

HIS 207: Africans and Their Descendants in the Making of the Atlantic World

Spring 2021 (Online)

“History...does not refer merely to the past...history is literally present in all that we do.”¹



UNCG Coronavirus Policy

As UNCG returns to face-to-face course offerings in fall 2020, the campus community must recognize and address concerns about physical and emotional safety. As such, all students, faculty, and staff are required to uphold UNCG's culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. Such actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Wearing a face covering that covers both nose and mouth
- Observing social distance in the classroom

¹ James Baldwin, "Unnameable Objects, Unspeakable Crimes," Blackslate, August 3, 2016, <http://blackslate.com/james-baldwin-unnameable-objects-unspeakable-crimes/> Accessed August 13, 2020

- Engaging in proper hand washing hygiene when possible
- [Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19](#)
- Staying home if you are ill
- Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill or exposed to someone who is ill.

Instructors will have seating charts for their classes. These are important for maintaining appropriate social distance during class and facilitating contact tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19. Students must sit in their assigned seat at every class meeting and must not move furniture. Students should not eat or drink during class time.

A limited number of disposable masks will be available in classrooms for students who have forgotten theirs. Face coverings will also be available for purchase in the UNCG Campus Bookstore. Students who do not follow masking and social distancing requirements will be asked to put on a face covering or leave the classroom to retrieve one and only return when they follow these basic requirements to uphold standards of safety and care for the UNCG community. Once students have a face covering, they are permitted to re-enter a class already in progress. Repeated issues may result in conduct action. The course policies regarding attendance and academics remain in effect for partial or full absence from class due to lack of adherence with face covering and social distancing requirements.

For instances where the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) has granted accommodations regarding wearing face coverings, students should contact their instructors to develop appropriate alternatives to class participation and/or activities as needed. Instructors or the student may also contact [OARS](#) (336.334.5440) who, in consultation with Student Health Services, will review requests for accommodations.

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in the university, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The

Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting the website at <https://shs.uncg.edu/> or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting <https://shs.uncg.edu/srp> or reaching out to recovery@uncg.edu

COVID-19 Spartan Shield Video

UNCG Chancellor Frank Gilliam has challenged us to create a Culture of Care at UNCG where we all wear face coverings and social distance, less to protect ourselves but rather more to protect everyone around us. It shows that you care about the well being of everyone around you. We have created this video featuring your student body presidents to better explain how and why this is so important.

Please watch this video before the first day of classes.

<https://youtu.be/Mb58551qxEk>

Instructor: Richard Smith

Course: HIS 207: Africans in the Atlantic World

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 9-10 via <https://uncg.zoom.us/> and by appointment.

Contact: rmsmi28@uncg.edu (I leave my email constantly open, so please email me anytime that you have questions.) Although many emails will be answered as soon as possible, I do ask that you allow me at least 24-48 hours response time.

Department of History: <https://his.uncg.edu/>

Department of History on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UNCGDepartmentofHistory/>

Course Introduction: Africans and their descendants played a crucial role in the creation of what historians call the Atlantic World. The Atlantic World is terminology given by historians to the regions of the globe linked together by the Atlantic Ocean. Vital to the creation of this terraqueous region, enslavement was just one way in which Africans contributed to its creation. Some travelled across the Atlantic on their own volition, usually as either travelers and migrants. Some of these individuals became property owners, whilst others worked as both skilled and unskilled laborers (enslaved and free). Moreover, the Atlantic World was not just constructed on the shores of the Western hemisphere but was also molded and shaped by the indigenous peoples in Africa, some of which never set foot in the New World. Lastly, this course will briefly cover the Haitian Revolution, the only successful slave revolt and one whose violence and success had repercussions well beyond the shores of the island of Hispaniola. The purpose of this course, therefore, is to present a comprehensive survey of the various ways Africans and their descendants contributed to this crucial region.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will be able to understand and identify the various ways by which Africans, and their descendants contributed to the making of the Atlantic World.
2. Students will understand the concept of the Atlantic World and identify the geographical area it encompasses.

