African-American History

Curriculum Created by:
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White Plains High School History Department
African-American History
2015-16

Instructor: Mr. Richard Dillon

This course traces the historical and political experiences of Black America from colonial times to the present. It explores the existence of Blacks in America and compares and contrasts their experience with that of other ethnic groups.

Students will encounter and contemplate the social, economic and legal institutions which have characterized being black in the U.S. at various periods in the nation’s history. Classes also will examine the development of political theory and action among Black Americans in response to conditions they have faced and continue to face. As well, close study of several major events and political movements allows students to develop interpretations of political interaction in America.

This course introduces students to the uniqueness of the Black American experience through the avenues of economics, political developments, social structures and human relations. In addition, students will examine the role that identity, resistance (passive and aggressive) and organization have played in reaching various milestones throughout the African American experience.

Relevance
A quick glance at events currently in the news demonstrates how such a course is essential and relevant. We need look no further than evening television broadcasts, radio programs or blogs to know that America is engaged in a vociferous and, at times, contentious conversation about race matters. Indeed, the election of the nation’s first African American president contributes greatly to this on-going national discussion.

If our students will be expected to fruitfully contribute to this conversation, their awareness and historical perspective will be vital. This course will arm them to participate in the public square and in their personal and professional interactions going forward.

Learning Objectives:
Upon the completion of the course the student will be able to do the following:

1. Identify many of the principal figures in African American history and their contributions;
2. Associate their proponents with the main ideas that characterized ethnic relations at various points in the history of the U.S.;
3. Synthesize historical factual content and theory into interpretations of the various key events;
4. Trace the progression of legal status for black Americans;
5. Compare the political ideologies of major African American movements and leaders;
6. Describe the socio-economic complexity of African American experiences;
7. Explain the origins of some major social, economic, or political issues engaging African Americans today.

**Methods of Instruction**: Methods of instruction may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Lecture and whole-group discussion: lectures will focus attention on essential factual content (critical events and individuals), while whole-group discussions will develop understanding of their significance
- Directed study of ancillary materials (hand outs, original materials): Out-of-class reading of texts, primary sources and secondary sources will be guided by developed question sets, to build analytical and interpretive skills. Such directed reading will be used as the basis for in-class large and small group discussions and/or out-of-class written work
- Videos and projectable materials will be used to illustrate lecture points or to prompt small group discussions
- Student debate research teams may be utilized to foster more in-depth analysis
- Term paper research will encourage the integration of approaches learned in the course and will provide students with the opportunity to independently synthesize course material

**Course Requirements**

A. Any written work (except in-class exams or essays) must be prepared in typescript, double-spaced.

B. "Integrity is expected of all students in an academic environment. A charge of academic dishonesty is a serious one and can have serious consequences if guilt is established." Plagiarism of any given or submitted work in this class will result in a grade of "F" for that work. In addition a "formal report of academic dishonesty will be made in writing to the department coordinator and the Principal."

C. Required readings are most useful if read before that section in class. Failing this, all such readings should be completed prior to a scheduled exam, as they will be directly incorporated therein.

D. Project and Exam due dates are fixed. Failure to attend exams will require a documented, acceptable excuse for early or late administration. Failure to meet project deadlines will be penalized at the equivalent of one letter grade per calendar day. All assignments are due in class on the assigned date and late penalty for the first day is assessed immediately after class on that assigned date.
Methods of Evaluation:

- Assessments (Quizzes, and Exams) 50%
- Classwork (e.g. Participation and presentations) 30%
- Homework (e.g. Guided readings and essays) 20%

Required Text:

*From Slavery to Freedom* by John Hope Franklin.

Supplementary readings
Course Content

Unit 1.
A. Abolitionism & Black Nationalism
   1. The Anti-slavery Movement
      - Erosion of Rights, Economic Polarity, and the Abolitionist Campaign
      - Frederick Douglass
      - Colonization Movement
   2. Pro-slavery Ideology & Confederate Policy
      - North vs. South – Slavery as a Cause
      - The role of Black Americans in the War

B. Reconstruction and Redemption
   1. Post War America Slavery: Abolished or merely altered and reinforced?
      - Politics and voting
      - The “Farmers’ Alliance Movement”
   2. The Ku Klux Klan and Terrorism
      - Jim Crow Laws

