

THE SLAVE NARRATIVE
AFA 3930 (Section 1110)
ANT 3930 (Section 08H5)

SPRING 2015

Turlington Hall, Rm. 2319

MWF Period 7 (1:55 – 2:45 pm)

Instructor: James M. Davidson, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Friday 10am - Noon (and by appointment)

Course Website: <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/davidson/courses.htm>

Description: This course presents a historical overview of the American Slave Narrative. Participants will obtain knowledge of the narrative form as it evolved through time, first as a force for social change in the broader abolitionist literature, then as biography for selected African-American leaders, and finally as an attempt to record a history, through the ex-slave narratives of the 1930s. The narratives will be viewed through various lenses -- as literature, as political discourse, as biography, and ultimately as a window through which we may view the conditions of slavery. Through lectures, I will introduce the readings and provide broad overviews of the overarching topics and issues within the Slave Narrative as a genre. A portion of class time, however, will be spent discussing and critiquing the readings.

Required Readings:

1. 2002 *The Classic Slave Narratives*. Edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Signet Classics. New American Library, New York.
2. 2000 *Voices From Slavery: 100 Authentic Slave Narratives*. Edited by Norman R. Yetman. Dover Publications.
3. 2000 (1901) *Up From Slavery*, by Booker T. Washington. Signet Classics. New American Library, New York.

(or read digital text on line, at:

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/WASHINGTON/cover.html>)

Supplementary Reading (not required, but would be useful):

1. 1988 *The Slave Narrative: Its Place in American History*, by Marion Wilson Starling. (Second Edition; originally published 1981). Howard University Press, Washington, DC.

Requirements: Participation in class discussions is expected, and each student's input will be crucial. Students are expected to have read the readings for that day, and come to class prepared to discuss them.

The writing component for this class consists of two critical essays on key readings to be assigned throughout the semester. Each essay will be three to five pages in length, double spaced, 12 point font, and one-inch margins. These will be corrected and returned with comments.

There will be three non-cumulative exams, the format of which will be a mixture of objective questions (e.g., true false, multiple choice, etc), and short answer or essay questions. There will also be a final exam, following this same format, but comprehensive and cumulative.

Grading:

Exams 1 thru 3 (20% each)	60%
Essays 1 and 2 (5 % each)	10%
Attendance/Class Participation:	10%
Final Exam (comprehensive)	20%

A final letter grade will be assigned at the end of the semester, according to this scale:

A	(93-100%)
A-	(90-92%)
B+	(88-89%)
B	(83-87%)
B-	(80-82%)
C+	(78-79%)
C	(73-77%)
C-	(70-72%)
D+	(68-69%)
D	(63-67%)
D-	(60-62%)
E	(59% or below)

Attendance: Regular attendance is expected. Excessive unexcused absences will detract from the student's final grade (see above).

Make-up Exams:

If an exam is missed, and the absence was pre-arranged, or in the event of illness accompanied by a physician's note, a make-up exam will be given. No make-up exams will be given for students who miss the testing period due to unexcused absences.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities:

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who in turn must provide this documentation to me when requesting accommodation.

Academic Honesty:

The University reminds every student of the implied pledge of Academic Honesty: “on any work submitted for credit the student has neither received nor given unauthorized aid.” **THIS REFERS TO CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM, WHICH WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN THIS CLASS**

Consult the Student Guide at www.dso.ufl.edu/stg/ for further information. To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use another person’s idea, opinion, or theory; any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings (any pieces of information) that are not common knowledge; quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words; or paraphrase of another person’s spoken or written words.

Students caught cheating will be referred to the University administration for disciplinary action, the consequences of which can include failure of this course, and possible expulsion from the University.

Schedule and Topics:

Week 1 (Jan 6 thru Jan 9)

Lecture: Introduction
 Why are slave narratives of value to us in the 21st century?

