

## SYLLABUS 2016-2017

*For Africa to me... is more than a glamorous fact. It is a historical truth. No man can know where he is going unless he knows exactly where he has been and exactly how he arrived at his present place. ~Maya Angelou*

**Course Description:** The historical study of persons of African descent in the U.S. forces us to grapple not only with a distinctive struggle for liberation, justice and equality, but also to revisit our understandings of human beginnings along with the foundations and shaping of the American republic. This course begins by examining the African genesis of humanity along with the early establishment, spread and/or influence of African civilizations throughout the world (i.e. African diaspora). The course then highlights the development of a distinctive 'racial' and cultural group that came to be known as 'African American' via the trans-Atlantic Slave trade. Within this particular trajectory of African peoples, the course explores the process and justification for slavery by focusing on the structure of slavery in the United States, and the differing conditions for Black people in the Northern and Southern regions of the country. During this section, students will also be introduced to the legacy of African heritage in the development of Black cultural institutions, as well as examine the significance of the Civil War, Emancipation Proclamation and Reconstruction period to the African American experience.

For the second half of the course, we will consider the global and national implications of African American experiences during their journey out of bondage to the White House. We will specifically move to a sustained consideration of the emergence of African American movements and leadership, along with their cultural, political and economic impact on the shaping of America from the late 19th through the 21st centuries. Central issues and debates to be explored thus include: the centrality of 'Africa'; race and racism; naming controversy; color prejudice (caste) within the African American community; integrationist vs. Black Nationalism; the complexities of Black intellectual and political thought; African colonization, decolonization/independence movements; African American contributions to war efforts; the changing gender roles among and between Black women/men; impact of Black professionalization; Black technological /scientific innovations; Civil Rights / Anti-apartheid movement; Black power; African American education vs. schooling; the erosion of communal ethos and deepening hold/embrace of materialist individualism; the 'New Jim Crow'; African American cultural manifestations – from griot to hip hop artist; and the significance of Black presidential races – past and present

There are six requirements for a KAP class:

1. Use of a college-level textbook
2. Use of 3-5 supplemental book readings per semester
3. Use of primary source materials in instruction and discussion
4. Each student must complete an independent research paper
5. Must include group discussion as a significant component of the classroom experience
6. Courses must be writing intensive

**Textbooks:**

Textbook -The African-American Odyssey

**Required Reading Semester 1:**

\*Olaudah Equiano, Olaudah Equiano

\*(selections) Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll Jordan Roll: The World Slaves Made*

\*Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

\**Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

\*(selections) James M. O'Toole, *Passing for White*

\*(selections) *12 Years a Slave*

\*Articles and occasional handouts on current events.

**Grading:** your work will be divided into the following 5 grading categories:

In-class Work: 25%

Presentations/Projects/Seminars: 25%

Tests/Quizzes/Papers: 35%

Blog Posts/Reflections: 15%

Final: 15-20%

**Responsibilities:**

**Critical Essay:** Each student will be required to submit 2 page double-spaced critical essays based on primary sources provided by the instructor. These primary sources will provide two opposing viewpoints; the student should compare and contrast these arguments with each other and craft a concluding summary which provides the student's view as to which argument is most convincing and why.

**Socratic Seminars:** Each student will lead a total of 2-3, 20 minute Socratic Seminar on a primary source, video clip, or artifact based on what the class is learning at the time. These can be done with a partner and will be graded based on the rubric provided.

**Presentations:** Each student will be in charge of a chapter of the textbook to read, interpret, and present. These presentations will occur weekly and will be graded based off of the rubric given. Students will present 2-3 times total. These presentations can be done with a partner.

**Blog Posts:** By Sunday 10 pm of every week, you are to post a response to the question for the week on the blog setup for this course. The question is listed in the syllabus.

**Classroom Policies:**

**Tardiness:** Class begins promptly every day and missing work will hurt academic performance. An unexcused tardy will result in missed instruction and further consequences, as outlined in the student handbook. Remember, the door closes when the bell rings, please be on time for class!!!

**Late Assignments:** You are expected to turn in assignments completed by the due date. Some unexcused assignments will be accepted with penalty for being late. The following are the deductions for late assignments:

- 6% for 1 school day late (best grade 94%)
- 12% for 2 school days late (best grade 88%)
- 20% for 3 school days late (best grade 80%)
- 30% for more than 4 days late (best grade 70%)
- 40% for more than a week late (best grade 60%)

**Late assignments will not be accepted after the completion of a unit. An extension may be granted for special circumstances after a parent/student/teacher conference.**

**Make-Up Work:** It is the student's responsibility to see the instructor regarding missed class and make-up work. It must be completed in accordance with school policy.

