

Black Women, Struggle and the Transnational State*
Spring 2018
ANT 324L/AFR 372F/LAS 324L/WGS340

Professor: Christen A. Smith, Ph.D.

Course Overview

This course surveys black women's experiences living with and confronting state oppression around the world. From the United States to Brazil, black women experience similar patterns of political, social and economic inequality. Transnationally, racism, sexism, patriarchy, homophobia, and classism affect the quality of life of black women, particularly within nation-states with legacies of slavery and colonialism. This course takes a social, cultural, historical and theoretical look at the roots of this inequality and how black women have chosen to respond to it locally and globally. How have interlocking forms of oppression affected black women's access to citizenship? How have black women, in turn, sought to organize themselves in response to this oppression?

Objectives 1) To think critically about the multiple forms of oppression that affect black women's lives globally; 2) To consider how black women's political identity has been defined by experiences with oppression transnationally; 3) To define and articulate black women's agency in response to oppression

Key Topics: Racism, sexism, patriarchy, homophobia, classism, transnationalism, representation, agency, black feminism.

Course Texts:

How We Get Free (2017), Keeanga-Yahmatta Taylor

Electric Arches (2017), Eve Ewing

* Syllabus subject to adjustments by the instructor based on the ongoing needs of the class. All changes will be communicated in a timely fashion to course participants.

Course Schedule

Week 1 – Course Introduction (1/17-1/19)

Week 2 - Slavery (1/22-1/26)

- “Black Purgatory: Enslaved Women's Resistance in Nineteenth-Century Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil”, Ana Lúcia Araújo (2015)
- *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Harriet Jacobs (1861), (excerpts)
- “The Venus Hottentot,” Elizabeth Alexander

*Film: “The Life and Times of Sara Baartman”

Week 3 - Tactics (1/29-2/2)

- “Harriet Ross Tubman Timeline”, Kate Clifford Larson (2014)
- Between History and Fantasy: Harriet Tubman in the Artistic and Popular Imaginary
Janell Hobson (2014)
- “Commemorating an African Queen”, Harcourt Fuller (2014)

Week 4 – Citizenship (2/5-2/9)

- *Southern Horrors*, Ida B. Wells (1892)
- “Deportation” in *Left of Karl Marx* (2007), Carole Boyce Davies
- “TFW Forum on Assata Shakur” (2013) (selections)

*Film: *Ida B. Wells: A Passion for Justice*

Week 5 – Intersectionality (2/12-2/16)

How We Get Free, Keeanga-Yahmatta Taylor (2017)

Week 6 – Amefricanidade (2/19-2/23)

- “For an Afro-Latin American Feminism,” Lélia Gonzalez (1988)
- “Women in Movement”, Sueli Carneiro (translated by Regina Camargo, 2016)**Error!**
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- “Rethinking Radical Anti-Racist Feminist Politics in a Global Neoliberal Context”,
Ochy Curiel (translated by Alexander Ponomareff, 2016)

Week 7 – Transnationalism (2/26-3/2)

- “Transnational Feminist Practices Against War” (Bacchetta et. al 2002)
- “Cartographies of Knowledge and Power,” M. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra
Mohanty 2010)

Week 8 (3/5-3/9)

- Midterm Review 3/5 and 3/7

* Midterm 3/9

Preliminary project report due March 9th

Week 9 – SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES (3/12-3/16)

Week 10 – Land (3/19-3/23)

- “Toward a Geography of Solidarity,” Courtney Morris (2016)
- “Delta Creek Women’s Engagement and Nigerian Oil Insurgency” (Oriola 2012)
- Film: “The War We Are Living”

Week 11 – Health (3/26-3/30)

- “Racial, sociodemographic, and prenatal and childbirth care inequalities in Brazil, 1999-2001”
- [“Nothing Protects Black Women from Dying in Pregnancy and Childbirth”](#), Nina Martin and Renee Montagne (2017)
- *Documentary: “When the Bough Breaks”

Week 12 – Policing (4/2-4/6)

- “Black Magik Women: Policing Appearances” in *Managing African Portugal* (Fikes 2009)
- “Introduction”, *Arrested Justice*, Beth Ritchie (2012)

Week 13 – Prison (4/9-4/13)

- “The Problem of Male Violence Against Black Women” *Arrested Justice*, Beth Ritchie (2012)
- “Domestic Enemies and Carceral Circles: African Women and Criminalization in Italy” Asale Angel-Ajani (2005)
- “Through the Eyes of a Strong Black Woman Survivor of Domestic Violence: An Australian Story”, Robbie Kina (2005)

*Film: “Me Facing Life: The Cyntoia Brown Story”

Week 14 – Healing and Self Expression (4/16-4/20)

