

## **Black Consciousness**

2241 AFRONA 0787

Section 1060

Mon.-Weds 4:00 pm-5:15 pm

Room 1501 Wesley W. Posvar Hall

Fall Semester 2023

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Office hours: Mon. and Weds. 2-3:30 pm

By appointment, in person or via zoom

### Description

This course is designed to expose students to the theories, practices and philosophies that have characterized the Black experience from antiquity to the present. It examines how people of African descent, despite their diversity, have developed a consciousness that is rooted in their shared history, culture and geographic origin, as well as their ongoing struggle for dignity and equality amidst racism, exploitation and disenfranchisement. In so doing, the course positions consciousness as the primary catalyst for social, political, economic and intellectual activity in the Black community. More importantly, it reveals the role of Black consciousness in inspiring social change that affects all members of society.

Africana Studies is, by nature, a multidisciplinary field. It is broad and ever growing, as it engages the experiences of people of African descent regardless of their location, ethnic group, gender, religion, culture, profession, or social class, in order to develop a broad and nuanced understanding of their existence. This requires the deployment various media, methods and schools of thought, from history, to sociology, economics and political science, to assess and at times challenge perspectives on the realities of Black people; this course is no different. Through lectures, readings, films, debates, exams, discussion boards, research projects, and the attendance of (and hopefully participation in) social and cultural events on campus, students partake in a forum that expands their understanding of all aspects of the Black life. Through the study of Black Consciousness, students explore the principles, ideas and inspiration that drive Black people.

### Objectives

- To equip students with the language, concepts and knowledge of history that are needed to understand Black consciousness.
- To familiarize students with the values, movements and events that manifest Black Consciousness.
- To establish a framework of multidisciplinary perspectives to understand the black experience.
- To examine the influence of Black Consciousness on all aspects of life.

### Texts

All readings for the course are distributed by hand or posted **online** via the **canvas network**. Any difficulty in accessing online documents should be reported to the instructor **immediately**.

## Assignments

**Reading Homework (daily).** Each class meeting has a corresponding reading or readings that are to be completed **prior to** the start of class. Readings will provide the background for daily lectures and discussions.

**Primary Document Analyses (5).** Throughout the semester, students are expected to make at least five **qualitative, substantive** comments on primary documents that are posted online. The document may be a poem, image, clip, song or interview that reflects or interrogates an aspect of Black consciousness. Comments and analyses should apply concepts discussed in class but may also be used to draw parallels to current events or the student's individual academic background. Students may also submit a maximum of two (2) primary documents for one percent of extra credit (each) to be added to your final grade. Extra credit will be posted to the course discussion board to contribute to class discussion.

**Group Presentation (1).** During the second week of class, students will be organized into groups of at least six to eight people to present on a Black Consciousness movement, or manifestation of Black Consciousness. Presentations will take place at the end of the semester, and students must assign themselves to their preferred topic online. The topics must address Black consciousness in one of the following categories;

Film	Academia
Musical	Literature
Politics	Sports
Business/Economy	Fashion
Social Media	Art (painting, sculpture, canvas, etc...)

A rubric will be provided to guide your presentation.

**Presentation Proposal (1).** All groups are **required** to schedule a meeting with the professor, **on Zoom**, prior to October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 to discuss their topic with the professor. A proposal (1 page in length) must be submitted to the professor prior to the consultation, and state the following in bullet form.

1. The names of all group members.
2. The topic (based on the category has been chosen)
3. A statement of how the topic represents Black Consciousness.
4. The media that will be used (PowerPoint, film clips, music, clothing, display, in-class activity, etc...)
5. Six (6) sources definitive sources, at least four (4) of which are literary (be prepared to explain the relevance of each one).
6. The duties delegated to each member of the group.

### Assessments

**Midterms (2).** Students will complete two (2) midterm examinations on September 27<sup>th</sup> and October 25<sup>th</sup>, covering Units 1 and 2 of the course. Questions will require students to apply their knowledge of geography, concepts, time periods and historical trends, and include multiple choice, short answer and essay questions to gauge their comprehension of course materials. Preparation guides will be distributed one week prior to each examination to guide students in studying for the exam.

