**Themes in Ethnic Studies**

**African American History and Biography during the Long 19th Century**

**SOC 5150**

**The Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics, and Humanities**

**Fall 2024, Tuesday 3:00-5:50**

Dr. Sean A. Scott seanscott@bsu.edu

Wagoner 149, office hours, MWF 10:00-11:50, M 1:00-4:00, T 2:00-2:50, or by appt.

**Course Description:** This course explores the lives of significant African Americans with an emphasis on introducing students to many lesser known or understudied individuals. Selecting subjects from the 1770s to the 1920s, the course focuses on men and women whose stories shed light on the broader political, social, religious, legal, and cultural issues that shaped American history. By examining these individual, students will learn about many facets of the African American experience during this period—northern free blacks’ struggles for a more inclusive society; slave resistance, violence, and flight from the South; the legal and social perils of the fugitive slave clause; African American contributions to abolitionism and the Civil War; new opportunities and political leadership during Reconstruction; the shortcomings of the postbellum social and political order; the Great Migration; and the ongoing struggle for equality.

**Course Format:** The course will employ a reading seminar format. I will provide a brief overview of a person’s life and historical context and we will discuss assigned readings. Since we meet once a week, oftentimes we will divide the class into three sections, essentially packing three 50-minute courses into one block.

**Attendance, Unexcused Absence Policy, and Late Work Policy**:

It is the policy of the Indiana Academy that any absence from class is unexcused, except for illness, death in the family, college or school-related activities, and extenuating circumstances. When a student is absent from a class, the instructor reports the student absence to the Faculty Attendance Coordinator in the Office of Academic Affairs. Unless the absence is excused by a school official, it is considered unexcused. The decision as to whether an absence is excused is not determined by the instructor. Four or more unexcused absences in any particular class a student takes will lead to academic and residential consequences to be determined by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Residential Life that may include detention, residential groundings, parent/principal conference, among others.

Any homework assignment missed because of an unexcused absence will not be made up for credit and will be given a zero. Any unexcused absence on the day of an exam or project will result in a 30% deduction for that assignment.

Come to class engaged and prepared to learn. I record attendance in powerschool a few minutes before class. If you are late, please see me afterwards to remind me to change your absence to tardy. Any student arriving fifteen minutes after the start of class will be counted absent for that period.

Missed exams or projects with an excused absence should be made within 2 days of returning to class if possible in order to avoid falling too far behind. Missed quizzes for an excused absence will not be made up, and you will receive your average quiz score for that assignment. Missed quizzes for an unexcused absence will receive a zero.

**Course Content Note:** As with many history classes, the lectures, readings, and discussions will include a range of topics that may be triggering, emotionally distressing, and difficult for some students. Engaging with topics such as slavery and human suffering is essential to this discipline. History seeks to understand the experiences and thought processes of former generations, whether for good or ill. Sometimes the language and word choices used by people in the past may be insensitive or politically incorrect today. Nevertheless, the goal of history is to understand the past within its own context and time. If a reading, image shown in class, or discussion is truly troubling to anyone, please do not hesitate to talk to your instructor. In some circumstances, an alternative reading can be assigned.

**Academic Integrity**: Academic integrity is foundational to achievement at the Academy and throughout your college career. Cheating on tests, plagiarism on papers, and all forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please understand that severe penalties will arise (zero on an assignment, for example) will arise for violating academic integrity and review relevant policies outlined in the Academy handbook.

**AI Policy**: The Humanities Division recognizes that artificial intelligence (AI) provides some exciting new tools for academic work. However, AI also poses significant dangers for academic integrity. Passing off as your own any research, words, or ideas which you did not create is plagiarism. This holds true whether the material is copied from a source in print, taken from internet content, or generated by AI. For this course, AI should not be used for writing papers. Period. Because the discipline of history emphasizes the importance of careful reading, independent research, and original writing, AI is an inappropriate shortcut. If you have any questions about this policy, please speak to me during office hours.

**Wireless Device Policy**: Pursuant to Indiana Code 20-26-5-40.7, The Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics and Humanities prohibits student use of wireless communication devices for non-instructional purposes in the classroom. As such, any and all portable wireless devices, that have the capability to provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two or more parties, must only be used for academic purposes directly tied to the classroom activity or related educational task. Exceptions to this wireless device policy are eligible through academic accommodations, individualized education programs, or with instructor approval permitting the use of a wireless device for justification related to health, safety, and/or well-being. The improper use of a wireless device in an active classroom setting is subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to; a verbal warning, temporary seizure of said device by a school official, an unexcused absence for the class in question, written communication to parent/guardian, among other elevated consequences for repeated improper use. Bottom line, don’t have your phone out during class unless I have authorized it.

