The purpose of this course is to critically examine important historical issues related to the African American experience since the Civil War. The scope of the course ranges from 1865 through the 21st centuries. We will examine the role black Americans played in the political, cultural, economic, scientific realms, and how those realms shaped the African American society.

In 1903, W. E. B. Du Bois wrote that “the problem of the Twentieth Century is the color-line.” The color-line provides one of the central themes of African American history since the Civil War. How were blacks separated from whites in the South? How did they respond to and confront that separation? How did segregation and discrimination – key components of the color-line – manifest themselves in the North? What were the various ways in which they were confronted? Were they challenged successfully? In what ways is the color-line still visible today in the 21st Century? These struggles to dissolve the color-line provide much of the context of the history will study in this course.

The struggles, however, were neither monolithic or always straightforward. This color line, Du Bois theorized, provided a cultural and political space for African Americans to develop outside and apart from American society. Many black communities drew on African traditions and sought to bring unity across the African diaspora. African Americans used varied techniques to break the color-line, using their expertise in the economic, cultural, labor or political realms to accomplish this goal. Most often, these struggles required significant cooperation and planning between blacks to succeed. But this does not mean that all African Americans were united in all aspects of these struggles. Differences in class, gender, color, political persuasion and age divided the black community.

**Grading**

**Papers: (50% of total grade)** All papers will have specific instructions that will be given at least one week before the paper is due. The essays will vary in length between 1500 and 200 words. They should be double-spaced, size-12 font (I prefer Times New Roman), with 1” margins. They will all need to present a specific thesis and carry an argument through the essay. I will provide more information on constructing a solid thesis and the structure I expect before the first essay.

1st paper – 15%
2nd paper – 15%
3rd paper – 20%

**Quizzes: (20% of the total grade)** I will give three or four unannounced quizzes throughout the course of the semester. Each will be worth 5-7% each. They will look to assess reading comprehension. They will all be open-note! (They will not be open-book, so do not write notes in
your book.) Take good notes; do well on the quizzes.

Wiki Project: (10% of total grade) In groups of three, students will participate in the construction of a wiki on an individual, law, or event that is important in African-American history. I have chosen the topics (they are available on the course system). Students can sign up individual or in a group by using the course system system.

What is a wiki? English Professor Elizabeth Weber defines wikis this way: “a series of collaboratively created web pages that may contain text, images, videos, and links. In a classroom context, the wiki is usually thematically linked to the specific course content. The instructor establishes the parameters for the wiki, and then the pages are individually or collaboratively created and edited by the students.”

What I like about the idea of using a wiki is that it is both collaborative and iterative – it is created by more than one mind and repetitively revised.

Goals: The goal of each wiki is to create a guide for researchers about the importance of this individual, law, or event to the larger history of African Americans. You are creating this wiki for use by other university and college students, or other academic researchers. Thus, I want the wiki to present an array of biographical information, links to other print and archival resources, pictures, video (if appropriate), and bibliographic content. A key aim of the wiki will be to present useful, scholarly sources and information on the topic.

Schedule: The wikis are semester-long projects. You and your group should start researching and creating the wiki by week 3. Each group will present their wiki twice in front of the class. The first presentation is a preliminary report. You will show the class what you have designed and tell us a little biographical information about your topic. These presentations are interspersed throughout the semester to correspond to the larger history we are examining. They should be about ten minutes long. The second presentation will occur at the time of the final exam. Then, you can show off your finished project. By the tenth week, every student must study another group's project and give that group written feedback.

Assessment: You will receive one final grade for the wiki project. The grade will assess the quality of the information and sources in your final project. All members of the group will receive the same grade. I will not grade the presentations or the peer-feedback. I will, however, take point of the final grade if you do not participate in the feedback or presentation. I put the grading rubric for the wikis on the course system.