- “An Interview with Victoria Santa Cruz”
- “Identity, Female Genealogy, and Memory in the Poetry of Delia McDonald” (Luis 2004)
- Electric Arches* (2017), Eve Ewing

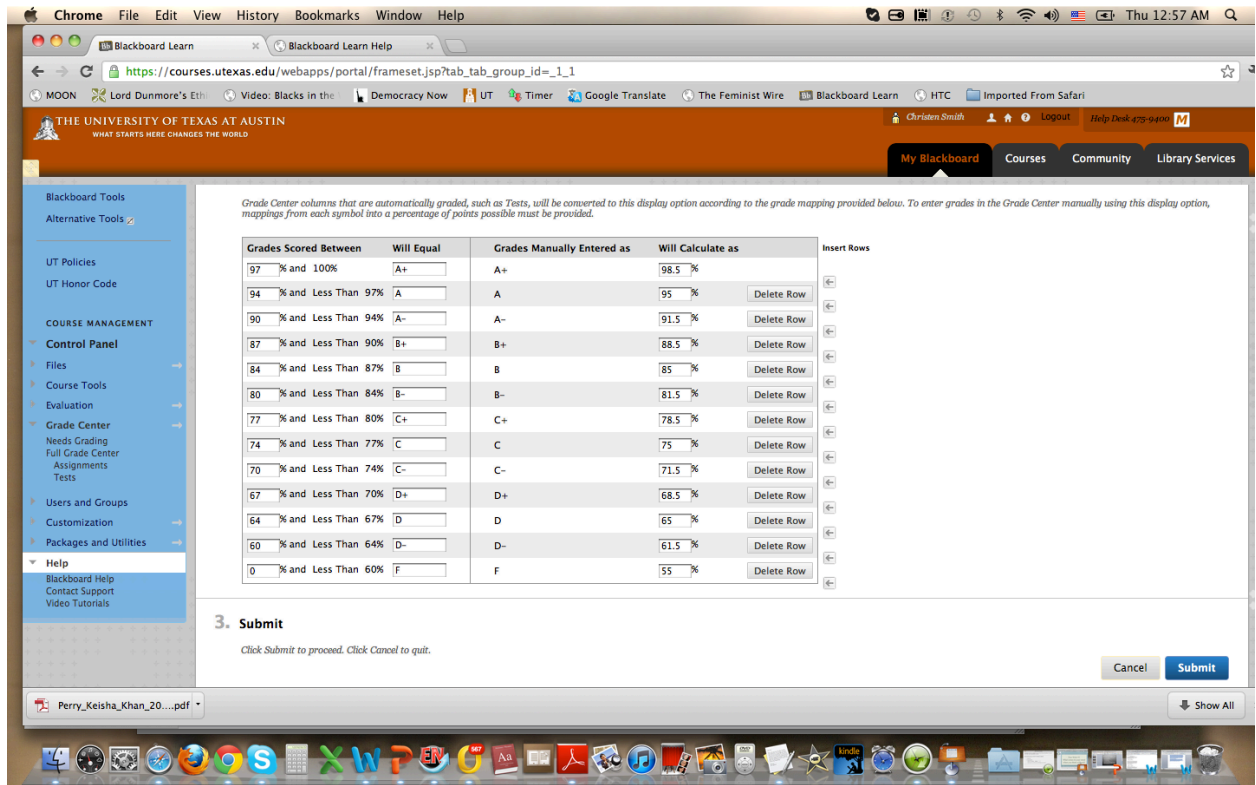
Week 15 – Course Closing (4/23-5/4)

*Final Class Project Wrap-Up and Discussion

Final Report Due May 4th

GRADING CRITERIA AND COURSE GUIDELINES

Grading Scale



How your grade in this class will be calculated:

Class Participation – 25%

- Attendance – 10%
- Engaged participation in class discussion and social media discussions– 15%

Midterm –20%

Final – 20%

Collaborative Class Project – 35%

- Preliminary Report – 10%
- 15% Final Report
- Fieldnotes – 10%

Class Participation

Attendance and Engaged Participation

Students who acquire six or more unexcused absences will receive a failing grade.

Please note that this is an upper level undergraduate seminar and your success in this course depends on close reading and engagement with the texts (readings, films, video clips, web links and information posted to Canvas), as well as active and informed participation in class discussions. You will be responsible for checking the Canvas course site and your email regularly for additional texts and announcements.

