



AMST 250mgw

Units: 4

Spring 2020

Lecture: Tuesdays-Thursdays 12:30-1:50pm

Location: SGM 101

Instructor: Professor Lydie Moudileno

Office: Taper Hall 278

Office Hours: Tuesdays 3-4pm

Contact Info: moudilen@usc.edu

Teaching Assistants:

Aurelien Davennes

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General Education: This course satisfies the university's general education requirement.

Diversity: This course satisfies the university's diversity requirement.

Course Description

This course will introduce students to the distinctive histories, cultures and identities that share a connection to Africa as a place of origin. From ancient times to the 21st century, people have both lived in—and left—Africa individually or collectively, for reasons ranging from the Transatlantic slave trade to modern experiences of voluntary or forced migration. Progressing chronologically from the early modern period (narrating slavery, the Haitian Revolution) to the twentieth century (Panafrikanism, the Harlem Renaissance) to last twenty years (recent migrants, cosmopolitanism), this course will examine singular experiences of diasporic subjectivity around the world, as accounted for in a range of different sources. These will include critical theory, fiction, music and the visual arts, as well as other media where diasporic identities are shaped, discussed and circulated. Particular attention will be paid to the ways blackness as a category necessarily intersects with (among many others) issues of space, language, citizenship, gender and sexuality, memory and politics. While focused on the Atlantic world, this course will also underscore the multidirectional scope of African mobility within the African continent and across the globe.

We will read authors such as W.E.B. Du Bois, C.L.R. James, James Baldwin, Frantz Fanon, Toni Morrison, Ta Nehisi Coates, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Course material will also include several films (Sembene Ousmane's *Thiaroye*, Raoul Peck's *I am not your Negro*, and Ryan Coogler's *Black Panther*).

Learning Objectives

- Analyze the history and evolution of African diasporic experiences, nomadic movements, and freedom dreams, and assess their potential relationships to our current sociocultural and political moment.
- Explore the ways in which writers, musicians, and other thinkers create and critique cultural practices and creative works that deal with African diasporic experiences.
- Think about some of the intersections of race, gender, class, and post/colonial history that manifest in the African diaspora.
- Examine how dynamics of displacement, mass migration, immigration, transnationalism, exile, and adventure have been constitutive of the history of the African diaspora.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Michael Gomez, *Reversing Sail. A History of the African Diaspora*.

The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African.

Harriett Jacobs. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins*

James Baldwin. "Notes of a Native Son"

Ta-Nehisi Coates. *Between the World and me*

Toni Morrison, *Sula*

Chimamanda Adichie, *Americanah*,

Description and Assessment of Assignments

This course follows the general rules of Dornsife College at USC in that class attendance and participation is required of all students. Attendance will be taken in both lecture and discussion. Any absences in either lecture or discussion section beyond the three allotted as excused (cumulative in both lecture and discussion) will count against the student's final grade: three percentage points per absence. With the exception of documented emergencies, excused absences will only be offered if documentation (i.e., a physician's note) is provided to TAs at least 24 hours in advance.

Unless otherwise noted on the syllabus or in class, students are to bring their books or a copy of that day's reading to class. If the reading includes an article, students should bring a paper copy to class.

NO CELL PHONES.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION. No late work or makeup quizzes are possible. Students must come to every class with paper and pen/pencil, and able to submit paper assignments in class.

COMMUNICATION. All instructors are available on a weekly basis for office hours, and can be reached via email at the addresses given on the first page. Students must allow instructors a day or two to read their messages, get the appropriate answers, and send responses back to them.

Questions about the logistics of the course may be shared by several students and can usefully be asked during discussion section so that your group can hear the response as well. For most questions, students should first contact the doctoral student leading their discussion section.

However, students should feel free to schedule an appointment with the professor as needed.

In-Class Assignments (25%)

Discussion sections include in-class assignments (such as essays, debates, reports, presentations, etc.), designed by the doctoral student leading your discussion section. These assignments require students process works read and ideas discussed in class.

Quizzes (15%)

There will be 3 to 5 surprise quizzes over the course of the semester.

These quizzes will always take place at the beginning of the lecture (with the whole class).