**Final Exam (1).** The final exam is **non-cumulative**, and will cover content **exclusively** from Unit 3 of the course, including topics from course presentations (Date TBA).

### Grade Distribution

Primary Document Analyses:	5%
Presentation Proposal:	5%
*Attendance and Participation:	10%
Presentation:	20%
Midterm #1:	20%
Midterm #2:	20%
Final Exam:	20%

\*Attendance is required to receive a favorable grade in this course. **Students are allowed two (2) unexcused absences**, with subsequent absences requiring a note from a physician or documentation of the event or circumstances that prevent the student from being present. \*\*\**After two absences, 2% will be deducted from the final grade for each subsequent absence.*\*\*\*

### A Note on Participation

Students may only deliver questions and comments if they are given permission by the professor. Unless they are presenting, they are required to raise their hand and wait for the professor to call on them before speaking, and on some occasions may be asked to participate even when they have not requested to do so. Doing so allows the professor to ensure that all students are comprehending course topics.

All questions and comments are to be made from the perspective and experiences of the individual who is giving them, and *not* their collective social, cultural, political, or economic affiliations, who may disagree with them. Likewise, no comments are to be made that target or relegate the beliefs, traditions, and values of another group. Participation, in its various forms, is to be done in an objective and analytical manner that does *not* judge their perceived worth, morality and social relevance.

### Grade Scale

Excellent	A+ (100)	A (99-93)	A- (92-90)
Good	B+ (89-87)	B (86-83)	B- (82-80)
Satisfactory	C+ (79-77)	C (76-73)	C- (72-70)
Poor	D+ (69-67)	D (66-63)	D- (62-60)
Failure	F (59 and below)		

### Schedule of Class Meetings

*The instructor reserves the right to change or add assignments to the schedule, and will provide at least one week's notice in the event of any alterations.*

Course Schedule		
Date	Topic	Assignment
<b>UNIT 1: The Search for a “Black” Consciousness</b>		
August 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Introduction	*N/A
August 30 <sup>th</sup> 2023	Black Consciousness in Africa	1. Khapoya, Vincent, “Chapter 1: the Continent and its People,” <i>The African Experience</i> , pp. 1-18.  2. Khapoya, Vincent, “Chapter 2: African Traditional Institutions,” <i>The African Experience</i> , pp. 19-58.
September 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Labor Day-No Class	
September 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	The Global Dispersion of Black Consciousness	1. Burns, James M. and Collins, Robert O., “Chapter 14: Slavery in Africa,” <i>A History of Sub-Sahara Africa</i> , pp. 202-212.  2. Burns, James M. and Collins, Robert O., “Chapter 15: The Atlantic slave trade,” <i>A History of Sub-Sahara Africa</i> pp. 213-227.  3. Burns, James M. and Collins, Robert O., “Chapter 16: The Asian slave trade,” <i>A History of Sub-Sahara Africa</i> pp. 228-247.
September 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Cultural Mixture in the Diaspora	1. Manning, Patrick, <i>The African Diaspora: A History Through Culture</i> , pp. 118-130.
September 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	<i>Daughters of the Dust</i>	1. Watch: <i>Daughters of the Dust</i> (1991), Julie Dash. <a href="https://www.kanopy.com/en/pitt/video/4694912">https://www.kanopy.com/en/pitt/video/4694912</a> *Written Response due on Canvas by Start of Class.
September 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	The Birth of a New Black Consciousness: The Americas	1. Bennet, Lerone, “Blood on the Leaves,” pp. 108-132.  2. Camara, Babacar, “ <i>Négritude</i> and the Race/Class Dialectic in Haiti.” Pp. 57-63.
September 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	The Onset of European Colonialism	1. Azevedo, Mario J. “Chapter 8: European Exploration and Conquest of Africa,” pp. 123-139.
September 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	<b>Exam #1</b>	