3. Students will learn to think critically, communicate effectively, and develop appropriate fundamental skills in quantitative and information literacies.
4. Students will be able to describe, interpret, and evaluate the ideas, events, and expressive traditions that have shaped collective and individual human experience through inquiry and analysis in the diverse disciplines of the humanities, religions, languages, histories, and the arts

Course Materials:

A. Textbooks- There are three required textbooks for this course (These are available through the bookstore or, through online retailers Amazon and Barnes and Noble. I have also included links to digital copies where available.):

1. Benjamin, Thomas. *The Atlantic World Europeans, Africans, Indians and Their Shared History, 1400-1900*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009.
2. James, Marlon. *The Book of Night Women*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2009. (Digital Copy <https://uncg.on.worldcat.org/oclc/233548552>) (Please Note: This works contains some languages and scenes that may be disturbing and offensive to some people. If this is the case, please let me know, and I will assign an alternate work for you to analyze)
3. Popkin, Jeremy D, ed., *Facing Racial Revolution Eyewitness Accounts Of The Haitian Insurrection*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. (Digital Copy: <https://uncg.on.worldcat.org/oclc/593240118>)

B. The above works will be supplemented by readings taken from the following works:

1. Mintz, Sydney W. *Sweetness And Power The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York: Penguin Press, 1986. (Canvas)
2. Thornton, John K. *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. (Digital Copy: <https://uncg.on.worldcat.org/oclc/817935777>)
3. Wheat, David. *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570-1640*. Williamsburg: Omohundro Institute, 2018. (Digital Copy: <https://uncg.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1100949190>)
4. White, Ashli, *Encountering Revolution: Haiti and the Making of the Early Republic*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010. (Canvas)

Further Readings: If you are interested at any point in the semester about learning more about some the people, places, and events covered during this course, please feel free to send me an email and I will provide you with a list of books to further your interest.

Course Layout: This course is divided into five modules and corresponds to the dates listed on the syllabus. The course will consist of recorded lectures with power points, readings, discussion

board posts, three essays, and a final paper. The recorded lectures, and accompanying power points, will be posted Sunday evening and will cover the materials for that corresponding week.

General Education Historical Perspectives Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to use a historical approach to analyze and contextualize primary and secondary sources representing divergent perspectives.
2. Students will utilize historical evidence to interpret the past coherently, orally and/or in writing.

Assignments:

There are no exams in this course.

1. Discussion Boards (25%): History is a continuous dialogue between the past and the present. This makes participation an essential part of any college history course and, therefore, a large portion of your grade. This course will include a discussion board. There will be two a week. They will be made available on Sundays and are due the corresponding Friday by midnight. You must post your own answer to the question I asked and also make at least two comments on two separate postings of your classmates. This is to help facilitate the discussion among the class. Your posts must be at least a paragraph in length and your grade will depend on the relevancy of your post to the question posed as well as the utilization of course materials to support your answer. **(GHP SLO1, SLO2) Please Note: Be respectful. If you make a comment on another student's post, do not call them out, do not use racist or insulting language of any kind. It is ok to disagree, but do it in a respectful way. Moreover, if you do disagree, please utilize information from the texts to illustrate and support your contentions. Failure to do so, if you are uncivil, you will receive a zero for the assignment.**

2. Essays (45%)-This course is divided into five modules. There will be an essay due at the end of four of them. For these assignments, I will provide you with a writing prompt consisting of a broad question based upon the material covered in the class up that point. Each essay will consist of 3-5 double-spaced pages, Times New Roman 12pt Font. The prompts for these essays will be posted approximately a week and a half-two weeks before they are due.

Due dates for these assignments are listed on the course syllabus. Please email me your paper, preferably as a word document, by midnight on the day that the essay is due. **(GHP SLO1, SLO2)**

3. Critical Analysis Paper (30%): There is no final exam in this course. Instead, you will write a 5-7 page analytical paper on Marlon James' *Book of Night Women*. This is not simply an exercise where you tell the instructor whether you liked the book or not. Instead, this is an exercise that requires you to place the work within a larger historical context. It requires you to think critically about what point, or points the author is trying to convey. Lastly, it requires you to explain how the James' work fits in the larger context of the course. A successful paper will

contain a clearly stated thesis and utilize several different examples, taken from both the work under discussion, in this case James' work, and other course readings. What I am looking for here is how you construct your thesis, and use the readings to support this thesis. (Please Note: James' work contains some languages and scenes that may be disturbing and offensive to some people. If this is the case, please let me know, and I will assign an alternate book to analyze.) I will speak more about this at a later date as well as include a set of power point slides to help you as you write your paper.

Your paper will consist of 5-7 double-spaced pages, Times New Roman 12pt Font with full citations.