I will use number grades to assess your papers and presentations. Here is a chart with what letter grade the numbers correspond to:

| 100-93 | A | 92-90 | A- |
| 89-87 | B+ | 86-83 | B | 82-80 | B- |
| 79-77 | C+ | 76-73 | C | 72-70 | C- |
| 69-67 | D+ | 66-63 | D | 62-60 | D- |

In-Class Participation: (15% of the final grade) Discussion of the reading assignments is a key component of the course. We will spend considerable class time analyzing the reading. To earn an “A” participation grade, you will have to demonstrate consistent and cogent contributions to discussion that are related to the reading. I highly suggest taking written notes on the reading.

Attendance: (5% of the final grade) Everyone may miss one class without repercussion. Every class

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missed greater than one for any reason will reduce the attendance grade by 30% (2 classes missed = 70% for attendance grade, 3 classes missed = 40% attendance grade, etc.)

**Academic Integrity**

The College of New Jersey's official “Academic Integrity Policy” prohibits “any attempt by the student to gain academic advantage through dishonest means.” It specifically prohibits “submitting a work for credit that includes words, ideas, data, or creative work of others without acknowledging the source.” It also prohibits “using another author's words without enclosing them in quotation marks . . . or without citing the source appropriately.” Teachers at The College of New Jersey are obligated to report any instance in which they believe that a student has intentionally violated the Academic Integrity Policy.

The typical penalty for infractions of the Academic Integrity Policy is a grade of "F" for the course. Repeat violators may be dismissed from the college.

Please review The College of New Jersey’s policy on Academic Integrity, available online at [http://www.tcnj.edu/%7Ebulletin/academicRegulations.html#adademicHonesty](http://www.tcnj.edu/%7Ebulletin/academicRegulations.html#adademicHonesty).

**Disabilities Policy**

Any student who has a documented disability and is in need of academic accommodations should notify the professor of this course and contact the Office of Differing Abilities Services (609-771-2571). Accommodations are individualized and in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992.

**Books**

**Required:**


**Reading Available on Course System:**


Riddle of the Zoot.”
Alain Locke, “Enter the New Negro,” *Survey Graphic* (March 1925).

*Plessy v. Ferguson*, (Supreme Court of the United States, 1896), dissent by Justice Harlan.

**Class Schedule**
* denotes reading available in course system.

**Week 1: Introduction: My Whiteness and the Teaching of African American History**

**Week 2: A Golden Moment?**

In-class interpretation: Frederick Douglass, *What the Black Man Wants*, Speech given at the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, April 1865.

**Week 3: Redemption**
Reading: Charles Lane, *The Day Freedom Died*, chapters, 4-8.


**Week 4: (Un)Civil Rights and the Law**

In-class interpretation: Two *peonage cases* from the files of the Justice Department (1909, 1945).

**Week 5: Marcus Garvey and the United Negro Improvement Association**
1" essay Due

In-class interpretation: *Special Agents Report* on Garvey Meeting in Pittsburgh, PA (1920).

**February 22rd: Migration, Renaissance and Radicalism**
the New Negro,” *Survey Graphic* (March 1925).

In-class interpretation: Claude McKay, *If We Must Die*; Langston Hughes, *I, Too*.

**March 1st: Red Storm Rising**


**March 8: no class Spring Break.**

**March 15th: “It's Like Living in Jail:” Racism Northern Style**
   Reading: Richard Wright, *Native Son*.

**March 22nd: World War II**

In-class interpretation: A. Philip Randolph, “Why We Should March,” 1941.

**March 29th: Civil Rights, A Primer**
   ***2nd Essay Due***

**April 5th: Civil Rights, con't.**

In-class interpretation: Fannie Lou Hamer, Speech before the 1964 Democratic National Convention.

**April 12th: Black Power**

In-class interpretation: *Stokely Carmichael, Speech at University of California, Berkeley, 1966.

**April 19th: Post-War Urban History**
In-class interpretation: Kerner Commission, final report, 1968.

**April 26th: Katrina**


**Final Exam Date:**

***Final Essay Due***

Final wiki presentation.