History 492-1
African Americans and the American Labor Movement in the 20th Century
Spring 2012
MWF 12:30 – 1:20 pm
University Hall 319

Instructor: Cornelius L. Bynum, Ph.D. Email: bynum@purdue.edu
Office: University Hall, 024 Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:30 – 3:30 pm or by appointment

Course Description:

History 492-3, African Americans and the American Labor Movement in the Twentieth Century, is an advanced seminar course designed to examine and engage the central issues, themes, events, and people that have shaped the work experiences of African Americans in the twentieth century. Students will discuss and write about both race and gender in the context of African Americans’ work life, focusing especially on economic opportunities and obstacles for black workers, unionization, racial challenges to labor solidarity, the impacts of urban development, and civil rights.

Assigned Texts & Articles:


Course Requirements & Policies:

Attendance:

Attendance is required. Any student that accumulates more than five (5) unexcused absences will automatically fail the class. Absences will be excused on a case by case basis and only when sufficient documentation is provided by the student. Death of a family member, family emergency, serious illness, or officially sponsored university events (e.g. basketball, football, or softball game) are examples of excusable absences; absence due to travel plans for Spring break will not be excused. If a student anticipates being absent from class, s/he should contact me in advance. If such advance notice is not possible, then s/he should contact me as soon as possible. In dire cases or cases of extended absence due to illness or other serious family circumstances, students should seek immediate assistance from the Dean of Students Office in Schleman Hall, room 207.

Class Participation:

Students should come to class having done all the assigned reading and prepared to offer insights and comments on course material. Students will be separated into groups that will meet with me on a rotating basis to discuss class readings. Individual group meeting will take place on Fridays during scheduled class time. Also, each group will be responsible for helping to lead class discussion on the Monday following their Friday group meeting with me. Class participation grades will be determined by students’ preparedness and involvement in group discussions, effectiveness in helping to lead class discussions when required, and overall participation in class discussions.

Writing Assignments:

Students will be required to write in-class essays for each of the assigned books for this class. Students will be given specific discussion questions to examine and are expected to incorporate the central arguments and examples outlined in the assigned texts and articles.

Grading:

Final grades will be based on class participation and essay grades. Class participation will account for twenty percent (20%) of the final grade and each essay will count for twenty percent (20%).

Cheating/Plagiarism

Plagiarism refers to the reproduction of another's words or ideas without proper attribution. University Regulations contains further information on dishonesty. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses, and will be treated as such in this class. You are expected to produce your own work and to accurately cite all necessary materials. Cheating, plagiarism, and other dishonest practices will be punished as harshly as Purdue University policies allow. Any instances of academic dishonesty will likely result in a grade of F for the course and notification of the Dean of Students Office.

This syllabus is subject to change as dictated by class needs and at the instructor’s discretion.

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. In the event of such an emergency, I will notify you of key schedule or policy changes by email.
Syllabus:

**Week One: The Meaning of Work**

Monday, January 9, 2012  Lecture: “Masculinity and Craftsmanship in the 19th Century”
Assigned Reading:
Nelson, Bruce, *Divided We Stand*, pp. xix – xlv, 3 – 45.

Wednesday, January 11, 2012  Lecture: “Women and Work in the Garment Trades”
Assigned Reading:
Nelson, Bruce, *Divided We Stand*, pp. 46 – 88.

Friday, January 13, 2012  Class Discussion

**Week Two: American Labor and the Progressive Era**

Monday, January 16, 2012  Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No Classes)
Assigned Reading:
Nelson, Bruce, *Divided We Stand*, pp. 89 – 141.

Wednesday, January 18, 2012  Lecture: “Industrial Democracy during World War I”
Assigned Reading:
Nelson, Bruce, *Divided We Stand*, pp. 145 – 184.

Friday, January 20, 2012  Class Discussion
Assigned Reading:

**Week Three: African American Migration and the Growth of New Urban Communities**

Assigned Reading:
Nelson, Bruce, *Divided We Stand*, pp. 185 – 218.

Wednesday, January 25, 2012  Lecture: “Migration, Immigration, and the Building of Black Communities in the Urban North”
Assigned Reading:
Nelson, Bruce, *Divided We Stand*, pp. 219 – 250.

Friday, January 27, 2012  Class Discussion

**Week Four: Black Militants and the Politics of Race**

Assigned Reading:
Nelson, Bruce, *Divided We Stand*, pp. 251 – 286.

Wednesday, February 1, 2012  Lecture: “New Negro Radicalism”
Assigned Reading:
Nelson, Bruce, *Divided We Stand*, pp. 287 – 296.

