



C-ID Descriptor

African American History of the U.S. to Reconstruction

Descriptor Details

- **Descriptor Title:** African American History of the U.S. to Reconstruction
- **C-ID Number:** 140
- **Units:** 3
- **Date of Last Revision:** 9/3/2025 04:30:55 AM GMT+0000

General Description

This course is a survey of African diasporan experiences in United States History from African origins to 1877 with emphasis upon the centrality of African American experiences and contributions. Course content focuses on African diasporan influences upon the political, social, economic, and cultural development of the United States.

Prerequisites

N/A

Corequisites

N/A

Advisories

N/A

Content

1. African civilizations with social, political, and cultural structures/institutions; religious traditions and economic ideas and practices.
2. Evidence of African presence in early America; relationships, similar cultural concepts and practices with Native American/American Indian cultures.
3. Relations between Africa, Europe, Asia and the Americas before the age of European colonialism.
4. Establishment, development, rationale, institutionalization, and expansion of enslavement in the Americas and its role in the development of capitalism and transnational economies.
5. The enslavement of Africans in America, its legalization, judicial and legislative codifications, and its religious and pseudo-scientific justifications.
6. African Americans and the American Revolution and the political, economic and ethical implications.
7. Fundamental ideals of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights; constitutional support for the institution of enslavement; African American and abolitionist views about the Constitution.
8. African American experiences in the new/early national period and the development of a racially divided nation, the expansion of enslavement and the growth of the abolitionist movement.
9. African American culture in antebellum America and various forms of allyships and resistance to American enslavement; reaction to African American resistance and the debates over the issue of enslavement.
10. Ideological, political and economic conflict between northern and southern regions around the critical issue of enslavement; legal decisions and political actions leading up to the Civil War; the extension of racial capitalism and the institutionalization of systemic white supremacy.
11. African Americans and the War of Jubilee/Civil War; African American responses and support for the Civil War; Lincoln's policies, emancipation; African American experiences in the Union army and treatment by the Confederacy.
12. The emancipation of enslaved Africans, the African American agenda for Black Reconstruction, political engagement and community building. National Reconstruction, its various phases and presidential plans, Reconstruction Acts and Amendments; the promises, compromises and failures of national Reconstruction the refashioning of systemic white supremacy, and the rise of the Jim Crow era.

Lab Activities

Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Discuss the main features of African cultures and civilizations before the age of European colonialism in America.
2. Explain the importance of mercantilism, the foundation of racial capitalism, and the Atlantic economy in the development of the social and economic systems within European colonies.
3. Analyze the Holocaust of Enslavement, Industrial Revolution, and their relationship to the development of European capitalism.
4. Discuss the evolution of the enslavement of African people and European rationale for it in the Americas, and explain the role of African exploited labor in the development of colonial economies.
5. Describe the impact of the enslavement of African Americans on emerging laws, social institutions, economic developments and government in the English colonies.
6. Discuss the development of colonial laws legalizing enslavement, police surveillance and suppression, and racial oppression.
7. Explain the role African Americans played on both sides of the American Revolution, and the impact of revolutionary ideas on the institution of enslavement and the development of racialized societies within the U.S.
8. Discuss the philosophical ideas held by the country's framers on such questions as: the origins and purpose of government; the relationship between individuals and government; the relationship between government and civil society; and the relationship between Europeans, and Native Americans and Africans.
9. Summarize the basic principles of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights; and identify fundamental American political values that flow from the Constitution; and their direct and indirect impact upon the African experience in the U.S.
10. Identify and discuss Constitutional provisions that legitimized enslavement and racial oppression; and analyze the contradictions inherent within a society founded on the principles of freedom and equality, and the persistence of enslavement and racial oppression.
11. Discuss the emergence of de facto and de jure racial discrimination in post-revolutionary U.S. society and its impact upon African Americans.
12. Explain the various reasons African Americans established social, religious, educational, economic, and cultural institutions after the Revolution and identify the specific institutions they founded.

13. Explain factors leading to western expansion including concepts of empire building, manifest destiny and racial capitalism.
14. Analyze the development of African American culture during the early national period and its relationship with, and influences upon European American culture.
15. Discuss the methods used by enslaved Africans to resist the institution of enslavement and how this resistance led to the enactment of laws to suppress it, including ship mutinies, revolts, abolitionism, maroon societies, Afro-Indian and Afro-Mexican alliances.
16. Summarize pro-enslavement and anti-enslavement arguments and explain the differences among anti-enslavement groups and abolitionists such as those founded and led by African Americans and advocates of the free soil movement.
17. Analyze the ideological, economic, and political issues around secession and the central role of African enslavement played in the conflict before and onset of the War of Jubilee.
18. Explain the role and contributions of African Americans during the Civil War, and compare and contrast the resources and social experiences in the Union and Confederacy.
19. Analyze the Emancipation Proclamation both as a political war measure and a humanitarian document.
20. Discuss Black and national plans for Reconstruction, and the impact each plan had on African American struggles for freedom, equality, and human dignity.
21. Discuss the challenges of achieving a credible Reconstruction and explain its importance to African Americans.

Evaluation Methods

A student's grade will be based on multiple measures of performance unless the course requires no grade. Multiple measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- I. Quizzes and exams
- II. Written assignments
- III. Research reports
- IV. Field reports
- V. Class discussions, group participation
- VI. Projects and presentations

Textbooks

1. Asante, Molefi, *The African American People: A Global History (classic)*
2. Bennett, Lerone. *Before the Mayflower: History of Black America (classic)*
3. Clark Hine, Darlene, et al., *African American Odyssey, Volume 2, 7th Ed., (2021)*
4. Clark Hine, Darlene, et al., *African American Odyssey, Combined Volume, 7th Ed., (2018)*
5. Clarke, John Henrik, *African People in World History, (classic)*
6. Clayborn Carson, et. al., *The Struggle for Freedom: A History of African Americans, Vol 1 to 1877, Ed.3, (2021)*
7. Clayborn Carson, et. al., *The Struggle for Freedom: A History of African Americans, Combined, Ed. 3, (2021)*
8. Franklin, John Hope, *From Slavery to Freedom, (2020)*
9. Harding, Vincent, *There is a River, (classic)*
10. Jordan, Terry L., *The U.S. Constitution: And Fascinating Facts About It, (classic)*
11. Painter, Nell, *Creating Black Americans: African American History and Its Meanings, 1619-Present, (classic)*
12. White, Debora, et. al., *Freedom on My Mind - A history of African Americans with Documents, (classic)*