**Inclusive Excellence Statement**: Ball State University aspires to be a university that attracts and retains a diverse faculty, staff and student body. We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse as expressed in our Beneficence Pledge. As a reflection of Ball State’s commitment to respect, civil discourse, and the Beneficence Pledge, Inclusive Excellence at the Indiana Academy emerges as one of the priorities of our living and learning community. We strive to exist together respectfully and compassionately, creating an environment where every member can thrive. Unfortunately, there might be occasions when something occurs that disrupts our progress toward meeting these objectives. In this case, we encourage any member of the Academy community to file a Campus Climate Report (CCR) <https://bsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6mbRbL5acAntUTI>.  All reports will be taken seriously, and appropriate responses will be carried out by Academy administration.

**Disability**: Students with documented disabilities should notify me by the end of the first week of class. Please remind me before exams if you plan to use your 504 or IEP accommodations.

**Student Success**: I want you to succeed in this course. Please see me during office hours to discuss any concerns or questions you have about the course or assignments. I am always happy to talk about specific readings, the study of history, or life in general. If I become concerned about your performance in this course, engagement in class, or overall well-being, I will speak with you first and then may refer you to the appropriate counselor within the Academy.

**Required Texts:**

Selected primary and secondary sources posted on Canvas or accessible online.

**Assignments:**

Quizzes and Discussion Participation: For a reading intensive course, our time will be most beneficial when everyone has read the assigned texts carefully and come prepared to engage with it. With a small enrollment, it will be quite evident who has read and who has not. Everyone should have something to add to the conversation each day. However, I am more concerned with the quality of a student’s comments rather than the quantity of one’s contributions. Weekly quizzes help reward those who have read carefully.

Exams: There will be two exams, one mid-term and one final. Exams will consist of a short objective section dealing with historical chronology, matching, or recognition of major persons or events; five or six short answer questions (generally answerable in a short paragraph each); and one longer essay synthesizing broader interpretive themes. Exams are not cumulative.

Leading class: Each student will have the opportunity to lead two class discussions of 30 minutes each. This will involve choosing the person to be studied that period, selecting texts to read, and leading the class. I will work with students to select texts and find supplementary readings to prepare for leading.

**Grading:**

Quizzes 30%

Participation 20%

Exams (2) 15% each

Leading class (2) 10% each

Students must take both exams and complete all major projects to pass the class. Grades will be figured according to the plus-minus scale copied below:

94-100% = A “A” grades reflect the “wow” factor. This shows exceptional, extra-

90-93% = A- ordinary effort and rewards work of the highest excellence.

88-89% = B+

83-87% = B “B” grades reflect the “very good” factor. This shows effort exceeding

80-82% = B- average and work that is high quality, but short of excellence.

78-79% = C+

73-77% = C “C” grades reflect average work and satisfactory results.

70-72% = C-

0-69% = D\* “D\*” reflects unsatisfactory work.

**Course Schedule and Readings:**

Readings, questions, and topics will be posted on Canvas. Below is a rough sketch that we will follow:

Aug. 13, 20, 27: Transatlantic Slave Trade, American Revolution, the paradox of liberty and slavery (Phillis Wheatley, Olaudah Equiano, Crispus Attucks, John Marrant, Quock Walker, Jupiter Hammon, Hercules Posey, Benjamin Banneker)

Sept. 3 No class (Labor Day extended break)

Sept 10: Early 19th-century resistance (Denmark Vesey, David Walker, Nat Turner)

Sept. 17, 24: The early life of Frederick Douglass

Oct. 1: Antebellum women (Sally Hemings, Harriet Jacobs)

Oct. 8: No class (Fall Break)

Oct 10: **Midterm exam** (Tues/**Thurs.** swap)

Oct. 15: The Fugitive Slave Clause (Shadrach Minkins, Anthony Burns, Solomon Northup)

Oct. 22: Antebellum women continued (Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Elizabeth Keckley)

Oct. 29: Civil War and Reconstruction (James Henry Gooding, Henry McNeal Turner, Hiram Revels)

Nov. 5: The later life of Frederick Douglass

Nov. 12: The post-bellum South (Booker T. Washington)

Nov. 19: Critique of Washington (W.E.B. Dubois)

Nov. 26: No class (Thanksgiving break)

Dec. 3: Confronting Violence and Racism in the early 20th Century (Ida B. Wells, Francis Grimké)

Dec. 10 Student led topics

Dec. 16-19 TBD **Final exam**