Unit 2: Black Progressive Movements		
September 27th, 2023	Transnational Black Identity	1. Williams, Michael, “Chapter 10: The Pan-African Movement,” <i>Africana Studies: A Survey of Africa and the Diaspora</i> , pp. 221-236.
October 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2023	Consciousness and Political Organization	1. Darling, Marsha J. Tyson, “The Quest for Equality: From Reconstruction to Obama,” <i>Africana Studies: A Survey of Africa and the Diaspora</i> , pp. 141-179.
October 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Paths to Independence	1. Césaire, Aimé, <i>Discourse on Colonialism</i> , pp. 31-78.
October 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	The Black Power Movement	1. Carmichael, Stokely, “We Are Going to Use the Term ‘Black Power’,” pp. 470-475.  2. King, Dr. Martin Luther, “Statement by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.” pp. 1-5.
October 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	African Nationalist Ideologies	1. David, Wilfred, “The Search for an Indigenous African Socialism” pp. 1-9.
October 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	The Challenges to Black Consciousness- Part I	1.Manning, Patrick, “Crises and Reverses,” <i>The African Diaspora: A History Through Culture</i> , pp. 295-302.  2.Nkrumah, Kwame, “Introduction: Neocolonialism” pp. 1-10.
October 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	The Challenges to Black Consciousness- Part II	1. Olsson, Göran, <i>The Black Power Mixtape</i> (2014)
October 23 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Exam #2	
Unit 3: Reimagining Blackness		
October 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	South Africa and the New Hope	Camara, Babacar, “The Ideological Foundation of Apartheid,” pp. 26-36.
October 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	The Rebirth of Independent Africa	1. Mungwini, Pascah, “African Renaissance, Coloniality, and the Quest for a Polycentric Global Epistemology,” <i>Conference Proceedings: African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific</i> , pp. 1-14.
November 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2023	Renewing the Struggle for Racial Equality	1. Rickford, Russell, “Black Lives Matter: Toward a Practice of Mass Struggle,” <i>New Labor Forum</i> , pp. 34-42.

November 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	The Emergence of Rastafarianism	1. Campbell, Horace, “Rastafari as Pan Africanism in the Caribbean and Africa,” pp. 75-88.
November 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Afrofuturism	1. Rollfson, J. Griffith, “The Robot Voodoo Power,” <i>Black Music Research Journal</i> , pp. 83-109.
November 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Critical Race Theory?	1. Delgado, Richard, “The Imperial Scholar: Reflections on a Review of Civil Rights Literature,” pp. 46-54.
November 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	No Class: WORK ON GROUP PROJECTS	
November 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	No Class: Thanksgiving Break	
November 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2023	No Class: Thanksgiving Break	
November, 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Presentation Day #1 Presentations by Groups 1 and 2.	
November 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Presentation Day #2 Presentations by Groups 3 and 4.	
December 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Presentation Day #3 Presentations by Groups 5, 6 and 7.	
December 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Presentation Day #4 Presentations by Groups 8, 9 and 10.	
*FINAL EXAM DATE AND LOCATION: TBA*		

## Course Policies:

### *Academic Integrity*

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh’s Policy on Academic Integrity. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators. To learn more about Academic Integrity,

visit the Academic Integrity Guide for an overview of the topic. For hands-on practice, complete the Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism tutorial.

### *Disability Services*

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union,

(412) 648- 7890, [drsrecep@pitt.edu](mailto:drsrecep@pitt.edu), (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

### *Health and Safety Statement*

In the midst of this pandemic, it is extremely important that you abide by public health regulations and University of Pittsburgh health standards and guidelines. While in class, at a minimum this means that you must wear a face covering and comply with physical distancing requirements; other requirements may be added by the University during the semester. These rules have been developed to protect the health and safety of all community members. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in you not being permitted to attend class in person and could result in a Student Conduct violation. For the most up-to-date information and guidance, please visit [coronavirus.pitt.edu](http://coronavirus.pitt.edu) and check your Pitt email for updates before each class.

### *Accessibility*

The Canvas LMS platform was built using the most modern HTML and CSS technologies, and is committed to W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative and Section 508 guidelines. Specific details regarding individual feature compliance are documented and updated regularly.

### *Diversity and Inclusion*

The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University's Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University's mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, see: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civilrights-title-ix-compliance/policies-procedures-and-practices>.

