

**Ethnic Studies 250 (CRN: 22068)**  
**Introduction to African American Studies: Hemispheric Legacies of the Plantation**  
**T Th 10:00AM-11:20 AM**  
**246 Gerlinger**

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**Prof. Irmay Reyes-Santos**

Office Hours: T 11:30AM -12:30PM, Th 3:00-3:50PM, and by appointment (313 McKenzie)  
 Email: [irmay@uoregon.edu](mailto:irmay@uoregon.edu) Office phone: 346-4824

**Graduate Teaching Fellow**

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**Course Description**

This course complicates the “American” in African American Studies by broadening the geographical scope of the field. Through the framework provided by African Diaspora Studies, we engage in a transnational examination of political, economic, and cultural matters of relevance to Afro-descendant peoples in the Americas. In this course, we point to the main questions of the field and its related key concepts. During the quarter, you must strive to learn how to *think critically, ask pertinent questions, engage in productive conversations with your peers, read academic and cultural texts, define and apply concepts, and examine U.S. history and your everyday life through the framework provided by African Diaspora and African American Studies.*

**Required Texts**

- **Reader (Duck Store)**
- **(pending) The Gilda Stories (Jewelle Gómez-Duck Store)**
- **Hard Road to Freedom (Horton and Horton-Duck Store)**
- **Some readings will be placed on Blackboard**
- **Reserve readings** – You can find the reader, The Gilda Stories, and Hard Road to Freedom in hard reserves in the library. The reader can also be found on Blackboard.
- If you have any difficulties obtaining the readings (for financial or technological reasons) **please communicate with the professor** and the necessary arrangements will be made.

You **MUST** bring a hard copy of the assigned readings for every lecture. Read the assigned texts before lecture.

**Course Policies**

**Creating a safe learning environment:**

The student is responsible for attending **every** lecture, keeping up with all assigned readings, and participating actively in conversations in the classroom. The readings and lecture are only a small part of the learning experience. You must confront the challenge of the course by engaging

with your teachers and classmates. Listen carefully and support your comments through references to the readings, sections, and lecture. In your comments and body language, you **MUST** show **RESPECT** for your instructors and peers. When someone is speaking, everyone listens. I reserve the right to ask you to leave the room, and/or drop the course, if you have disrupted classroom dynamics or disrespected your teachers and/or classmates. I must ensure that the classroom is a safe space for all. For this reason, you will have a strictly PROFESSIONAL relationship with the professor and GTF.

See campus policy on these matters at <http://aaeo.uoregon.edu> and [http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/rules/OARS\\_500/OAR\\_571/571\\_004.html](http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/rules/OARS_500/OAR_571/571_004.html)

For campus regulations regarding academic dishonesty, classroom disruption, alcohol and drug violations, theft, physical assault, and sexual misconduct, see the Office of Student Judicial Affairs website: [http://studentlife.edu/programs/student\\_judi\\_affairs/index.htm](http://studentlife.edu/programs/student_judi_affairs/index.htm).

Also see campus policy on affirmative action and equal opportunity posted on Blackboard.

### **The Lecture:**

You should approach the lectures as models for understanding the texts. Be prepared to articulate the analytical frameworks presented in lecture in your assignments. I request that you avoid using your personal computers in lecture, unless it is necessary. They tend to be a distraction to you as well as your classmates. **If you take notes on your laptop, you must sit in the first row of the classroom. If you arrive late, you must do the same.** If you miss a lecture, or section, it is your responsibility to get notes from classmates and know the material. You can also come to see me during office hours to discuss material you have missed. Lecture notes will not be available by email or e-reserves.

### **Office hours:**

The classroom and office hours are the spaces and time-slots allocated to meet your intellectual needs. We can schedule appointments, if necessary. I encourage you to come to my office (or the GTF's office) at least once in the quarter to talk about the readings, the lecture or assignments. When an assignment is due or an exam approaching, I may decide to set strict time-slots for individual students during my office hours. Therefore, if you have any questions, concerns, or just need to discuss anything at length with me, you should plan to meet before high demand periods. I strongly encourage you to seek your GTF's feedback on your work. When you come to office hours, be open to constructive comments on your work.