Friday, February 3, 2012  In-Class Essay 1
Week Five: Industrial Unionism and the Great Depression

Monday, February 6, 2012
Lecture: “African Americans and the Construction of Working-Class Culture”
Assigned Reading:

Wednesday, February 8, 2012
Lecture: “Race, Gender, and Labor in the 1930s and 1940s”
Assigned Reading:
Chateauvert, Melinda, Marching Together, pp. 36 – 52.

Friday, February 10, 2012
Class Discussion

Week Six: Industrial Unionism and the Great Depression (continued)

Monday, February 13, 2012
Lecture: “Black Radicals during the Depression”
 Assigned Reading:
Chateauvert, Melinda, Marching Together, pp. 53 – 70.

Wednesday, February 15, 2012
Lecture: “Working-Class Consciousness in the 1930s”
Assigned Reading:
Chateauvert, Melinda, Marching Together, pp. 71 – 94.

Friday, February 17, 2012
Class Discussion
Assigned Reading:

Week Seven: Race and Labor during World War II

Monday, February 20, 2012
Lecture: “Theaters of Resistance”
Assigned Reading:
Chateauvert, Melinda, Marching Together, pp. 95 – 115.

Wednesday, February 22, 2012
Lecture: Wartime Mobilization and Racial Discrimination”
Assigned Reading:
Chateauvert, Melinda, Marching Together, pp. 116 – 137.

Friday, February 24, 2012
Class Discussion

Week Eight: Race and Labor during World War II (continued)

Monday, February 27, 2012
Lecture: “Labor and Civil Rights in the South”
Assigned Reading:
Chateauvert, Melinda, Marching Together, pp. 138 – 162.

Wednesday, February 29, 2012
Lecture: “Labor and Civil Rights”
Assigned Reading:
Chateauvert, Melinda, Marching Together, pp. 163 – 197.

Friday, March 2, 2012
In-Class Essay 2
Week Nine: Race, Labor, and Anti-Communism

Monday, March 5, 2012     Lecture: “Labor Unionism and Anti-Communism”
Assigned Reading:

Wednesday, March 7, 2012  Lecture: “Postwar Defeats for Organized Labor”
Assigned Reading:

Friday, March 9, 2012      Class Discussion
Assigned Reading:

Week Ten: Spring Break

Monday, March 12 – Friday, March 16, 2012  Spring Vacation (No Classes)
Assigned Reading:
Korstad, Robert Rodgers, *Civil Rights Unionism*, pp. 93 – 166.

Week Eleven: Labor and Civil Rights

Assigned Reading:

Assigned Reading:

Friday, March 23, 2012      Class Discussion
Assigned Reading:
Korstad, Robert Rodgers, *Civil Rights Unionism*, pp. 251 – 300.

Week Twelve: The Civil Rights Movement and the New Unionists of the 1960s

Assigned Reading:

Wednesday, March 28, 2012  Lecture: “Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Memphis Sanitation Strike”
Assigned Reading:
Korstad, Robert Rodgers, *Civil Rights Unionism*, pp. 368 – 419.

Friday, March 30, 2012      In-Class Essay 3
Week Thirteen: African Americans and the War on Poverty

Monday, April 2, 2012
Lecture: “Civil Rights Activism and the War on Poverty”
Assigned Reading:

Wednesday, April 4, 2012
Lecture: “Civil Rights, Labor, and Politics in Detroit”
Assigned Reading:
Thompson, Heather Ann, Whose Detroit?, pp. 28 – 47

Friday, April 6, 2012
Class Discussion

Week Fourteen: Race, Labor, and Gender

Monday, April 9, 2012
Lecture: “Manhood and the Building Trades”
Assigned Reading:
Thompson, Heather Ann, Whose Detroit?, pp. 48 – 70.

Wednesday, April 11, 2012
Lecture: “Women Workers and the Needle Trades”
Assigned Reading:

Friday, April 13, 2012
Class Discussion
Assigned Reading:

Week Fifteen: Deindustrialization and Immigration

Monday, April 16, 2012
Lecture: “Globalization of Work”
Assigned Reading:

Wednesday, April 18, 2012
Lecture: “Labor in Cyberspace”
Assigned Reading:

Friday, April 20, 2012
Class Discussion

Week Sixteen: Race and Labor in the 21st Century

Monday, April 23, 2012
Lecture: “Civil Rights Reconsidered”
Assigned Reading:

Wednesday, April 25, 2012
Assigned Reading:

Friday, April 27, 2012
Class Discussion
Assigned Reading:

In-Class Essay 4 TBA