

## BLACK PROTEST IN THE ATLANTIC WORLD (SPRING 2016)

THURSDAYS 4:30 – 7:00 PM

### INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

**Dr. Wendi N. Manuel-Scott**

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays & Thursdays 12-1,  
Thursdays 3:00-4:00, or by appointment

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### OVERVIEW:

This undergraduate course is designed to introduce student to the history of resistance and protest in the Atlantic World from slavery to the post-emancipation era. We will focus on the struggles of people of African descent to attain freedom and equality and explore the different ways black people responded to slavery, colonialism, and racial oppression (both legal and extralegal). With significant emphasis on the voices of protest in the Caribbean and the United States, students will explore how diverse ideas about slavery, freedom, citizenship, gender, class, and equality have shaped the politics of resistance and cultures of opposition in the Atlantic World. In this course, students will examine the different histories of black protest and the obstacles to black freedom and equality. We will especially focus on the experiences and resistance strategies of black women. This course requires students to develop their critical reading skills and hone their analytical abilities through careful reading of all assigned texts, active engagement with course themes, and vocal participation in class discussion. At the end of this course students should be able to think in a more critical fashion about the valiant struggle of slaves and their descendants for freedom and equality. Students will also gain a better understanding of the global dimensions of black protest and makings and meanings of freedom in the Atlantic World.

### EXPECTATIONS:

**Email:**

Electronic mail is a valuable tool. I will, from time to time, send emails to the class, and I am happy to respond to your email messages provided you bear in mind the following points. In academic and professional settings, all emails should have a descriptive subject line (“Question about AFAM 200 assignment”), begin with a respectful salutation (“Prof. Manuel-Scott”), and conform to standard English with proper punctuation and capitalization. Do not use instant message abbreviations. All correspondence should take place via your GMU email account. If you have not activated you GMU email account, go to <https://mail.gmu.edu/>, and select “activate account.”

Final disclaimer: This syllabus is subject to revision as the semester proceeds. Announcements will be made at our class meetings or via GMU email accounts and students are responsible for being aware of any changes.

**Attendance/Participation:** I expect you to be in class. You can’t participate if you’re not present so it is to your benefit to be in class and on time. You should also note that I construe “present” to mean both physical and active mental engagement. You are expected to come to class with assigned articles and books. I also expect all students to have completed all of the readings assigned for that class period. It is also to your advantage to listen closely to lecture material and to take notes during lectures and films.

Students are responsible for ensuring that they legibly write their own name on the sign-in sheet each class period. No one will be “added” to the sign-in sheet after the class is over. If you miss class it is your responsibility to check with your classmates to find out what you have missed. If you are absent, **do not** ask me (in person or via email) if you “missed anything important” or “what did I miss.”

Two absences: the highest grade you may receive is a B

- Three absences: the highest grade you may receive is a C
- Four absences: the highest grade you may receive is a D
- Five absences: you will automatically receive an F

I have an **absolute ban on electronic communication** including cell phones and computers and any other equipment without express permission. You will not be permitted to use text messaging (even reading text messages), instant messaging, emailing, reading Facebook/Instagram/Twitter or web surfing during class time. *Please do not make me embarrass you, and please know that for every single time I see a cell phone, I will count you absent for the day.*

### **Tardy Policy:**

I place a high value on promptness. I feel very strongly that there are very few excuses for late arrivals. You are expected to arrive on-time and leave when class is over. **You are permitted ONE tardy without penalty. Thereafter, each tardy counts as an absence.** If you need to leave early, check in with me before class starts. Please avoid planning appointments which overlap with the class time. Repeat offenses will impact your attendance and participation grades.

### **Class Conduct:**

Together we will create a climate of mutual respect. Students are expected to use good manners in class. Racist, sexist, homophobic, and overall offensive language does not contribute to creating a safe learning space. This class will engage in critical investigation and the open discussion of ideas in an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Absolutely no one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference.

### **Additional class conduct suggestions:**

1. **Turn off. Tune in.** Before each class turn off your cellphone and other electronic devices. Stow your laptop. Sleeping or otherwise “tuning out” is not acceptable; class requires engagement from all members of our academic community.
2. **Bring your “A” game.** ALWAYS bring materials to class. Failure to do so will result in a zero participation score for the day.
3. **Take great notes.** I consider note taking essential to the learning process. It always to your intellectual advantage to listen closely (and critically) to lecture material and to take notes during lectures and class discussions.
4. **Stay engaged for the full period:** NO rustling of papers or putting away texts in readying for departure before the instructor has dismissed class.

### **Effective Reading Strategies:**

1. Highlight ideas and phrases that strike you as significant. It is best to avoid excessive highlighting.
2. Re-read difficult sections or flip back and skim an earlier section if you feel yourself getting lost.
3. Use your margins. Use sticky notes. Summarize the content of the paragraph or section in a word or two alongside the margins. These notes will serve as reminders as you re-read sections. Write comments or questions in the margins as you read. Make a note in the margin (or on a sticky) if a particular section or passage puzzles or intrigues you.