### **Email policy:**

Email is not the primary medium to contact me or the GTF. We should not be expected to respond to email immediately. Since not all of you have internet access all the time, it would be an unfair advantage for those who do to rely on email for communication. Moreover, the professor and GTFs have other responsibilities (preparing class, grading, writing), which are also part of their responsibilities and occupy their time outside the classroom and the office. You can email to set appointments, ask specific questions about the reading or lecture, or send the instructors information about any health-related or personal situation affecting your academic performance.

**Email Etiquette:**

Please remember that correspondence by email is another way that you participate in the class. Therefore, it is important to ensure that your email interactions with me are professional and courteous. **Please include a subject line. Do not send papers to my email address. Do not email me questions that are already answered by the syllabus. You should always address me as Prof. Reyes-Santos by email, and sign your whole name at the end of your message.**

**Evaluation:**

Participation 20 % [includes reading responses on Blackboard]

One Assignment 15 %

Mid-term Exam 30 %

Final Exam-Portfolio 30 % [includes PRINTED reading responses on Blackboard]

Surprise Quizzes 5 %

You will be evaluated on the skills mentioned in the course description (first page).

**Attendance and Participation**

Your grade for attendance and participation requires active participation and doing the homework assigned. If you do not participate in our conversations for the whole quarter nor go to office hours, do expect to receive a 0 in participation. If you arrive late to lecture or section, just seat yourself quietly and wait until the class is over to ask what you missed. **If you use your laptop for activities not related to the course, you will lose ten percent of your participation grade.**

**Late assignments**

Late assignments will be marked down one-half letter grade (1.5%) for every day, unless you have a special arrangement with the instructor, which would only be possible under very extenuating circumstances. There are no make-up quizzes or examinations. You will be asked to produce a doctor's note if an exception is allowed. You cannot drop off late papers at the Ethnic Studies office or my office. You will have to wait until the next lecture.

**Late Papers, Grades, Questions**

If you did not meet a deadline, avoid emotional outbursts in the Ethnic Studies office, my office, or email. You are responsible for your performance in the course and punctuality. We can always discuss exceptional circumstances.

**Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty**

I will not tolerate any kind of academic dishonesty. Familiarize yourself with campus policy with regards to academic dishonesty: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/> Punishment could include an F for the assignment, an F or withdrawal from the course, and suspension or expulsion from the university. We actively investigate any sign of academic dishonesty in our grading.

**Health Conditions and Disability Services**

If you have a documented health condition or experience any physical or emotional conditions that impede your full participation in the course, please meet me **soon**. You may be asked to bring a notification letter from Disability Services outlining your approved accommodations.

## **Week 1: Introduction: Why African Diaspora Studies at the University of Oregon?**

**Key Terms: African American Studies, African Diaspora Studies, Race, Social Construction, President-elect Barack Obama**

Tuesday Jan. 6:

- Syllabus
- Introduction to the course: Race, the Power of an Illusion, Part I

Thursday Jan. 8:

- <http://centralamerica.com/belize/hotels/victoria.htm> [Blackboard]
- <http://www.graylineneworleans.com/plantation.shtml> [Blackboard]
- Horton and Horton, "Slavery and Freedom in the Age of Revolution," "From Militancy to Civil War" [Book]
- "A Slave Girl Tells of Her Life" [Blackboard]

## **Week 2: History of the African Diaspora in the Americas**

**Key Terms: Slavery, Racism, the Plantation, Alliances**

Tuesday Jan. 13:

- Horton and Horton, "From Reconstruction to Jim Crow," "From Civil Rights to Black Power" [Book]
- Fanny Lou Hamer "Voting Rights in Mississippi", "Get on the Ground" [Blackboard]
- Martha Calhoun, "A History of Eugene's Race Politics" (May 18, 2006)[Blackboard]

Thursday Jan. 15:

