What We'll Be Doing This Semester:

This semester we will explore prominent aspects of social, political, cultural, and economic development in African American history from 1865 to as close to the present as the semester will allow. The guiding questions of the course include: How did we get to where we are today in terms of race relations? How has the position(s) of African Americans in American society changed over time? What have African American historical actors had to say about their own experiences? Most of the reading of the course comes from primary documents that provide multiple perspectives on African Americans’ varying experiences in American society.

What You'll be Doing This Semester:

Reading and Talking! At the end of the day, this class will be all about intensive discussion of the weekly readings. I'll lecture minimally to set the context for our readings and to move us along a general time line of African American history. The rest of the time we'll be talking about what you're reading. You'll find that you learn the subject in a more meaningful and lasting way when you're fully engaged with the material. I won't assign a participation grade. I simply expect that you'll participate because this is your class, too, and you need to take responsibility for your own learning.

Graded Assignments for the course are:

1) Mapping the Reading: Each week (sometimes several times a week) you will complete a reading map. This is designed to motivate you to read! Worth 20% of final grade.

2) Two Reading Papers: Twice during the semester I will ask you to reflect on a series of our readings to make an argument that both analyzes and synthesizes those readings. You will find that if you haven't kept up with the readings, you'll severely limit your ability to write these papers successfully. Worth 25% each.

4) Group Oral Presentation: Groups of 3 students will choose a topic and a corresponding week and help teach the week's subject by giving a 10-15 minute oral presentation. Oral presentations may take a variety of forms, the more creative, the better. Strong presentations will make a forceful and clear central argument, will connect thoughtfully to the week's theme and/or subject matter, and will offer the class interesting and pertinent information on the subject. In addition, a successful presentation requires cohesion (don't try to give three separate presentations one after the other) and dynamism (it helps if you know your subject well and that you express your interest in and your enthusiasm for the subject). Each group will be required to hand in a bibliography. Please use books, journals, and primary documents as your source material. (Come and talk to me about your research for the project!) Worth 10% of final grade.

5) Take-Home Final Exam/Paper: Your final exam will be a take-home essay assignment that will focus most heavily upon the last 1/3 of the semester, but will also ask you to draw upon your knowledge from across the semester. Worth 20% of final grade.
A Word... about attendance and late assignments:

You are expected to attend class regularly. This is where the learning happens. More than THREE absences, excused or unexcused, over the course of the semester will result in a .25 reduction per absence of your final reading map grade. If you are not present in class, you cannot hand in a reading map unless you have talked to me and we have addressed the issue in advance. Late assignments will be penalized .25 per day. Your papers must be handed in at the appointed time so as not to be considered late.

A Final Word:

To be able to fully participate in and learn from our discussions, you must bring copies of the assigned readings to class. Unless you have a documented medical need for use of a laptop in class, I ask that all mobile devices (laptops, cell phones, tablets, etc.) be turned off and stowed out of sight from the moment you enter the classroom until you leave. Note that I’m not just talking about class time but anytime that you are in our classroom. Scholarly research shows that such devices provide more distraction than benefit for students in classes and that students who spend time in class multi-tasking had similar GPAs to those students who did not attend class at all. Plus, it's distracting to other students. And, it's rude. So we'll have none of it; we'll go old school.

What You'll be Reading:

You can purchase at the bookstore:

Nella Larsen, *Passing*
Malcolm X and Alex Haley, *Autobiography of Malcolm X*
Alfred Brophy, *Reconstruction the Dreamland*

All other readings are embedded in the syllabus below.

Weekly Readings and Assignments:

**January 20, 22: Reconstruction's Promise**

1) Black Codes 2) Amendments 13, 14, 15  3) Regosin, "The Freedmen's Bureau"

**January 25, 27, 29: Reconstruction Revisited**

1) Civil Rights Act of 1875 2) Klan Readings 3) Civil Rights Cases

Watch: "Slavery by Another Name"

**February 1, 3, 5: The Jim Crow South**

1) Litwack, "Jim Crow Blues" 2) Rosengarten, "Youth" 3) "Disfranchisement of Black Voters" 4) Sharecropping Contracts  5) Plessy v. Ferguson
February 8, 10, 12: Fighting Back


February 15, 17 (no class on Friday): Fighting Back (and In-Fighting)


February 22, 24, 26: The Era of the Great Migration

1) Du Bois, "Returning Soldiers" 2) "Letters from the Great Migration" 3) 1919 Race Riot 4) Tygiel, "Unreconciled Strivings: Baseball in Jim Crow America"

Watch: "Rosewood" First paper due Feb. 26

February 29, March 2, 4: Harlem Renaissance

1) Marcus Garvey 2) Alain Locke, "An Evaluation of the New Negro" 3) Nella Larsen, Passing

March 7, 9, 11: Democracy?

1) Brophy, Reconstructing the Dreamland

Watch: "Scottsboro"

March 14, 16, 18: Depression and WWII

1) "Unequal Wages" 2) Du Bois, "Petition to the Human Rights Commission" 3) Morehouse, "The Good Fight"

Visitor: Professor Rickerby Hinds, March 16

March 21, 23, 25 SPRING BREAK

March 28, 30, April 1: Roots of Revolution: The 1950s

1) Eyes on the Prize readings, Chs. 1 & 2, excerpts

Watch: Eyes on the Prize, "Awakenings"

April 4, 6, 8: The Civil Rights Movement: SNCC and SCLC

1) Eyes on the Prize readings, Chs. 3 & 4, excerpts
Watch: Eyes on the Prize, "Ain't Scared of your Jails"  Second Paper Due April 8

April 11, 13, 15: Black Nationalism/Black Power


April 18, 20, 22: Civil Rights Movement: Mississippi, Alabama, and Shifting the Gaze to the North

1) Eyes on the Prize readings, Chs. 5 & 6, excerpts

Watch: Eyes on the Prize II: "Two Societies"

April 25, 27 (no class on April 29): Outgrowths

1) "Combahee River Collective Statement"

Watch: Eyes on the Prize II: "The Promised Land"

May 2, 4, 6: Where are we Today?

1) Michelle Alexander, The New Jim Crow (excerpts) 2) Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations"

Final Paper Due May 11 - In my mailbox in Piskor 114 by 4 p.m. Please do not email your paper!