Your class participation grade will be based on attendance and *meaningful* participation in class discussions. Meaningful participation is taken to be analytic engagement with the texts and course themes in class discussions (both in the classroom and in virtual classroom space i.e. Facebook or Twitter), not vague commentary or generalizations. Each student is expected to come to class prepared to participate actively in class discussions each week. This includes but is not limited to doing the assigned reading and preparing thoughtful questions to share with the class. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

Those students who take the initiative to *engage critically* with the readings and themes of the class *and* actively participate in class discussions by sharing their ideas and thoughts openly and respectfully on a regular basis will be graded highly. Those who do not participate in class discussions unless called upon will be graded down. *Always be prepared to speak when you are called upon.*

In-Class Assignments: Students will also be graded on their thoughtful completion of in-class assignments. In-class assignments will be assigned throughout the semester at the discretion of the instructor. In-class assignments will be announced in class and/or posted to Canvas. The satisfactory completion of these assignments will be incorporated into this class participation grade.

Collaborative Class Project: Together, our class will conduct an ethnographic study of Black women's experiences living in Austin, TX. This project is a *guided-inquiry* method of learning. Students will be asked to critically reflect on the themes of the class and in groups of 3-4, design a research plan for investigating the topic and reporting on it. The project will extend the entire semester and will include but not be limited to ethnographic field research, participatory mapping, archival research, interviewing and participant observation. Student groups will be given periodic research assignments to fulfill the requirements of this assignment. Each group will be required to submit a **preliminary report** before Spring Break and a **final report** (2500 words) with bibliography to the instructor by the last class day. In addition, the students will be asked to keep a **fieldwork journal** that the instructor will ask to see periodically that the students will submit along with the final report. The instructor will ask that the students submit periodic updates on their research progress to the instructor. Further instructions for will be discussed in class.

GUIDELINES

Due Dates/Late Policy: As a general policy late assignments will not be accepted without the instructor's prior approval. Any late assignments accepted will carry a penalty of 10% of the assignment grade per day late. – **six days late or more will automatically receive a grade of 0.**

I will make exceptions to this penalty policy **only** in the event of a documented medical or family emergency, or if you have official, documented University of Texas business off-campus; in such a case, please notify me as soon as possible.

Format Guidelines for Writing Assignments:

All coursework must be double-spaced and typed in 12pt Times New Roman font. All papers must have 1-inch margins on all sides. Please use the AAA Style Guide: http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style_guide.pdf as a guideline for bibliographies and citations.

Grading Evaluation

Rubrics: Rubrics will be used as grading criteria for most course assignments including class participation. These rubrics will be available on Canvas and will be discussed in-class.

Class Policies

1. Again, please come to class on time and prepared to participate actively in class discussions each day.
2. Hot and cold beverages are okay to bring to class, but please **NO FOOD ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOM** (unless you have brought a goodie for everyone and you have cleared it with me first).
4. Please be attentive and polite to one another during class. If you wish to read the *Texan*, surf the web, talk with your neighbor during lecture, sleep, or do anything else disruptive, then please go elsewhere.
5. Please respect your classmates and your instructor. In this course, there will be a lot of lively discussion and debate. Even if you don't agree with someone, you should still treat that person with respect and be kind. We are all here to learn!
5. Due dates for all assignments are listed on the syllabus and/or will be announced in class and/or will be announced on Canvas. Late assignments carry stiff penalties. Please see note on "due dates" above.

6. **ACADEMIC HONESTY IS IMPERATIVE.** I will refer all cases of academic dishonesty (i.e. cheating and plagiarism) to the Dean of Student's Office. If you have questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, visit the University's official statement: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

Writing Center

I strongly encourage you to use the Undergraduate Writing Center, FAC 211, 471-6222 or <http://uwc.fac.utexas.edu> The Undergraduate Writing Center offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Any undergraduate enrolled in a course at UT can visit the UWC for assistance with any writing project. They work with students from every department on campus, for both academic and non-academic writing. Whether you are writing a lab report, a resume, a term paper, a statement for an application, or your own poetry, UWC consultants will be happy to work with you. Their services are not just for writing with 'problems'. Getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of a successful writing project. Consultants help students develop strategies to improve their writing. The assistance they provide is intended to foster independence. Each student determines how to use the consultant's advice. The consultants are trained to help you work on your writing in ways that preserve the integrity of your work.

Documented Disability Statement

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD. *(Note to Faculty: Details of a student's disability are confidential. Faculty should not ask questions related to a student's condition or diagnosis when receiving an official accommodation letter.)*

- Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.).
- Please notify me as early in the semester as possible if disability-related accommodations for field trips are required. Advanced notice will permit the arrangement of accommodations on the given day (e.g., transportation, site accessibility, etc.).
- Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) or reference SSD's website for more disability-related information: http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean

of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Q drop Policy

The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:

“Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number.”

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Process for grade appeals (Liberal Arts): Students must first contact course instructor, then if dispute not resolved, they must contact Associate Chair. If Associate Chair declines appeal, the student can appeal to the Dean. See below for details. (I have attached the linked pdf to this email as well)

http://www.utexas.edu/cola/student-affairs/_files/pdf/grade_appeals_form_student_version.pdf