Week 2 (Jan 12 thru Jan 16)

Lecture: Time line of Olaudah Equiano
 Equiano’s methods and goals in writing his narrative

The Life of Olaudah Equiano (Preface; Chapters 1 through 4)

Week 3 (Jan 19 thru Jan 23)

NO CLASS Monday – Jan 19: Martin Luther King Jr., Day

Lecture: Slavery in Africa and the Atlantic World of Europe and the Americas
 The Middle Passage

The Life of Olaudah Equiano (Chapters 5 through 8)

Week 4 (Jan 26 thru Jan 30)

Lecture: Structure of the Slave Narratives
Confessions of Nat Turner
The Abolitionist Movement In Britain and the United States

The Life of Olaudah Equiano (Chapters 9 through 12)

Week 5 (Feb 2 thru Feb 6)

Lecture: Discrepancies in Equiano's Narrative

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2)

*******Exam 1 (Friday -- February 6)*******

Week 6 (Feb 9 thru 13)

Lecture: Frederick Douglass (1818-1895): Introduction
A Comparison of his Three Different Narratives (1845, 1855, 1881)

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (Chapters 3 through 6)

Week 7 (Feb 16 thru Feb 20)

Lecture: Douglass: Timeline of Childhood Events/Plantation Life
Brutality in the Slave Narratives and Douglass
Literacy in the Slave Narratives

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (Chapters 7 through 9)

Week 8 (Feb 23 thru Feb 27)

Lecture: Occupations of Frederick Douglass
Escape in the Slave Narratives

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (Chapters 10 through 11 and Appendix)

Week 9 (March 2 thru March 6)

NO CLASSES: SPRING BREAK (Feb 28-March 7)

Week 10 (March 9 thru March 13)

Lecture: Escape in the Slave Narratives (cont)
Booker Taliaferro Washington (1856-1915): An Introduction
Washington's Two narratives (1900 and 1901)

Booker T. Washington *Up From Slavery* (Introduction and Chapters 1 through 5)

*******Exam 2 (Wednesday – March 11)*******

Week 11 (March 16 thru March 20)

Lecture: The world of Booker T. Washington: Reconstruction and Jim Crow
Booker T. Washington: Public and Private

Booker T. Washington *Up From Slavery* (Chapters 6 through 10)

Week 12 (March 23 thru March 27)

Lecture: Booker T. Washington: Public and Private (cont.)
The WPA Ex-Slave Narratives: An Introduction/ Precursors.

Booker T. Washington *Up From Slavery* (Chapters 11 through 17)

Week 13 (March 30 thru April 3)

Lecture: The WPA Ex-Slave Narratives: Conducting the Interviews
The WPA Ex-Slave Narratives: Black Participation in the Project

Voices From Slavery (Yetman edited volume)

*******Exam 3 (Friday – April 3)*******

Week 14 (April 6 thru April 10)

Lecture: Problems Using the Ex-Slave Narratives

Voices From Slavery (Yetman edited volume)

Week 15 (April 13 thru April 17)

Lecture: Belief Systems and Charms in the Ex-Slave Narratives
The Legacy of the Ex-Slave Narratives
Listening to the Narratives: Laura Smalley, Billey McCrae,
Fountain Hughs

Reading: *Voices From Slavery* (Yetman edited volume)
1. Mary Anderson (p. 15)
2. Frank Bell (p. 21)
3. Boston Blackwell (p. 27)
4. Martin Jackson (p. 173)
5. Silvia King (p. 198)

Week 16 (April 20 thru April 22)

Lecture: Listening to the Narratives: Laura Smalley, Billey McCrae, Fountain
Hughs (continued)

The Slave Narrative: Closing Thoughts

Reading: *Voices From Slavery* (Yetman edited volume)
6. Elizabeth Sparks (p. 296)
7. Ria Sorrell (p. 294)
8. J. T. Tims (p. 301)
9. Mingo White (p. 310)
10. Lulu Wilson (p. 322)

Last Day of Class: Wednesday, April 22

Final Exam Period 30D (Thursday – April 30, 2015, ----- 3 to 5 pm)

*******The Final Exam is at least in part, comprehensive and cumulative*******