The due date for this assignment is listed on the course syllabus. Please email me your paper, as a word document, by midnight on the day that the essay is due. **(GHP SLO1, SLO2)**

For the essays and the final paper, you will be graded exclusively on how well you utilize the relevant course materials, with proper citations, to support your main arguments. YOU MUST CITE ALL OF YOUR SOURCE MATERIAL EVEN PARAPHRASES. All of your source material MUST be footnoted, and not parenthetically notated or listed on a work cited page, utilizing the Chicago Style Format:

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html)

FAILURE TO ADHERE TO THE ABOVE INSTRUCTIONS WILL RESULT IN A ZERO FOR THE ASSIGNMENT.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a very serious issue and will be dealt with accordingly. Akin to theft, plagiarism falls into two broad categories: intentional and unintentional. Intentional plagiarism constitutes the willingness of an individual to claim sole authorship of another individual's written work. Unintentional plagiarism occurs when an author disregards proper citing procedures. The best piece of advice regarding avoiding plagiarism is to cite everything, especially if you are unsure whether or not it should be cited. The following websites provide additional information with regards to plagiarism and how to avoid it:

Duke University Plagiarism Tutorial <https://plagiarism.duke.edu/def/> (Links to an external site.),

UNCG Defines Plagiarism: <https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity/violations-and-sanctions/plagiarism/> (Links to an external site.), UNCG'S Academic Integrity

Policy: <https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity/> (Links to an external site.)

Due Dates:

- 1. Essay 1-February 6, 2021**
- 2. Essay 2-March 6, 2021**
- 3. Essay 3-March 27, 2021**
- 4. Essay 4-April 17, 2021**
- 5. Critical Analysis Paper-April 29, 2021**

Please note the following:

Discussion Boards

One of the major components of this course is the discussion board. There will be two a week. They will be made available on Sundays and are due the corresponding Fridays by midnight. You are required to post your own comment before responding to two of your classmates posts. Please be advised that your original post and your responses must be at least a paragraph in length. I will be dropping the two lowest scores for this assignment. **Please Note: Be respectful. If you make a comment on another student's post, do not call them out, do not use racist or insulting language of any kind. It is ok to disagree, but do it in a respectful way. Moreover, if you do disagree, please utilize information from the texts to illustrate and support your contentions. Failure to do so, will result in a zero for the assignment.**

Essays

Another major component of your grade are the four short essays that you are required to write. The prompts for these essays will be posted approximately a week and a half-two weeks before they are due. Your essay must be between 3-4 pages and length with a 12 pt New Roman Times font. You are required to only use the materials assigned to the course. You are also required to cite all of your sources using the Chicago Style (the link is in the syllabus) and footnotes. **Failure to adhere to these instructions will result in an automatic zero on your essay.**

Recorded Lectures and Power Points

To help you navigate through some of the readings, I will be posting from time to time recorded lectures accompanying power points. These will again be posted on Sundays and will cover the materials for that corresponding week. Please note, the first one will be posted on Wednesday of this week.

Analytical Paper

The final assignment for this course will be an analytical essay based upon your reading of Book of Night Women by Marlon James. Instructions related to this assignment will be forthcoming. However, the same basic parameters apply for this assignment as do the ones for the essays. Moreover, what I am looking for with this assignment is how you utilize the readings that you have done over the course of the semester to analyze James' text. As we get closer to the end of the semester, I will be speaking about how you complete an assignment of this nature and what to look for when reading James' text.

Grading:

1. Discussion Boards (25%)
2. Essays (45%)
3. Critical Analysis Paper (30%)

Grading: Grading for this course is based on written essays and participation in the discussions. Late assignments will be accepted, however, there will be a penalty of five points assessed to the essays and paper for everyday that they are late. Two points will be assessed for every discussion post being late. Exceptions to this policy are prior arrangements made with the instructor and emergencies. (What constitutes an emergency is at the discretion of the instructor.)

Contact: Every student must have a UNCG email account. For an online course, email is the primary mode of contact and communication between the student and the instructor. I can be reached at rmsmi28@uncg.edu or by sending a message through Canvas. Messages through Canvas and emails through your UNCG account are the only ones that I will answer. Though I check my email frequently, please allow 24-48 hours for a response to your inquiry.

Office Hours: I will be holding virtual office hours, on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10-12 and can be accessed through the following link: <https://uncg.zoom.us/>

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a very serious issue and will be dealt with accordingly. Akin to theft, plagiarism falls into two broad categories: intentional and unintentional. Intentional plagiarism constitutes the willingness of an individual to claim sole authorship of another individual's written work. Unintentional plagiarism occurs when an author disregards proper citing procedures. The best piece of advice regarding avoiding plagiarism is to cite everything, especially if you are unsure whether or not it should be cited. The following websites provide additional information with regards to plagiarism and how to avoid it:

Duke University Plagiarism Tutorial <https://plagiarism.duke.edu/def/> (Links to an external site.), UNCG Defines Plagiarism: <https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity/violations-and-sanctions/plagiarism/> (Links to an external site.), UNCG'S Academic Integrity Policy: <https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity/> (Links to an external site.)

