267-01 African-American Biblical Interpretation

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Overview This course will explore African-American biblical interpretation, both from historical and contemporary perspectives. As an important emphasis, students and professor will explore the kinds of Scripture passages and theological perspectives that have been used to convey a liberating message. The course will explore a historical range of African-American biblical interpretations (from 1790 to the present). Students will examine a variety of approaches or perspectives among African-American interpreters; including interpretations from the context of slavery, distinctive interpretations from traditional African-American preaching (post-slavery), and interpretations from modern African-American biblical scholars. THEO 267 is one of the Ethics/Religion and Society electives. As such, it is structured to further E/RS objectives of (a) heightened awareness about ethical and religious dimensions of socially significant issues; (b) increased ability to use theological methods and principles effectively in the analysis of socially significant issues; and (c) strengthened development of a world view that is oriented to responsible action. Thus, a major focus will be historical and social context for interpretation. This course is part of GDST’s race and ethnicity concentration and it counts as an elective in the Peace Studies Minor.

“Canvas Class” The professor has chosen to use the academic web-based resource “Canvas.” Ordinarily, a student can access the Canvas site through the “Canvas” Tab on the right of her or his portal home page. (Login to myxu). For an alternative way to access Canvas try the following URL:  https://canvas.xavier.edu/login.


Selected articles on Electronic-Reserves. Password: justice.

Course Requirements
(1) Class attendance, discussion and participation. Students are expected to attend class regularly except for serious reasons. Excessive absences (over 5 class sessions) may affect one’s grade. Participation in class discussions is important. It is best to read the assignments for each class session prior to that day’s class meeting. The quality of one’s participation is more important than quantity. “Quality” participation involves careful preparation, insightful discussion, and pertinent questions.
All students are required to receive a passing grade on the quiz associated with the library’s tutorial, “Preventing Plagiarism.” The professor must receive your passing score by Monday, January 27. You can find the “Preventing Plagiarism” tutorial at http://www.xavier.edu/library/xututor/plagiarism/index.cfm All students are also required to receive a passing grade on the quiz associated with the library’s tutorial, “Evaluating Websites.” The professors must receive your passing score by Wednesday, February 5. You can find the “Evaluating Websites” tutorial at http://www.xavier.edu/library/xututor/evaluating/index.cfm

This course will use the “Discussion” feature of the “Canvas” web-based resource. Students will be required to post responses to a question or questions posed by the professors. The class will be divided into three groups the first class period. The three groups will take turns in posting a response to a question or questions – based on the reading for the upcoming class period – posed by the professors. Students will respond directly to the question. Students are also encouraged to read responses posted by classmates so that they can reflect upon others’ contributions as well. Students in the group posting that class period must post a response by 7:00 a.m. the day of the class session for which the response is due, to give the professors time to read responses before class. Students may find the Discussion link on the home Canvas page on the left side. Students can access the home page by means of the Canvas tab on the portal or by the following URL: https://canvas.xavier.edu/login.

A Mid-term take home examination will be distributed by Monday, February 17. The mid-term is due at the beginning of class, Friday, February 28. This exam will include four medium-length essay questions.

A Final take home examination will be posted on Canvas by Monday, April 23. The final examination will test student knowledge of material covered in the second half of the term; that is, it will not be comprehensive. It will be due on May 7 between 10:00 – 11:50 a.m.

Two papers are required. Each paper should be 8-10 pages, typed, double-spaced, with one inch margins. Due dates = Monday, March 17 and Wednesday, April 16. Further details on the papers will be posted to Canvas by the end of the second week.

*** Grace days*** Each student is entitled to a grace period for turning in assignments, up to a maximum of 7 days for the Spring semester. This grace period means that you may hand in a mid-term examination late or a paper late, as long as you do not exceed a total of 7 days for the semester. You need not offer the instructors an explanation for the late assignment, unless you exceed the limit. The 7 day grace period will only be extended in the case of a health or family emergency and that extension must be cleared with the instructor. Please use your grace days wisely. The grace days may not be used for the Final Examination.

Grading
The value of the above requirements is: Class attendance, participation, and Discussion postings – 20%; Mid-term - 20%; Final exam – 20%; Papers - 40% (20% each). Numerical grades for these five factors will be weighted according to these percentages. The grading scale will be: A = 100-94%; A- = 93-92%; B+ = 91-90%; B = 89-87%; B- = 86-84%; C+ = 83-82%; C = 81-79%; C- = 78-76; D+ = 75-74%; D = 73-71%; D- 70-68%; F = 67-0% (See Xavier catalog, 43). Class attendance and participation may be used as subjective factors in grading, especially in borderline cases. For policy on departmental grading see http://www.xavier.edu/theology/Grading-Policy.cfm.
DAILY READINGS

Monday, January 13
Introduction to the Course
Review Syllabus

Wednesday, January 15

Friday, January 17
Readings (E-Reserves):
Raboteau, “The African Diaspora.”

