This course is designed for students interested in examining African-American intellectuals and intellectual life from the mid-nineteenth century up until today. We will examine the lives and thought of a variety of thinkers and writers, including political theorists, social scientists, philosophers, economists, social critics, novelists, and artists. Our goal will be to situate their political ideas, ethical dilemmas, and aesthetic sensibilities in their broader historical contexts. We will look at concerns that were not exclusive to African-American intellectuals, but were regarded by many as particularly pressing to them: race and racism, the (sometimes competing) desires for self-expression and group solidarity, and the negotiations between intellectual objectivity and social activism. Though this class focuses on African-American intellectuals, it does not assume that they speak with one voice or that they constitute a discrete intellectual tradition in American history. Nor does it assume that they were interested exclusively in African-American experience. Rather, it aims to see how African-American intellectuals have contributed to our understanding of issues facing African-American communities, Americans more broadly, and people around the globe.

Assignments and Grading
The main assignment in this course is a 20-25 page research paper on a topic in African-American intellectual history. In preparation for this final paper, students will have several weekly readings, as well as short writing, oral, and research assignments.

Each week, you will be expected to write paragraph-length questions based on the assigned texts. Writing your weekly questions is a very useful strategy for synthesizing the reading, distilling authors’ arguments into economical and clear prose, and focusing your thoughts before coming to class. Paragraph-length questions are to be posted to our Learn@UW course webpage no later than 7 p.m. Thursday night (as in, the night before class). (You are encouraged to read through and be prepared to comment on your classmates’ paragraphs.)
All reading and writing assignments listed on the syllabus are mandatory. In addition, attendance is mandatory. If for any reason you are unable to come to class, please email me in advance to let me know. Unexcused absences and/or tardiness will result in a poor participation grade.

Grading will be based on the following:

1. **Participation & Attendance.** Informed and engaged contribution to class discussions, and weekly questions. 20%
2. **Primary/Secondary Source Exercise.** 5%
3. **Contributions to the Companion to African-American Thought and Culture Exercise.** 10%
4. **Proposal and Bibliography for Final Paper.** Proposal should be 2-3 double-spaced pages/bibliography of primary and secondary sources should be roughly ½ page single spaced. 10%
5. **Final Paper.** 20-25 page final research paper with bibliography. 55%

**Readings**
The following books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore:

Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, Preface by Jean-Paul Sartre (1961)
Lawrence Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought From Slavery to Freedom* (1978)

All other required readings (essays, articles, and book chapters) are on e-reserves. All of the required books are available on 3-hour reserve at the College Library.

**Preparation for First Class Meeting on Jan. 21:**
In order to hit the ground running, your assignments for the first class meeting are:
1. Do all the readings assignments for week 1 listed below
2. Think about what area of African-American intellectual history interests you
3. Review the course syllabus and come with any questions you may have about it
Course Outline:

Week 1 (Jan. 21) Course Introduction
“Black in America,” New Yorker, Apr. 29, 1996 Special Issue. Read 3 articles of your choosing. {History Office}
Visit www.theblackscholar.org. Browse the Website

Mandatory: Library Workshop. Sign up for one of the following workshops using this link (ASAP):

Tuesday, Jan. 25th 6-7:15 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 26th, 6-7:15 p.m.

Week 2 (Jan. 28) The Figure of the African-American Intellectual and African-American Intellectual Production
Harold Cruse, The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual (1967) [selections] {R}
W.E.B. Dubois, “The Talented Tenth” (1903) available at:

Week 3 (Feb. 4) African-American Social Scientific Thought, in and of the World
Andrew Zimmerman, Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South (2010)

Primary/Secondary source exercise due at the beginning of class (Feb. 4)

Week 4 (Feb. 11) African-American Print Culture with James Danky


Henry Louis Gates, Jr. “Foreword,” and James Danky, “Brief History of the Project,” and

1-Paragraph distillation of research paper plans/interests due 4 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 10th. Email to me and jpdanky@wisc.edu.

**Week 5 (Feb. 18) African-American Folk Thought**
Lawrence Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought From Slavery to Freedom* (1978)
Mia Bay, “‘Devils and Good People Walking De Road at De Same Time’: White People in Black Folk Thought,” in *The White Image in the Black Mind, 1830-1925* (2000) {R}

**Week 6 (Feb. 25) Religion in African-American Intellectual Life**


Hubert Harrison, “On a Certain Conservatism in Negroes,” (n.d.) available at: [http://www.archive.org/stream/negronation00harr#page/40/mode/2up](http://www.archive.org/stream/negronation00harr#page/40/mode/2up)

Martin Luther King, “A Tough Mind and a Tender Heart,” from *Strength to Love* (1983), 1-10. {R}

*Companion to African-American Thought and Culture* exercise due at the beginning of class today (Feb. 25)

**Week 7 (Mar. 4) Work on Research Paper Proposal and Bibliography**
Class time devoted to working on your research paper proposal and bibliography.

