2016

CORE 100-07-11 First Year Seminar: The Black Powers

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Focus: This course provides a cursory overview of the various meanings attached to the concept of black power in the 20th and 21st centuries. To that end we will read selections from the uncollected writings of James Baldwin, a primer on black revolutionary thought (from cultural nationalism to communism) in conjunction with Ta-Nehishi Coates’ best-selling *Between The World and Me*; Angela Davis’ and David Matlin’s analyses of the American prison system; the overlapping but decidedly different takes on black America provided by Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr.; and a DVD on the block power movement.


Other: The Black Mixtape (DVD provided)

Requirements: Two papers, 3-5 pages each. **Paper One:** Opinion paper on the relationship between racism, class structures and economic power as
depicted in the various essays in at least two of the three texts read during the first half of the semester (by authors James Baldwin, Ta-Nehesi Coates and Robert Allen). **Paper Two**: Opinion paper on the problem of economic power, black power and incarceration as depicted in two of the three works by Malcolm X, Martin Luther King and David Matlin).

Midterm examination (take-home) and final examination (in class).

Individual student presentations on any issue, text or author read and discussed during the semester. Students may use note cards, brief essays, power point, posters, etc.

**Regular** and **consistent** participation in class discussions.

Impromptu quizzes. Quizzes can be made up only by counting the **next** quiz as “double.”

**Grading Scale:**

- Final Examination: 25 points
- Midterm Examination: 20 points
- Participation: 15 points
- Paper One: 10 points
- Paper Two: 10 points
- Presentations: 10 points
- Quizzes: 10 points

**Schedule:** Week

1. *The Black Power Mixtape*; Eyes On The Prize : NO CLASS Fri. August 26th
2. *James Baldwin: The Cross of Redemption* (Student-selected essays, speeches and reviews)
3. *James Baldwin: The Cross of Redemption* (Student-selected essays, speeches and reviews)
4. *James Baldwin: The Cross of Redemption* (Student-selected essays, speeches and reviews)
5. *Between The World and Me*, Part I (pp. 5-71)
6. *Between The World and Me*, Part II (pp. 75-152)
8. Black Awakening (Black Nationalism, pp. 89-121; pp. 122-127); Fall Break (October 13-14, 2016): **TAKE-HOME MIDTERM EXAMINATION**
10. *Black Awakening in Capitalist America* (pp. 192-273; 274-284); **NO CLASS** **FRIDAY OCTOBER 28th** **PAPER ONE DUE BY EMAIL**
11. *Malcom X Speaks: Speeches and Statements* (pp. 3-57; 58-87-88-114)
12. *Malcolm X Speaks: Speeches and Statements* (pp. 115-156; 157-178; 179-226)
13. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go From Here?* (pp. 1-68; 69-101; 102-134)
14. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go From Here?* (pp. 135-166; pp. 167-202); **THANKSGIVING**
15. David Matlin, *Prisons: Inside the New America* (pp. 1-55; 57-102; 103-137)
16. Student Presentations; **PAPER TWO DUE FRIDAY DECEMBER 9th**
17. **FINAL EXAMINATION**
Student Learning Outcomes:

GOAL 1: Students will be effective communicators in writing and orally

1. Students will be able to organize and express their ideas in writing and orally
2. Students will be able to formulate clear and arguable theses, supported by evidence drawn from appropriate sources
3. Students will be able to utilize an effective writing process guided by audience, purpose, cultural context, and disciplinary standards

GOAL 2: Students will be critical thinkers

1. Students will be able to analyze and interpret texts, images, objects, artifacts, and quantitative and qualitative data
2. Students will be able to describe the historical, cultural, mythological, and social contexts of texts, works of art, and theories
3. Students will be able to evaluate the strength of an argument or claim and its evidence
4. Students will be able to discuss fundamental questions that arise from the human condition, such as questions about the grounds of morality, the essence of justice, the nature of reality, the possibility of certainty, the nature of beauty, or the reasonableness of religious faith

GOAL 4: Students will understand and appreciate the arts, humanities and science disciplines, and reflect on connections among these studies.

1. Students will be able to think historically in order to understand the past on its own terms and to understand how societies have changed over time
2. Students will be able to recognize and interpret artistic and literary expression

GOAL 5: Students will be integrated individuals who articulate a coherent, ethical perspective on the world and their place in it
1. Students will be able to recognize the societal, ethical and moral dimensions of discourse, art, information, science and technology

2. Students will be able to relate their knowledge and skills in a reflective and constructive way to their life experiences and the challenges confronting today’s world

3. Students will be able to use information and resources responsibly in their communication and research

4. Students will be able to utilize intellectual, moral, and spiritual tools and sensibilities to engage faithfully and responsively in the world for the promotion of peace, social justice, and ecological sustainability

GOAL 7 (E/RS): Students will be intellectually, morally and spiritually educated individuals capable of critical reflection on ethical and/or religious questions of social significance from the perspective of multiple disciplines with unique methods

1. Students will be able to analyze rationally competing claims about individual and political justice within foundational philosophical texts

2. Students will be able to engage in critical, theological reflection on ethical and/or religious questions of social significance, using human experience and religious traditions as resources to address these questions

3. Students will be able to critically read, write about, and reflect on ethical and/or religious issues of social significance through interpretation of literary texts

4. Students will be able to reflect critically on ethical and/or religious questions of social significance through the method of another discipline or through a second course in philosophy, theology or literature.

Miscellaneous: The use of laptops*, cell phones, I-phones or any texting devices during class is strictly forbidden. Any student caught using such devices will be marked absent for the day. Students who attend class without the book being discussed that day will also be considered absent. Students who walk into class more than five minutes after class begins will also be considered absent for the day and will not be permitted to participate in class discussions and/or take quizzes. Late papers will be penalized a half a grade per day (not class) late. Plagiarism, intentional or not, will result in automatic failure of the course.