**Electronic Devices:** Once in awhile we will use smartphones in the classroom. If you do not have one, do not worry, I will provide other options. Until the time that I ask to take out phones, please leave all your electronic devices in your backpack or pockets. Using your phone in the class is a privilege that can be taken away.

**Supply List:** These are the things you need daily for this class:

1. Binder (three-ring) or folder
2. Notebook
3. Pens/Pencils (on tests or papers you need black or blue pens)
4. Planner (handed out at school)

**Notebook:** You are required to keep a notebook in which you will keep all class, homework assignments, notes and a glossary. This notebook will be graded on a regular basis and will provide proof that you did your assignments.

**Academic Honesty:** As a Shaker student a lot is expected from you, honesty is the most basic. Plagiarism will not be tolerated at any time. Copying work will result in a "0" for everyone involved along with other appropriate action.

**Contact:** It is my belief that each student is of worth and deserves every opportunity to excel. I am available for help before and after school most days. I can be best reached at [wadsworth\\_a@shaker.org](mailto:wadsworth_a@shaker.org) or posting a question to my edmodo page. I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours on school days. If you have a question on a project or homework assignment, please make sure you email with enough time to finish the project. Homework will be posted on my website <https://sites.google.com/a/shaker.org/kap-african-american-history/> and grades will be regularly updated. I believe it is important for parents, students, and teachers to work together so please do not hesitate to contact me!

**Expected Behavior:**

I am very excited to teach you this year! I believe you will not only learn a lot but also enjoy my class. I care about each of you and I am here to help any way I can. To make learning possible I stress a safe and focused classroom environment. I will not allow any interference with your success or the success of your peers in this class. I have 6 classroom rules that will be

consistently and fairly enforced throughout the year. There will be rewards for following and consequences for breaking rules. These rules are:

1. Come prepared and on time for class.
2. Follow directions the first time given
3. Listen respectfully while others speak, raise your hand to speak
4. Have your materials out and begin the warm-up before the bell rings
5. Respect yourself, others, and the school
6. Allow me to be the teacher

**Consequences:** Although I am sure Shaker students do not need this section, I am including the consequences that will be given for misbehavior for needed future reference. Students who are consistently breaking rules will have to fill out a behavior form and will have parents contacted.

*First offence:* private warning, name on teacher clip-board

*Second offence:* student quietly reminded on expectations and that there is a check by their name, quick 10 minute meeting after school to discuss behavior and brainstorm solutions to this problem.

*Third offence:* referral written, student may be removed from classroom, parent/student/teacher/admin conference.

*Severe Disruption:* Student is immediately removed from the classroom, parents and administration are notified.

**Rewards:** There will be rewards for students and classes that follow the rules. Some of these might be music while working, movie days, candy, prizes and more.

**Keys for Success:** Over my years of teaching I have compiled a few tips for success.

1. Do your homework: I do not assign meaningless homework. Homework is not only a grade but also vital practice for tests, quizzes, and critical thinking.
2. Do not procrastinate. Write deadlines for yourself in your planner and stick to these deadlines. Your life will be so much easier and your time better spent. This is especially important with projects and Model Congress!
3. ASK QUESTIONS! Questions are so important in government (and in life)! Asking WHY and HOW is critical to understanding our complex world. **I will never disrespect you for asking a question.** You can also write down questions and give them to me after class. Sometimes I even give prizes for interesting questions.
4. Use creativity and imagination while working! This class will ask you to constantly think outside the box. Students who cultivate critical thinking and creativity do well in class and form critical skills for the future of our democracy and their career.
5. Come to class with a positive attitude, ready to learn. A good attitude and willing spirit will take you far in the classroom and in life.
6. Keep organized. Come up with a system that works with homework, classwork and notes. Stick to that system. I challenge you to at least make sure you are organized every

Sunday night in preparation for Monday morning. This will help you manage your time, learn productively, and not drown in papers!

7. Ask for help when you need it! I may need a heads-up if you are struggling. I care about you and want you to succeed!

**Signature Page**

Please sign to indicate that you have read and understand this course policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Print):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Signature):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (Print):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (Signature):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Parent/Guardian (Best Contact Email addresses/phone): \_\_\_\_\_

Comments or questions (anything you would like me to know):