- Film: Race, the Power of an Illusion, Part III

## **Week 3: Challenging Heteronormativity**

**Key Terms: Intersectionality, Gender, Sexuality, Heteronormativity, Ableism, Ageism, Feminism, Whiteness, Privilege**

Tuesday Jan. 20:

- George Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness"[Reader]

Thursday Jan. 22:

- Cheryl Clarke, "A House of Difference" [Reader]
- Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference" [Reader]
- "Rights vs. Rights: An Improbable Collision Course" (Blackboard)

**Assignment due on Thursday, Jan. 29th [Blackboard]**

## **Week 4: Questioning Heteronormativity**

Tuesday Jan. 27:

- Continue discussion or film: A Place of Rage

Thursday Jan. 29:

- Wesley Chrislow, “Migration, Identity, and a Black Same-Sex Consciousness” [Reader]
- Jewelle Gómez, “But Some of Us are Brave Lesbians” [Reader]

### **Week 5: Multiculturalism and Institutionalized Racism**

**Key Terms: Multiculturalism, Neoliberal State, Prison Industrial Complex, Institutionalized Racism**

Tuesday Feb. 3:

- Guest speaker: Michael Hames-García
- Horton and Horton, “Conservatism and Race in Multicultural America” [Book]
- Angela Davis, “The Prison Industrial Complex” [Reader]
- Recommended reading in Reader: Vijay Prashad, “Second-hand Dreams”
- Recommended reading: Human Rights Watch and Department of Justice websites [Blackboard]

Thursday Feb. 5:

- Derrick Bell, “The Space Traders” [Reader]

**Take-home mid-term due on Thursday, Feb. 12th. [Blackboard]**

### **Week 6: Freedom and Repression**

**Key Terms: Freedom, Repression**

Tuesday Feb. 10:

- Continue discussion or film: The Farm

Thursday Feb. 12:

- The Black Panthers, “Bobby Seale Explains Panther Politics: An Interview” [Reader]
- Michael Hames-García, “The Practice of Freedom: Assata’s Struggle” [Reader]

### **Week 7: Anti-racist Struggles and Decolonization Movements**

**Key Terms: Citizenship, Imperialism, Blackness, Haitian Revolution, Identity, the Black Revolution**

Tuesday Feb. 17:

- Dessalines, “Haitian Constitution” [Blackboard]
- Frederick Douglass, Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, “Minister to Haiti,” “Continued Negotiations” [Reader]

Thursday Feb. 19:

- Malcolm X, “Answers to questions at the Militant Labor Forum” [Reader]
- Malcolm X, “The Black Revolution” [Reader]
- “The Victims of the Ku Klux Klan” [Blackboard]

**Week 8: African Diaspora and Anti-War Movements****Key Terms: Prison Industrial Complex, Third World Feminism, Solidarity, Human Rights, Civil Rights**

Tuesday Feb. 24:

- Audre Lorde, “Grenada Revisited” [Reader]
- Angela Davis, “Abolition Democracy” [Reader]
- Martin Luther King, “Conscience and the Vietnam War” 1967 [Blackboard]

Thursday Feb. 26:

- Continue discussion or film: Lest We Forget

**Week 9****Key Terms: Revision of History, Hemispheric Legacies**

Tuesday Mar. 3:

- The Gilda Stories (BOOK-pending)

Thursday Mar. 5:

- The Gilda Stories

**Week 10****Key Terms: Cultural Resistance, Alliances, African America**

Tuesday Mar. 10:

- The Gilda Stories
- Speech: President Barack Obama

Thursday Mar. 12:

- Concluding Remarks
- Preparing for the Final Exam

**Take-home Final Exam (TBA)****Recommended readings on Blackboard:**

- “A Black Feminist Speaks Out” (1851)
- “An Abolitionist is Given the Death Sentence in 1851”
- Executive Order: “Desegregation of Central High School 1957”
- “Ku Klux Klan Creed”
- “Our Nation is Moving Towards Two Societies” 1968
- and more