SWBATS and other areas of investigation

1. Describe the impact that David Walker’s appeal may have had on the anti-slavery movement.
2. Discuss the role that Black abolitionists played in the anti-slavery movement.
3. Explain how the women’s rights movement grew out of the abolitionist movement.
4. Discuss the importance of the Underground Railroad.
5. Discuss the difference between the goals of Black and White abolitionist.
6. Assess the success of the abolition movement.
7. Debate the merits of the Pro-Slavery Argument.
8. Explain the role that print media played in the abolitionist movement.
9. Identify the major events of the 1850’s and explain how these events contributed to the strain of between pro and anti slavery forces.
10. Explain why the election of Abraham Lincoln became the “straw that broke the camel’s back”.
11. Discuss the significance of The Emancipation Proclamation.
12. Discuss Abraham Lincoln’s views on Blacks, emancipation and colonization.
13. Describe the role played by Blacks in The Civil War.
14. What did freedom mean for Blacks, Whites, Northerners and Southerners?
15. Describe the economic, political and social changes brought by Reconstruction.
16. Identify the differences between Presidential Reconstruction and Congressional Reconstruction.
17. Assess the changes brought about by The Reconstruction
18. Explain the circumstances that led to the end of The Reconstruction and the triumph of White supremacy
19. Discuss the cost (impact) to Blacks for the North’s loss of the peace

Additional Readings:
Walker, David Walker’s *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World*

Films/Documentaries:
Underground Railroad (History Channel)
Glory
Africans in the Americas pt. 4

Unit 2
A. African-American Life 1877-World War I
   1. South
      ▪ Agriculture
      ▪ Urban Life
      ▪ Attempts at Reform
   2. North
      ▪ Urban life
   3. A separate society
      ▪ Plessy
   4. Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee
   5. W.E.B. DuBois, the Niagara Convention, the birth of the N.A.A.C.P.
   6. Woodrow Wilson’s betrayal and WWI
B. Between the Wars- A Period of Calm: But not for everyone
   1. The Other side of normalcy
      ▪ The Red Scare
      ▪ Lynch Laws
      ▪ “Race Riots”
   2. The Great Migration
      ▪ Chicago and New York during the 1920’s
      ▪ Marcus Garvey and Father Divine
      ▪ Harlem Renaissance
   3. The Great Depression and the New Deal (Franklin Chapter 19)
SWBATS and other areas of investigation
1. Compare Black eagerness and opportunity for education during slavery, reconstruction, the late 19th Century and the present.
2. Explain the role played by philanthropists in the establishment of historical Black colleges and universities.
3. Discuss both the advantages and limitations of attaining education during the late 19th century.
4. Explain the origins and the role played by HBCUs during the 19th century and the present. Are these institutions still necessary?
6. Identify and discuss the various roles played by the Black church during the late 19th century and early 20th century; is it buffer/protector? Or opiate?
7. Describe the origins and roles played by various fraternal orders (e.g. Masons) as well as college fraternities and sororities.
8. Explain why many Blacks supported the U.S. during the Spanish-American War. Was this support consistent with other conflicts involving the U.S. past and present?
9. Identify the reason why Blacks migrated to the North.
10. Who was Plessey?
11. Discuss the difference in patterns of violence confronting Blacks in the North and South.
12. Explain the role the Niagara Movement played in the development of the NAACP.
13. Compare the early NAACP activities with those of the present organization.
14. Determine how various issues of this period were handled in the press (e.g. women’s issues, imperialism, WWI and violence directed towards Blacks).
15. Discuss the role played by Blacks during WWI. How did Blacks reconcile with the war for democracy abroad while being lynched at home?
16. Identify the factors that led to the strengthening of the KKK and the subsequent “Red Summer”.
17. Identify Marcus Garvey and the source of his widespread support among many Blacks. Was it Positive appreciation of Blackness and pride in Africa or a reaction to White racism and exclusion?
18. Who was Father Divine? Who is he today?
19. Describe the role played by the Harlem Renaissance in a) resisting oppression and b) celebrating Black pride. (Franklin, Chapter 18)
20. Assess the impact that the Great Depression had on Blacks.
21. Evaluate the impact that Roosevelt’s New Deal had on Blacks economically, and politically. (Franklin, Chapter 19)
22. Determine the degree to which New Deal programs impacted the participation of Blacks in labor unions.
23. Assess the survival and growth of Black institutions and culture between the World Wars.
**Additional Readings:**

Allen, James. *Without Sanctuary: Lynching photography in America*

Anderson, James D. *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*

Dubois, W.E.B. *The Souls of Black Folk*

Friedman, David M. *A mind of its own*


Ross, Lawrence C. *The Divine Nine: The history of African American fraternities and sororities*

Sitkoff, Howard *A New Deal for Blacks: The Emergence of Civil Rights as a National Issue: The Depression Decade*

Period Magazines and Newspapers e.g. *The Crisis, Harpers Weekly, New York Times, Atlanta Journal Constitution*

