**Course Description:** W.E.B. Du Bois is often invoked by American Studies scholars as an inspiration and icon. Why? This class will take a deep look at how Du Bois’s pioneering interdisciplinary scholarship on race, sociology, gender, imperialism, American “exceptionalism” and the fine arts literally invented American Studies before it was born. The class will argue that American Studies might not exist without Du Bois, even though Du Bois himself has historically been marginalized by the development of the discipline. The course will pay special attention to Du Bois’s influence on the development of “transnational” and activist modes of scholarship that have become central to American Studies itself. At the same time, the course will examine how Du Bois work can be used to illuminate the formation of related fields to American Studies like African American Studies and Postcolonial Studies. Among the authors to be studied include W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul Gilroy, Hazel Carby, Amy Kaplan, Michael Denning and Michelle Alexander.

**Required Texts (available at Von’s Bookstore):**

*Culture in the Age of Three Worlds.* Michael Denning. Verso. 2004

*The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture.* Amy Kaplan. Harvard UP.


*Paul Gilroy The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness.* Harvard UP.


Course Requirements:

1 Teaching Day. Choose one week during the semester and lead class discussion for the first sixty minutes. Choose up to three topics or themes from the reading for the week that you would like the class to discuss, explore and develop. Provide at least one teaching supplement to the text (print/audio/video) and one print handout. If video or audio, keep clips to five minutes or less. The teaching supplement is to be a tool to prompt discussion. Also, provide the class with three suggested sources for further study related to the topic. 20 percent of final grade.

1 Mid-Term Essay Abstract: Due Tuesday, September 30th. Provide a 300 word abstract of an essay you’d like to write for the midterm essay (see below). The abstract should be a concise summary of the topic, the argument you’d like to make, and what you think the argument can contribute to scholarship. 10 percent of final grade.

Mid-term Essay Due Week Due Tuesday, October 21st. Write an 8-10 page paper on a theme of your own choosing. The paper should develop out of the abstract submitted earlier in the term. The essay should present a clear argument about the topic. It should also provide an argument as to how the paper contributes to scholarship on either Du Bois or American Studies or both. Required sources: 2 from the syllabus; 5 from outside the syllabus. Use discipline-appropriate citation style. Check the Purdue Online Writing Lab if you have questions about citation style: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/ 25 percent of final grade.

Annotated Bibliography: Due Tuesday, Nov. 25th. Choose a theme or topic related to the course. Create an annotated bibliography on the theme using a minimum of 10 sources. The primary purpose of an annotated bibliography is to provide the reader a clear summary of the main argument of the text being annotated. The annotation is descriptive, not editorial. It should also offer brief comment on how the source may be useful to scholarship on the topic around which your bibliography is organized. The Purdue online writing lab offers guidelines for annotated bibliographies. Please also ask me if you have questions: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/ 20 percent of final grade.

Final Paper Due: Tuesday, Dec. 9th: The final paper may be an extension (and elaboration) of your mid-term essay, or an entirely new paper. The paper should be 25-30 pages in length, typed and double-spaced. You must use a minimum of 3 sources from the syllabus, and 15 sources from off the syllabus. Please use a citation style appropriate to the discipline. 25 percent of final grade.

Attendance: 1 unexcused absence allowed; all absences thereafter reduce one point from final grade average.

Plagiarism: Will be cause for failure of course.
Course Schedule:

T. Aug. 26: Introduction---What Happens To American Studies When You Put W.E.B. Du Bois at the Center?

T. Sept. 2 DISCIPLINE, FOUNDATIONS AND CHANGE.


T. Sept. 9 THE INVENTION OF BLACK SOCIOLOGY.

The *Philadelphia Negro* (all) and from the *Oxford Du Bois Reader*: Ch. 5 “The Training of Negroes for Social Power” and Ch. 1 “The Present Outlook for the Dark Races of Mankind”

T. Sept. 16 TRACING SCHOLARLY LINEAGE I


T. Sept. 23 HISTORIOGRAPHY, HEGEMONY AND COUNTER-HEGEMONY.

From *Black Reconstruction in America*: Ch. I, II, III, IV, V; X, XI; XIV; XVI; XVII. From *Oxford Du Bois*: Ch. 3 “John Brown;” Ch. 5 “The Negro and Communism” and “A Negro Nation within the Nation.”

T. Sept. 30 INTERNATIONALISM, ANTI-IMPERIALISM AND AMERICAN STUDIES

*Dark Princess (all)*; From Ch. 4 Oxford Du Bois “Negro Art and Literature” and “Criteria of Negro Art;” Ch. 3 “Gandhi and the American Negro” and Ch. 5 “China.” ABSTRACT DUE

T. Oct. 7 DIASPORIC MODERNITY AND (AFRICAN) AMERICAN STUDIES.


T. Oct. 14th: No Class. Fall Break.
T. Oct. 21 DU BOIS AND THE IDEA OF FEMINISM.

Hazel Carby, *Race Men*. From Oxford Reader, Ch. 5 “Woman Suffrage” and Ch. 6 “The Damnation of Women” in *Darkwater*.

**MIDTERM ESSAY DUE**

T. Oct. 28 TRACING SCHOLARLY LINEAGES II.


T. Nov. 4 TRANSNATIONAL DU BOIS/TRANSNATIONAL AMERICAN STUDIES

Amy Kaplan *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* “Introduction” and Ch. 6 “The Imperial Cartography of W.E.B Du Bois.” *From Oxford Du Bois Ch. 6 Darkwater (all).*

T. Nov. 11 DU BOIS AND ANTI-COLONIAL AMERICAN STUDIES.


T. Nov. 18th. SCHOLARSHIP OF EXILE AND THE UNAMERICAN.

Kevin Gaines, *African Americans in Ghana: Black Expatriates and the Civil Rights Era*. From Oxford Du Bois, Ch. 3 “Kwame Nkrumah” and Ch. 7; “The Future of Africa.”

T. Nov. 25 TRACING SCHOLARLY LINEAGES III: A DU BOISIAN AMERICAN STUDIES?

Michael Denning, *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds* (all).

**ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE**

T. TRACING SCHOLARLY LINEAGUES IV: DU BOIS AND ACTIVIST SCHOLARSHIP.

Dec. 2 Michelle Alexander *The New Jim Cross: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Color Blindness* AND Du Bois handout to be provided.

T. Dec. 9 A celebration of your work! Dinner and discussion. **FINAL ESSAY DUE.**

**Hardcopy to me and e-mail to your classmates.**