Academic Accommodations: All disabilities should be registered with the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS). The friendly and knowledgeable staff will work with you to ensure that you receive the necessary accommodations. The following link provides information regarding the services offered by OARS as well as way to contact them: <https://ods.uncg.edu/> (Links to an external site.)

Course Schedule

Introduction

Class 1-Thursday January 21, 2021: “What do we mean by the Atlantic World?” Thornton pp. 1-42,

Module 1: Africans and Europeans

Class 2-Tuesday January 26, 2021: “Europe, Africa, and the New World Before 1500” Benjamin pp. 6- 51

Class 3-Thursday January 28, 2021: “The European Opening of the Atlantic” Benjamin pp. 52-101

Class 4-Tuesday February 2, 2021: “Forging the Iberian Empires in Africa and the New World” Benjamin pp. 105-160

Class 5-Thursday February 4, 2020: “The Overseas Empires of Spain and Portugal” Benjamin pp. 161- 208

Class 6-Tuesday February 9, 2021: “The French, English, and Dutch Excursions into the New World” Benjamin pp. 214-272

FIRST ESSAY DUE SATURDAY FEBRUARY 6, BY 11:59 PM

Module 2: Free Africans in the New World

Class 7-Thursday February 11, 2021: “Transformation of African Culture in the Atlantic World” Thornton pp. 206-234

Class 8-Tuesday February 16, 2021: “Africans Religions and Christianity in the Atlantic World” Thornton pp. 235-271

Class 9-Thursday February 18, 2021: “Women and Men in the Making of the Atlantic World” Benjamin pp. 420-464

Class 10-Tuesday, February 23, 2021: “Tangomaos and Luso-Africans” Wheat pp. 104-141

Class 11-Thursday, February 25, 2021: “Nharas and Morenas Horras” Wheat pp. 142-180

Class 12-Tuesday March 2, 2021: “Black Peasants” Wheat pp. 181-215

Class 13-Thursday March 4, 2021: “Becoming Latin” Wheat pp. 216-234

SECOND ESSAY DUE SATURDAY MARCH 6, BY 11:59 PM

Module III: Slavery and The Atlantic Slave Trade

Class 14-Tuesday March 9, 2021: “Slavery and African Social Structure” Thornton pp. 72-97

Class 15-Thursday March 11, 2021: “The Process of Enslavement and the Slave Trade” Thornton pp. 98-128

Class 16-Tuesday March 16, 2021: “West Africa, the Americas, and the Atlantic Slave Trade” Benjamin pp. 326-372

Class 17-Thursday March, 18, 2021: “The Atlantic Plantation Complex and the Cultures of Slavery” Benjamin pp. 373-419

Class 18-Tuesday March 23, 2021: “Sugar and Slavery” Mintz (Canvas)

Class 19-Thursday March 25, 2021: “The Abolition of the Slave Trade and New World Slavery” Benjamin pp. 615-660

THIRD ESSAY DUE SATURDAY MARCH 27, BY 11:59 PM

Module IV: Revolution

Class 20-Tuesday 30, 2021: “The Atlantic World in the Age Of Revolution (Part I)” Benjamin pp. 517-566

Class 21-Thursday April 1, 2021: “The Atlantic World in the Age of Revolution (Part II)” Benjamin pp. 567-614

Class 22-Tuesday: April 6, 2021: Tacky’s Rebellion and the Impact on Britain’s Northern American Colonies (The Future United States)

Class 23-Thursday April 8, 2021: “The Haitian Revolution” Popkin pp. 49-104

Class 24-Tuesday April 13, 2021: “The Haitian Revolution” Popkin pp. 105-179, 245-251

Class 25 Thursday April 15, 2021: “The Haitian Revolution in the United States” Ashli White (Canvas)

Class 26 Thursday April 15, 2021: “The Haitian Revolution in the United States” White (Canvas)

FOURTH ESSAY DUE SATURDAY APRIL 17, BY 11:59 PM

Class 27-Tuesday April 20, 2021: Marlon James, *Book of Night Women*, (New York: Riverhead Books, 2009), 14-196.

Class 28-Thursday April 22, 2021: Marlon James, *Book of Night Women*, 197-252.

Class 29-Tuesday April 27, 2021: Marlon James, *Book of Night Women*, 258-326.

THURSDAY APRIL 29, 2020-Analysis Paper Due

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER !!!!!!!