When the quiz is announced, students will have 5 to 10 minutes to silently review their own handwritten notes before the questions are put on the screen. No talking or sharing notes during this brief review session. Quizzes help evaluate how well students follow lectures, take and review their notes, and keep up with the assigned reading. They also provide sample questions for the Midterm and the Final. The lowest quiz score is dropped in the final calculation of the overall quiz grade. (So, for example, out of 5 quizzes, only the best 4 would count.)

Midterm Exam (30%) and Final Exam (30%)

Exams give students a chance to demonstrate their understanding of the material covered in lectures and in discussion sections. Each exam will include three parts: I) Defining key terms; II) short answer questions; III) essays. For the Midterm, the first two parts of the exam (defining key terms & short answer) will be given in lecture. The essay part of the exam will

be given in discussion section. The Final will cover all three parts in one sitting. Both are sit-down exams. Students must use blue books which can be purchased at the USC bookstore and libraries.

Grading Breakdown

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points	% of Grade
In-class assignments		25%
Quizzes		15%
Midterm exam		30%
Final exam		30%
TOTAL		100%

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Course Schedule:

Week 1- **Introductions**

Read: Palmer, Colin, "The African Diaspora" (available on Blackboard)

Read: Gomez, *Reversing Sail*, Introduction and Chapters 1-3 (pp. 1-55)

Week 2- **Africa as origin**

Tues, Jan 21- The Interesting Life of Olaudah Equiano, chap 1 and 2 (pp 31-61) Use online link on BB <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/15399/15399-h/15399-h.htm>

Thur, Jan 23- Equiano, chap 4, 5, 6.

Week 3- **Representing Slavery**

Tues, Jan 28- *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Preface, Introduction + chaps I-VIII (pp 5-70)

Thur, Jan 30- *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, chaps XXIX- end. (pp 224-303)

Week 4- **Icons of the Diaspora: Haiti in the diasporic imagination**

Tues, Feb 4: CLR James, *The Black Jacobins*. Chapter 1, "The Property" (6-26); Chapter 2, "The owners" (27-61)

Thur, Feb 6: CLR James, *The Black Jacobins* ("The San Domingo masses begin" (85-117)
"Appendix. From Toussaint L'Ouverture to Fidel Castro" (391-418)

Week 5- **Gendering the African Diaspora**

Tues, Feb 11- Toni Morrison, *Sula*, part 1 (Foreword+ 1919-1921)

Thur, Feb 13- Toni Morrison, *Sula*, part II (1922-1927)

Week 6- **Gendering the African Diaspora**

Tues, Feb 18- *Sula*, part 2

Thur, Feb 20- Essays- Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother*, Chapter 1 ("Afrotopia" pp 19-48)

Week 7- **Icons of the Diaspora: James Baldwin**

Tues, Feb 25- Baldwin "Notes of a Native Son" (selection)

Thur, Feb 27- Film: Raoul Peck, *I am not your Negro*

Week 8- March 3-5= **MIDTERM+ REVIEW**

Week 9- **Beyond America: Afro-Europe, part 1**

Tues, Mar 10- Essays: Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic* (introduction), Brent Edwards. *The Practice of diaspora*, introduction

Thur, Mar 12- Frantz Fanon, *Black skin white masks*, (selected chapters).

SPRING BREAK

Week 11- **Afro-Europe, part 2 (Film)**

Tues, Mar 24- Film: Sembene Ousmane, *Thiaroye*

Thur, Mar 26- Celine Sciamma *Girlhood* OR Alice Diop, *Vers la tendresse*

Week 12- **Blackness in the 21st century**

Tues, Mar 31- Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and me*
Thur, Apr 2- Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and me*

Week 13- New epics of diaspora: “I, too, Am America”

Tues, Apr 7- Adichie, *Americanah*, part 1
Thur, Apr 9- *Americanah*, part 2

Week 14- New epics of diaspora

Tues, Apr 14- *Americanah*, part 3
Thur, Apr 16- *Americanah*, part 4

Week 15- Essays, tbd

Tues, Apr 21- Essays/Interviews, tbd
Thur, Apr 23- Essays

Week 16- Re-imagining Africa

Tues, Apr 28- Manifestoes: In search of new images
Thur, Apr 30- Afrofuturism: *Black Panther*

Week 17— Conclusions

Tues, Apr 28- Discuss final exam.
Thur, Apr 30- Conclusions

FINAL EXAM: Friday May 8th, 11-1pm

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298
usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776
dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

Campus Support & Intervention - (213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.