I ask that everyone in the class strive to help ensure that other members of this class can learn in a supportive and respectful environment. If there are instances of the aforementioned issues, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, by calling 412-648-7860, or e-mailing [titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu). Reports can also be filed online: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/make-report/report-form>. You may also choose to report this to a faculty/staff member; they are required to communicate this to the University's Office of

Diversity and Inclusion. If you wish to maintain complete confidentiality, you may also contact the University Counseling Center (412-648-7930).

### *Copyright Notice*

These materials may be protected by copyright. United States copyright law, 17 USC section 101, et seq., in addition to University policy and procedures, prohibit unauthorized duplication or retransmission of course materials. See Library of Congress Copyright Office and the University Copyright Policy. Statement on Classroom Recording To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written

permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

### *Gender Inclusive Language Statement*

Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Just as sexist language excludes women's experiences, non-gender-inclusive language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Identities including trans, intersex, and genderqueer reflect personal descriptions, expressions, and experiences. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of any gender (for example, first year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind, etc.). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications, and recognizes the difference between biological sex and gender expression. Students, faculty, and staff may share their preferred pronouns and names, and these gender identities and gender expressions should be honored.

### *Content Warning and Class Climate Statement*

Our course readings and classroom discussions will often focus on mature, difficult, and potentially challenging topics. Course topics are often political and personal. Readings and discussions might trigger strong feelings—anger, discomfort, anxiety, confusion, excitement, humor, and even boredom. Some of us will have emotional responses to the readings; some of us will have emotional responses to our peers' understanding of the readings; all of us should feel responsible for creating a space that is both intellectually rigorous and respectful. Above all, be respectful (even when you strongly disagree) and be mindful of the ways that our identities position us in the classroom. I expect everyone to come to class prepared to discuss the readings in a mature and respectful way. If you are struggling with the course materials, here are some tips: read the syllabus so that you are prepared in advance. You can approach your instructor ahead of time if you'd like more information about a topic or reading. If you think a particular reading or topic might be especially challenging or unsettling, you can arrive to class early and take a seat by the door so that you can easily exit the classroom as needed. If you need to leave or miss class, you are still responsible for the work you miss. If you are struggling to keep up with the work because of the course content, you should speak with me and/or seek help from the counseling center.

### *Statement on Scholarly Discourse*

In this course we will be discussing very complex issues of which all of us have strong feelings and, in most cases, unfounded attitudes. It is essential that we approach this endeavor with our minds open to evidence that may conflict with our presuppositions. Moreover, it is vital that we treat each other's opinions and comments with courtesy even when they diverge and conflict with our own. We must avoid personal attacks and the use of ad hominem arguments to invalidate each other's positions. Instead, we must develop a culture of civil argumentation, wherein all positions have the right to be defended and argued against in intellectually reasoned ways. It is this standard that everyone must accept in order to stay in this class; a standard that applies to all inquiry in the university, but whose observance is especially important in a course whose subject matter is so emotionally charged.

### *Take Care of Yourself*



Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep, and taking time to relax. Despite what you might hear, using your time to take care of yourself will actually help you achieve your academic goals more than spending too much time studying. All of us benefit from support and guidance during times of struggle. There are many helpful resources available at Pitt (See the Student Affairs' Health and Wellness website at <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/shs/> for additional information.) An important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Take the time to learn about all that's available and take advantage of it. Ask for support sooner rather than later – this always helps. If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or difficult feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty or family member you trust for assistance connecting to the support that can help. The University Counseling Center is here for you: call 412-648- 7930 and visit their website. If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal, call someone immediately, day or night: University Counseling Center (UCC): 412 648-7930 University Counseling Center Mental Health Crisis Response: 412-648-7930 x1 Resolve Crisis Network: 888-796-8226 (888-7-YOU-CAN) If the situation is life threatening, call the Police: On-campus: Pitt Police: 412-268-2121 Off-campus: 911.

### *Email Communication*

Each student is issued a University e-mail address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their e-mail via other service providers (e.g., Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address. To forward e-mail sent to your University account, go to <http://accounts.pitt.edu>, log into your account, click on ***Edit Forwarding Addresses***, and follow the instructions on the page. Be sure to log out of your account when you have finished. (For the full E-mail Communication Policy, go to [www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-10-01.html](http://www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-10-01.html).)