**Week 8 (Mar. 9) Comparative Diasporas (Meeting with Prof. Michel’s “Zionism and its Critics” Course, Curti Lounge, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.)**

(Plus review: Edwards’s essay at: [http://socialtext.dukejournals.org/cgi/reprint/19/1_66/45.pdf](http://socialtext.dukejournals.org/cgi/reprint/19/1_66/45.pdf))


Edward Blyden, “The Jewish Question” (1898), 5-24.

Research paper proposal and bibliography due on Friday, March 11th at 4 p.m.

Week 9 (Mar. 18) Spring Break

Week 10 (Mar. 25) Independent Research

Individual meetings to review paper proposals early this week.

(Mar. 24th) Please try to attend Henry Louis Gates, Jr.’s Nellie Y. McKay Lecture in the Humanities, 7:30 p.m. Mills Hall, Mosse Humanities Building

Week 11 (Apr. 1) Black and Blue: From Existentialism to Black Power
Frantz Fanon, Wretched of the Earth, Preface by Jean-Paul Sartre (1961)


Week 12 (Apr. 8) Independent Research and Writing

Week 13 (Apr. 15) Primary Source & Trouble-Shooting Workshop
Bring in one of your primary sources to examine together with your classmates. Also, come prepared to discuss any substantive or structural problems you are having with your research and writing. You will be expected to help each other test and reformulate your ideas.

Submit 2 copies of your 8-page drafts no later than Wednesday, April 20th

Week 14 (Apr. 22) No class—Passover/Good Friday

Week 15 (Apr. 29) Discussion of Drafts

Week 16 (May 6) Final presentations

Final papers due Thursday, May 12th at 4:00 p.m. in Professor Ratner-Rosenhagen’s office.
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African-American Intellectual History
Starter Bibliography

African-American Thought Starter Kit

Figure of the Black Intellectual
Harold Cruse, *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (1967)
________, *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual Reconsidered* (2007)

Racial Leadership and Uplift


Black Transatlantic Studies/Cosmopolitanism/Pan Africanism
Van Gosse, "'As a Nation, the English Are Our Friends': The Emergence of African American Politics in the British Atlantic World, 1772-1861," American Historical Review (October, 2008), 1003-1028.

**Anticolonialism and Postcolonialism**
Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952)
________, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963)
Aime Cesaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (1955)
Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (1994)

**Black Expatriates**

**Harlem Renaissance**
Alain Locke and Arnold Rampersad, *The New Negro: Voices of the Harlem Renaissance*

**Black Culture and Religion**
Lawrence Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (1977)
Bucklin Moon, *Primer for White Folks* (1945)
Juan Williams, *This Far by Faith: Stories from the African American Religious Experience* (2003)

**Segregation and Jim Crow**

**Civil Rights Movement**
Juan Williams, *Eyes on the Prize: America’s Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965* (1987)
Bruce Watson, *Freedom Summer: the Savage Season that made Mississippi Burn and Made America a Democracy* (2010)
Doug McAdam, *Freedom Summer* (1990)

**Black Radicalism and Black Power**
George L. Jackson, *Blood in My Eye* (1972)
Angela Davis, *If They Come in the Morning* (1971)

**Black Studies, Literary Studies, and the Academy**
Manning Marable, Dispatches from the Ebony Tower: Intellectuals Confront the African American Experience (2000)


Jonathan Holloway, Confronting the Veil: Abram Harris, Jr., E. Franklin Frazier, and Ralph Bunche, 1919-1941 (2001)

Karla F. C. Holloway, Moorings and Metaphors: Figures of Culture and Gender in Black Women’s Literature (1991)


Gender


Peter Ling and Sharon Monteith, Gender and the Civil Rights Movement (1999)


Patricia Hill Collins, Black Feminist Thought (1990)


Kristin Waters and Carol B. Conaway, Black Women’s Intellectual Traditions: Speaking Their Minds (2007)


Claudia Tate, Black Women Writers at Work (1984)

Human Rights


Race and American Democracy


Thomas F. Gossett, Race: the History of an Idea in America (1963)

Miscellaneous


Discover the people and events that shaped African American history, from slavery and abolitionism to the Harlem Renaissance and Civil Rights Movement. Some historians consider ancient Africa the cradle of human civilization. In Before the Mayflower, Lerone Bennett, Jr., contended that "the African ancestors of American Blacks were among the major benefactors of the human race. Such evidence as survives clearly shows that Africans were on the scene and acting when the human drama opened." In addition, African Americans began to employ the European tactics of petitions, lawsuits, and organized protest to fight for their rights. As social commentator Ellis Cose explained: "Theories of blacks' innate intellectual inadequacy provided much of the rationale for slavery and for Jim Crow [legal discrimination based on race]."