This class will examine the ways in which African and African Diaspora Identities have constructed and reconstructed in the 20th and 21st centuries. Beginning with W.E.B. DuBois’ and Frantz Fanon’s views on race, the course will outline the various dynamics of these identities through the lenses of Diaspora, culture, sexuality, social movements, gender, class, place, migration, sociology and philosophy. Readings will include Audre Lorde, Bayard Rustin, Michael Eric Dyson, George Chauncey, Henry Louis Gates, Paul Gilroy, Michael Gomez, Albert
Murray and Eugene Robinson. Sources include Poetry, Literature, History, Philosophy, Journalism, Demographics from throughout the Atlantic World.

**Required Readings**


Selections from *Time on Two Crosses: The Collected Writings of Bayard Rustin* edited by Devon W. Carbado and Donald Weise Cleise Press, 2003. (on Blackboard)


**Recommended Readings**


**Course Requirements:**

Class Participation 55% (Participation 20%, Responses 30%, Attendance 5%)
Discussion Leader Sessions 10%
Midsemester Annotated Bibliography 15%
Concise Literature Review 20%

**Explanation of Requirements**

**Responses:**
Every week you will turn in a 1-2 page double spaced response paper, which states the argument of the work or works, a critical assessment of the text, the implications of the argument for understandings of both African and African Diaspora identities and identity in general and finally your own views on the text.

**Discussion Leader Sessions:** Each week (depending on course enrollment) a different student or students will lead discussion on the week’s readings. The first time you present you will be required to meet with me to discuss your understandings of the work. You will also be responsible for telling the class about the author and where you think their work fits in with the larger field. Finally, you will submit a set of questions to me the day of the seminar, which I will duplicate and hand to the class.

**Midsemester Annotated Bibliography:** in the middle of the semester you will submit a list of 10-15 articles or books that examine either an aspect of African and African Diaspora that is not examined in this course or a further examination of one of themes of this course. In a paragraph after the complete citation, state the argument of the work, the type of evidence the author(s) utilize, the theoretical framework of the work and the contribution to the field.
Concise Literature Review: In an 8-10 page paper that uses the 10-15 works in your annotated bibliography, you will outline convergences, divergences, future directions and challenges in the subset of your canon.

Attendance
Come to class on time. Class time is limited and tardiness not only distracts your classmates, but also increases the likelihood of missing important information.
Three (3) late arrivals = one (1) unexcused absence.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class and three (3) unexcused absences will result in a one (1) letter lowering of your grade.

Participation

In order to be successful in this course, you must actively participate in the section discussions. This includes reading all assignments (in the textbook, sourcebook and course website) and coming to class ready to discuss the assigned readings.

Good participation is displayed by comments or questions that are relevant to lecture or discussion session topics and are informed by the assigned readings. You can also earn extra participation points by attending pertinent lectures that will be announced during class.

Classroom Conduct

During the section meetings, there will many opportunities for you to express yourself orally. In order to allow a fluid exchange of ideas, everyone's opinion will be respected. You are welcome to disagree with your classmates' views on certain issues; however, personal attacks, rude comments or disrespectful behavior of any type will not be condoned and will be detrimental to your participation grade.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

The Oberlin Honor Code applies to all assignment for this course. This code can be found through Blackboard → Lookup/Directories → Honor Code. On assignments and tests you turn in for this course, the honor pledge and your signature must be present. The pledge is as follows: “I affirm that I have adhered to the honor pledge in this assignment.” All tests are closed book, closed notes and closed “friend.” For the exams, signing the honor pledge signifies that you have abided by those restrictions and neither given nor received aid during the exam. The essay and research paper are to be written without assistance, but as always you are encouraged to discuss your idea with others.

Students with Disabilities

If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities that require accommodations (such as a note taker or special testing arrangements), please let the instructor know early in the semester so your learning needs can be appropriately met. You will need to provide
documentation of your disability to Ms. Jane Boomer, Coordinator for Services for Students with Disabilities. Her office is in Peters G-38A and her phone number is x58464

**Email Policy**

I will respond to emails within 24 hours from Monday – Friday, and within 48 hours on the weekends. It is a requirement to check your email and blackboard for announcements for this class.

**Late Work Policy**

For every 24 hours late I will deduct (1/2) a letter grade from your assignment. Also, unless all written work is turned in I will not turn in your final grade.

**Seminar Topics**

**Unit 1: Beginnings of Diaspora and Blackness**

*Week One:* Introductions, in class discussion on the Mean Girls of Morehouse

Discussant: Brian Yates

*Week Two:* DuBois, Double Consciousness and Diaspora


Discussant(s): ________________________________________________________________

*Week Three:* Frantz Fanon’s Masks, Beings and Alienations


Discussant(s): ________________________________________________________________

**Unit 2: The Diaspora Speaks Back**

*Week Four:* Complicating Africanness/Americanness/Blackness


Discussant(s): ________________________________________________________________

*Week Five:* The Black Atlantic: De-Centering America in understandings of Blackness

Discussant(s):  

**Week Six:** Challenging American Blackness, Black American Ethnicities

Assigned Readings: Selections from Marilyn Halters’ *Between Race and Ethnicity* (on Black Board)

Discussant(s):  

**Week Seven:** The negative consequences of having a Diaspora, but not a home


Discussant(s):  

**ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY IS DUE 3/25**

Spring Recess 3/26-4/3

**Unit 3: Black Sexualities: The Theory of Practice**

**Week Eight:** Is there a place for alternate sexual practices within Black Communities


Discussant(s):  

**Week Nine:** The problems of identity in the struggle for Civil and Sexual Rights and Matrices of Oppression: Audre Lorde’s and Bayard Rustin’s Expressions of Freedoms

**Unit 3: Black Cultural Practices and Identity Politics in America**

**Week Ten:** Blacks as the Ultimate Americans


Discussant(s):

**Week Eleven:** Can you be black, male and American at the same time?


Discussant(s):

**Unit 4: Are Blacks Only From the Hood? Or Why Does Blacks as a Problem Continue**

**Week Twelve:** Class as central in identity


Discussant(s):

**Week Thirteen:** The Black Middle Class vs. The “non talented” 90th


Discussant(s):
Week Fourteen: Complicating the Complications: Your Findings on Identity

Assigned Readings: NONE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Presentations of the Literature Review Drafts

Week Fifteen: Turn in Final Drafts of Literature Reviews.