## **GRADING AND REQUIRED WORK:**

1. Participation: 10%

2. Class activities and quizzes: 20%
3. Weekly Reading Log: 35%
4. Black Protest Project: 20%
5. Final Cumulative Essay: 15%

**Please Note:** All course requirements must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in the class. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty are grounds for failing this course.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Honesty:**

This class and all of your work as an undergraduate are governed by GMU's Honor Code: "Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work." Plagiarism is presenting another person's words, ideas, or sequence of arguments as your own without attribution. We will discuss what constitutes plagiarism and how to cite sources properly in this course. If at any point, however, you have a question about this, please ask. If you are tempted to plagiarize or find yourself using material from the Internet or any other source and trying to pass it off as your own, stop working on the assignment and contact the instructor. It is better to submit work late than to break the Honor Code. It is my duty to report all violations of the Honor Code, and I take this duty quite seriously. When I report cases of plagiarism to the Honor Committee, I recommend that the penalty be failure for the course or suspension from George Mason. Such drastic outcomes are avoided through proper citations and good communication with your instructor. To read more about the Honor Code, the Honor Committee, and its procedures, see go to <http://honorcode.gmu.edu>.

### **Disabilities and Academic Accommodations:**

I am very supportive of students with different learning abilities. However, I cannot help you unless I know about it in advance. If, for any reason, you suspect you may have a learning disability, have yourself assessed now. If you require academic support because of a physical or learning disability or any condition that affects your ability to learn, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. You will need to furnish appropriate documentation to the Office of Disability Services. If you have contacted the Office of Disability Services and are waiting to hear from a counselor, please tell me. If you qualify for accommodation, the ODS staff will give you a form detailing appropriate accommodations for your instructor. In addition to providing your professors with the appropriate form, please take the initiative to discuss accommodation with them at the beginning of the semester and as needed during the term. Because of the range of learning differences, faculty members need to learn from you the most effective ways to assist you. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

### **Assignments:**

Class discussion forms the heart of this seminar. I expect each student to come to class having read all of the reading assigned for that week and to be prepared to actively participate in class discussions.

### **Class Activities and Quizzes:**

#### Quizzes:

During the semester, there will be six class activities and/or quizzes. Quizzes will be given during the first 10 minutes of class and students who arrive late to class will not be allowed to participate in them. The quizzes will consist of three questions that are designed to assess your knowledge of the material related to the assigned readings and previous lectures. No make-up quizzes will be offered. Quizzes are worth 50 points.

### Class activities:

Class activities are intended to further your understanding of topics and allow you to apply the knowledge you have learned. You will complete some activities as individuals and others as a member of a group. More information regarding these activities will be provided during the semester.

### Black Protest Project:

Your final project will be based on research in primary and secondary sources. This project will be done in stages over the last half of the course and you will receive a detailed instructions and ongoing support throughout the semester.

### **Writing Assignments:**

You will write LEARNING LOG essays that synthesize, compare, and contrast readings. You must consider the authors' aims and arguments and the evidence used to sustain the argument and interpretation. Essays should be approximately 750 words. You do not need to consult any materials outside of the assigned text.

You must post your LEARNING LOG essays on Blackboard by 4:00pm. Late essays will be marked down one letter grade for each day it is late. I will not accept work that is more than one week late without a valid written medical excuse or notice of a death in the family. I do allow for "one "life happens" opportunity: that is, you may turn in one "life happens" assignment late (up to 48 hours) with no penalty. The "life happens" rule applies only to the two-page essays and NOT to the final exams.

The grade for your essays will be based on how well you meet the following seven requirements:

1. The essay presents a clearly identifiable thesis/argument.
2. The essay has an effective, compelling introduction that prepares scholarly readers for the analysis that follows.
3. The essay effectively synthesizes the main points/arguments of the assigned text.
4. The essay skillfully compares and contrasts the main points/arguments of the assigned text.
5. The body of the essay contains well-developed, coherent paragraphs that feature clear topic sentences, transitions, and focused content.
6. The essay offers a substantive and meaningful conclusion.
7. The essay demonstrates proper spelling and grammar.

### **Final Exam/ Synthesis Paper:**

There will be one final assignment – a synthesis take-home exam. Your paper should draw on assigned course texts and reflect the development of your own interpretations. You do not need to consult any materials outside of the assigned text to successfully complete the final.

All final papers are due on **May 6**.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Marlon James, *The Book of Night Women* (Riverhead Press, 2009)

Stephanie Camp, *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South* (University of North Carolina Press, 2004)

Eric Robert, *If We Must Die: Shipboard Insurrections in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Louisiana State University Press, 2009)

This is the intended schedule for this course, though I reserve the right to make adjustments, if necessary, as the semester progresses. It is important on discussion days that you complete all of the reading in advance.