Monday, January 20
**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - NO CLASS**

Wednesday, January 22
Readings (E-Reserves):
Raboteau, “Death of the Gods”

Friday, January 24
Readings (E-Reserves): Equiano, “Excerpts from The Interesting Narrative . . .”
Video: Daughters of the Dust

Monday, January 27

Wednesday, January 29

Monday, February 3

Wednesday, February 5

Friday, February 7
Video: Underground Railroad
Monday, February 10
Video continued: Underground Railroad

Wednesday, February 12
Finish Video: Underground Railroad
Discussion

Friday, February 14

Monday, February 17
****Take-Home Mid-Terms Distributed****

Wednesday, February 19
Readings: (a) POP, “An Address before the Pennsylvania . . .,” 80-83; (b) POP, “Ethiopian Manifesto,” 84-89; (c) POP, “Appeal to the Colored Citizens . . .,” 90-109.
Bible Readings: (a) Genesis 1:1-2:4a; (b) Isaiah 1:21-31; (c) Isa. 30:-17; (d) Isa. 58:1-14; (e) Luke 4:16-30.

Friday, February 21
Readings: (a) POP, “Address to the National Convention,” 110-113; (b) POP, “Address Delivered Before the African . . .,” pp. 114-121; (c) POP, “Productions,” 122-130.

Monday, February 24

Wednesday, February 26

Friday, February 28
Readings (E-Reserves): Segovia, Fernando F. “Cultural Studies and Contemporary Biblical Studies”
****Take-Home Mid-Term Examinations Due****

March 3-7  SPRING BREAK  --  NO CLASS

Monday, March 10
Video: This Far By Faith, tape 2.

Wednesday, March 12
Friday, March 14  
Bible Readings: Passages listed under sermon titles.

Monday, March 17  
Video: More from This Far By Faith  
****FIRST PAPER DUE****

Wednesday, March 19  
Readings: (a) DOT, Harriet A. Baker,” 69-90; (b) DOT, “Mary J. Small,” 91-97.  
Bible Readings: Passages listed under sermon titles.

Friday, March 21  
Bible Readings: Passages listed under sermon titles.

Monday, March 24  
Video: More from This Far By Faith

Wednesday, March 26  
Bible Readings: Passages listed under sermon titles.

Friday, March 28  
Bible Readings: Passages listed under sermon titles.

Monday, March 31  
Bible Readings: Passages listed under sermon titles.

Wednesday, April 2  
Readings: *Stony the Road We Trod*, “The Haustafeln (Household Codes) . . .,” 206- 231.  
Bible Readings: Passages referred to in article.

Friday, April 4  
Readings: *Stony the Road We Trod*, “Reading Her Way Through . . .,” 57-77.  
Bible Readings: Passages referred to in article.

Monday, April 7  
Readings (E-Reserves): Excerpts from Martin Luther King, Jr.’s writings.  
Video: Eyes on the Prize  
Bible Readings: Passages referred to in articles and Acts 17:16-34
Wednesday, April 9
Readings (E-Reserves): More excerpts from Martin Luther King Jr.’s writings; *Introducing African American Religion*, 220-234.
Video: Eyes on the Prize cont.
Bible Readings: Passages referred to in articles

Friday, April 11
Bible Readings: Passages referred to in articles

Monday, April 14

Wednesday, April 16
Readings (E-Reserves): Cone, “Black Spirituals: A Theological Interpretation.”
Music CDs in class
****SECOND PAPER DUE****

Friday, April 18
EASTER HOLIDAY – NO CLASS

Monday, April 21
EASTER HOLIDAY – NO CLASS

Wednesday, April 23
Music CDs in class
*****TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAMINATION POSTED*****

Friday, April 25
Readings: Stony the Road We Trod, “Race, Racism, and . . .,” 127-145.
Bible Readings: Passages referred to in article.

Monday, April 28
Readings: *Stony the Road We Trod*, “Who Was Hagar?,” 187-205
Bible Readings: Passages referred to in articles

Wednesday, April 30

Friday, May 2
Wrap-Up and Discussion

*****FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAMINATION DUE
10:00 – 11:50 a.m.; Wednesday, May 7*****