

University of Arkansas - Fort Smith
5210 Grand Avenue
P. O. Box 3649
Fort Smith, AR 72913-3649
479-788-7000

General Syllabus

HIST 41233 African-American History to 1865

Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Laboratory Hours: 0

Effective Catalog: 2019-2020

I. Course Information

A. Catalog Description

Development of the culture and history of African-Americans from slavery to emancipation is presented through lecture, selected readings, discussion groups, presentations by students, and preparation of a bibliographical essay.

B. Additional Information

Students will examine contributions of African Americans to American history from 1619 through the 13th Amendment to the Constitution in 1865. Historical eras under our study will include 1) the beginning of the slave plantation institution in the Americas; 2) colonial slavery; 3) the sociology of black adaptation and resistance to slavery; 4) songs and stories in the slave tradition; 5) free blacks, families, and slave life; 6) the Civil War, black volunteerism, and emancipation; and 7) adjustment to freedom.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

A. Subject Matter

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Exhibit mastery of essential factual material about the history of African-Americans in the United States during the period ending in 1865.
2. Analyze African-American history, society, and culture in the United States during the period ending in 1865, identifying, discussing, and comparing recurrent and variable concepts and themes.
3. Describe the institution of slavery in legal and economic terms, as well as evaluate the arguments made by supporters and opponents of the institution.
4. Describe efforts by African-Americans to increase the community's role in American politics.

5. Use tools of historical analysis recovering, researching, and writing about the African-American past.
6. Explain the complexity of both change and continuity over time in African-American society and culture.
7. Evaluate the influence of historical interpretation and historiographical schools of thought, including their sociological elements, as they relate to the history of African-Americans before 1865.
8. Explain the effect of events and ideas from the African-American past on contemporary American society as a whole and African-Americans in particular.

B. University Learning Outcomes

This course enhances student abilities in the following areas:

Global and Cultural Perspectives

By placing the emphasis on social, cultural, and economic factors, students will come to understand the interaction between Africa and the Americas.

Communication Skills (written and oral)

Students will learn to research original sources and write essays in accord with the Chicago Manual of Style.

Analytical Skills

Critical Thinking Skills

Students will learn to analyze slavery and reactions to it. Students will organize presentation groups based on specific sub fields of African American history.

III. Major Course Topics

- A. Overview of West Africa, Geography, Culture, and History
- B. New World Plantations, Barbados and Cuba
- C. The Middle Passage and the Sociology of Slavery
- D. Jamestown and Charlestown: Slavery Comes to the Mainland English Colonies
- E. The “Peculiar Institution”—Slave Societies and Societies with Slaves
- F. The World the Slaves Made - Agency
- G. Free Black People and Abolition Movements
- H. Lincoln, the Civil War, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments