

Read:

- Mariners Museum, *Captive Passage*, Ch. 7, p. 149-169

ASSIGNMENT: Response Essay 2 due Wed.

Week 8: Oct. 9-11

How did African American expat communities relate to their African neighbors?

Read:

- Ch. 19 of *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*: "The Sierra Leone Krios: A Reappraisal from the Perspective of the African Diaspora" p. 339-361

Week 9: Oct. 16-18

What religious influences did Africans and African Americans share?

Read:

- Ch. 4 of *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*: "African Religions in America: Theoretical Perspectives," p. 65-77

ASSIGNMENT: Map Exercise due Wed.

Week 10: Oct. 23-25

In what ways did African American missionaries help establish new West African communities?

Read:

- Kimberly D. Hill, "Maria Fearing: Domestic Adventurer," in *Alabama Women*, ed. by Susan Ashmore and Lisa Dorr (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 2017), 90-107. (posted on E-Learning)

Week 11: Oct. 30-Nov. 1	What influence did African neighbors have on African American missionaries?
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Read:

- Kennedy, *Black Livingstone*, Ch. 6 and Ch. 8

Week 12: Nov. 6-8	What is Pan-Africanism?
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Read:

- Horne, *Race Woman*, Introduction and Ch. 8

ASSIGNMENT: Comparative Essay due Wed.

Week 13: Nov. 13-15	How did African and African American leaders work together to oppose imperialism?
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Read:

- Horne, *Race Woman*, Ch. 9

Week 14: Nov. 20-22	FALL BREAK (enjoy your holiday)
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Week 15: Nov. 27-29	How did the black freedom struggles in the U.S. and Africa inspire each other?
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Read:

- Baldwin, *Toward the Beloved Community*, Ch. 1, p. 7-24

ASSIGNMENT: Response Essay #3 due Wed.

Week 16: Dec. 4-6	What are the significant legacies of Trans-Atlantic communities? (Discussion and Project Planning on Wed.)
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Read:

- Baldwin, *Toward the Beloved Community*, Ch. 2, p. 25-63

Final Essay	ASSIGNMENT: Submit your final essay in paper and on E-Learning by the end of your scheduled final exam session. There will be no final test. See your finals schedule on Galaxy.
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GOALS:

Successful students will:

- ✓ understand the evolution and global influence of the African American population in the United States
- ✓ analyze the effects of social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on the development of African Americans
- ✓ improve their writing skills
- ✓ analyze various interpretations of major developments in African American history
- ✓ differentiate and analyze documentary and statistical historical evidence and differing points of view
- ✓ use a variety of resources to learn about the American past and answer history-based questions

My Responsibilities: I will do my best to provide informative lectures and academic guidance throughout the semester. Each class will begin with a lecture outline to guide your note taking. Though I cannot provide lecture notes, I will remain accessible during office hours and by e-mail to discuss history, class work, academic issues, and college resources. Unless there is an emergency, I will check e-mail twice a day between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. except for weekends. Quizzes, midterms, and written assignments will be graded and returned within two weeks of the due date.

Your Responsibilities: You are expected to uphold the standards of student conduct. Come to class prepared to take notes, ask questions, and discuss the assigned readings. You should attend every class session because lectures will include information not covered in the readings. Also, we gain a better understanding of people in the American past from listening and responding to each other's diverse perspectives.

Copy the lecture outlines and key terms for each class session. Ask a classmate for notes if you miss a class. If you have trouble understanding reading assignments or exam questions, ask Dr. Hill for help and sign up for free on-campus tutoring. As a courtesy to other students, please sit near the door if you need to leave class early. Do not cross the front of the classroom if you arrive late; choose a seat near the side or the back. Please silence phones or other devices during class time.

ATTENDANCE AND LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICIES:

Call my office ahead of time if you must miss your exam or assignment deadlines. An unexcused absence on the day of your quiz or essay assignment will result in zero credit for the assignment. Make-up quizzes will only be offered in exceptional and unavoidable circumstances, and you will need documentation such as a doctor's note. No late essay assignments will be accepted without prior notice in writing. The grades for late essays will be reduced by one letter grade for each additional day. Do not plagiarize others' work; your entire course grade may be withheld. If you need to drop the course, contact the Registrar's office for the appropriate forms. I will not drop students from this course based on attendance.

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU SUCCEED:

The Office of Student Success operates the **Student Success Center** (SSC, <http://www.utdallas.edu/studentsuccess>), which offers assistance to students in the areas of writing, mathematics, communication, multiple science fields, reading, study skills, and other academic disciplines. These services are available through individual and small group appointments, workshops, short courses, and a variety of online and instructional technologies. All students enrolled at UT Dallas are eligible for these services.

It is the policy and practice of UTD to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. However, written notification from the Office of Student AccessAbility (OSA) is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with your professor and allow one week advance notice. Students who have questions about receiving accommodations, or those who have, or think they may have, a disability (mobility, sensory, health, psychological, learning, etc.) are invited to contact OSA for a confidential discussion at 972-883-2098 or by email at studentaccess@utdallas.edu.

Sharing Confidential Information

Students considering sharing personal information in email, in person, or within assignments or exams should be aware that faculty members and teaching/research assistants are required by UT Dallas policy to report information about sexual misconduct to the UT Dallas Title IX Coordinator. Per university policy, faculty have been informed that they must identify the student to the UT Dallas Title IX Coordinator. Students who wish to have confidential discussions of incidents related to sexual harassment or sexual misconduct should contact the Student Counseling Center (972-883-2527 or after hours 972-UTD-TALK or 972-883-8255), the Women's Center (972-883-8255), a health care provider in the Student Health Center (972-883-2747), the clergyperson (or other legally recognized religious advisor) of their choice, or an off-campus resource (i.e., rape crisis center, doctor, psychologist). Students who are sexually assaulted, harassed, or victims of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, or stalking, are encouraged to directly report these incidents to the UT Dallas Police Department at 972-883-2222 or to the Title IX Coordinator at 972-883-2218. Additional information and resources may be found at <http://www.utdallas.edu/oiec/title-ix/resources>.

Campus Carry

The University's concealed handgun policy is posted on the campus carry website: <https://www.utdallas.edu/campuscarry/>