**Films/Documentaries:**

*Africans in the Americas* pt. 4

*Rosewood*

*Burning of Tulsa*

*Marcus Garvey (A&E Biographies)*

*Harlem Renaissance*

*The Great Debaters*

**Unit 3**

A. World War II and the beginning of the end of segregation

1. A. Philip Randolph
   - Executive order 8802
   - War Industry

2. Blacks on the Front lines
   - Tuskegee Airman
   - The Liberators
B. The Civil Rights Movement of the 50’s and 60’s
   1. Who remembers Emmett Till?
   2. Freedom Riders
   3. Medgar, Martin, Malcolm & Stokely
      ▪ Integration versus Separatism versus Nationalism
   4. Success and Disillusionment

SWBATS and other areas of investigation
1. Explain the American Dilemma
2. Compare and contrast Black protest against the military during WWI and WWII
3. Identify A.P. Randolph and explain his role in turning labor issues into civil rights issues
4. Discuss the roles Black GIs played and the treatment they received during WWII (Franklin, Chapter 21)
5. Describe the political, social and economic landscape that Blacks faced after WWII
6. Identify the measures taken by the Federal Government to address issues of discrimination
7. Discuss both Black and White responses to progressive changes after the war—how did these changes affect Blacks in the south?
8. Describe the causes and effects of post WWII urbanization.
9. Why is 1954 sometimes referred to as the beginning of the end of segregation
10. Debate the notion that the Civil Rights movement was a Black Revolution
11. Evaluate the actions of the various Civil Rights Organizations
12. Assess the impact that young people had on the movement
13. Reinforce the role that women played in the movement
14. Examine the civil rights stance of the U.S. Presidents between 1945-1968 (Who deserves to be remembered as the “Civil Rights President?”)
15. Discuss the following: “White participation in the civil rights movement helped and hurt the movement”
16. Debate the merits of the Black Power Movement and other radical elements of the era
17. Discuss the following: “As Blacks began to make incremental gains, the push back from Whites increased in intensity”
18. Create a balance sheet of the Civil Rights Movement
19. Assess the cost of the gains made by Blacks during the Civil Rights Era
20. Appraise the 1970’s. “A non decade, a period of reflection or shades of things to come?”
Additional Readings:
Marable, Manning *Malcolm X: A life of Reinvention*

Films/Documentaries:
Eyes on the Prize
Children’s march
Cadillac Records
Race: The Power of Illusion pt. 3

Unit 4
A. 1970s through 90s: Closing the Gap or Pulling up the Ladder?
   1. Affirmative Action and Backlash
      ▪ Before Michigan there was Bakke
   2. Carter and Reagan variation of the theme: “Up the Down Escalator”
   3. Power and not in title alone: The ascendancy of Blacks into positions of power
      ▪ Cosby, Winfrey, and Thomas: Leaders of the New School
B. Current Era: The State of African Americans Today
   1. Gains and Challenges
      ▪ Economics, Class and Ethnicity
      ▪ Political Issues and Options
   2. The Prison System
      ▪ Justice or Just us?
      ▪ Racial Profiling
   3. Black Pride: its impact on identity and on emerging ethnic and gender groups
   4. Non-US Blacks: Culture versus “Race” and “Color”
   5. Leaders and Perspectives - Voices from the Ebony Tower

SWBATS and other areas of investigation
1. Discuss why race is still a hot topic today - why can’t we get past it
2. How will globalization affect affirmative action and other social programs?
4. Debate the notion of the African-American athlete as the modern day plantation slave
5. Discuss the concept of a cultural "Great White Hope" and its significance and ever changing perception, i.e. are Elvis and Eminem the same in their impact on African American and American culture?

6. Discuss the validity of W.E.B. DuBois' "twoness" concept as it relates to present day Blacks and its representations in modern culture via educational access, economic success and corporate inroads

7. How will the Hispanic growth rate affect Blacks politically - will Blacks lose clout and power in the political arena

8. Identify the economic forces (companies, spheres, industries) that benefit from the status quo

9. Do successful African Americans have a responsibility to "give back to the Black Community?"

10. Has integration been a good thing for the African-American community?

Additional Readings:
Cose, Ellis The End of Anger: A New Generations Take on Race and Rage
Dickerson, Deborah The End of Blackness
Dyson, Michael Eric Is Bill Cosby right: or has the Black middle class lost its mind?
Hacker, Andrew Two nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile and Unequal
Obama, Barrack Dreams of My Father: A story of race and Inheritance
Rhoden, William 50 Million Dollar Slaves
Robinson, Eugene Disintegration: The Splintering of Black America
West, Cornel Race Matters
Wise, Tim Between Barrack and a hard place: Racism and White Denial in the Age of Obama

Films/Documentaries:
Do the Right Thing
School Daze
The Human Stain

ASSESSMENT: Students progress will be evaluated via weekly quizzes, unit exams, and essay responses to various reading, documentaries, and films. In addition students are expected to participate (respond) to weekly blog questions.

Term Paper due ______________ by 3PM no Exceptions