Day	Date	Subject	Preparation
Thur	Jan 21	<b>WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course Information and Review of the Syllabus, Expectations, etc.</li> </ul>
Thur	Jan 28	<b>WEEK 2: CROSSING THE LAKE OF FIRE</b>	Reading: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eric Robert, <i>If We Must Die: Shipboard Insurrections in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade</i></li> </ol> <b>ESSAY #1 DUE</b>
Thur	Feb 4	<b>WEEK 3: MAKING RACE AND IDENTITY IN THE ATLANTIC WORLD</b>	Readings: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cecily Jones, “Shades of White: Gender, Race, and Slavery in the Caribbean” <a href="http://www.opendemocracy.net">www.opendemocracy.net</a></li> <li>Edward B. Rugemer, “The Development of Mastery and Race in the Comprehensive Slave Codes of the Greater Caribbean during the Seventeenth Century” <i>The William and Mary Quarterly</i>, (July 2013), pp. 429-458.</li> <li>Hilary Beckles, “Black Masculinity in Caribbean Slavery,” pp. 1-23.</li> </ol> <b>ACTIVITY/QUIZ #1</b>
Thur	Feb 11	<b>WEEK 4: WORK, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY</b>	Readings: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ira Berlin and Philip Morgan, “Introduction” in <i>Cultivation and Culture: Labor and the Shaping of Slave Life in the Americas</i>.</li> </ol> Screen in Class: <i>The Language You In</i> <b>ESSAY #2 DUE</b>
Thur	Feb 18	<b>WEEK 5: REVOLUTION AND FLIGHT FROM BELOW- MAROONS, RUNAWAYS, AND REBELS</b>	Reading: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jerome S. Handler, “Escaping Slavery in a Caribbean Plantation Society: Marronage in Barbados, 1650s-1830s,” <i>New West Indian Guide</i> (1997), pp. 183-225.</li> <li>Sylviane A. Diouf, “Introduction,” <i>Slavery’s Exiles</i>, pp. 1-11.</li> <li>Knight, Franklin W, “The Haitian Revolution,” <i>The American Historical Review</i> (2000) pp. 103–115.</li> </ol> <b>ESSAY #3 DUE</b>
Thur	Feb 25	<b>WEEK 6: REVOLUTION AND FLIGHT FROM BELOW CONT.</b>	Runaway Slave Advertisement Assignment DUE <b>ACTIVITY/QUIZ #2</b>  <b>PROJECT STATEMENT AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE</b>
Thur	Mar 3	<b>WEEK 7: CITIZENSHIP, IDENTITY, AND THE QUEST FOR FREEDOM</b>	Reading: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patrick Rael, “Free Black Activism in the Antebellum North” <i>The History Teacher</i>, 39 (Feb., 2006), pp. 215-253.</li> <li>Carol Wilson, “‘An Almost Sleepless Vigilance’: Black Resistance to Kidnapping” <i>Freedom at Risk</i> (University Press of Kentucky, 1994) pp.</li> </ol> <b>ESSAY #4 DUE</b>
Thur	Mar 10	<b>WEEK 8: SPRING BREAK</b>	March 7- 13 <b>SPRING BREAK</b>
Thur	Mar 17	<b>WEEK 9:</b>	Readings:

		<b>POLITICAL BODIES AND GEOGRAPHIES OF RESISTANCE</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stephanie Camp, <i>Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South</i> (University of North Carolina Press, 2004)</li> </ol> <p>ESSAY #5 DUE</p>
Thur	Mar 24	<b>WEEK 10: PROJECT WORKING DAY</b>	<p>PROJECT WORKING DAY</p> <p>PROJECT TIMELINE AND MAPPING DUE IN CLASS</p>
Thur	Mar 31	<b>WEEK 11: “EVERY NEGRO WALK IN A CIRCLE”</b>	<p>Reading:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marlon James, <i>The Book of Night Women</i></li> </ol> <p>ACTIVITY/QUIZ #3 (Counts twice)</p>
Thur	Apr 7	<b>WEEK 12: A TROUBLESOME PEOPLE: PROTEST AND AGITATION IN THE AGE OF EMANCIPATION</b>	<p>Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Michael Craton, “Proto-Peasant Revolts? The Late Slave Rebellions in the British West Indies 1816-1832,” <i>Past and Present</i> 85 (1979) pp. 99-125.</li> <li>Howard Zinn, “Abolitionist, Freedom-Riders, and the Tactics of Agitation” in <i>The Antislavery Vanguard: New Essays on the Abolitionists</i>, (Princeton University Press, 1965) pp. 417-52</li> </ol> <p>ESSAY #6 DUE</p>
Thur	Apr 14	<b>WEEK 13: RETHINKING EMANCIPATION IN THE ATLANTIC WORLD</b>	<p>Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Emancipation” in <i>A Tale of Two Plantations: Slave Life and Labor in Jamaica and Virginia</i>, (Harvard University Press, 2014) pp. 368–410</li> <li>Thomas N. Tyson, David Oldroyd and Richard K. Fleischman, “Accounting, Coercion and Social Control During Apprenticeship: Converting Slave Workers to Wage Workers in the British West Indies, 1834-1838” <i>The Accounting Historians Journal</i>, 32 (December 2005), pp. 201-231</li> </ol> <p>Screen in class: <i>Slavery by Another Name</i></p> <p>ESSAY #7 DUE</p>
Thur	Apr 21	<b>WEEK 14: SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION AND ANTI-BLACK VIOLENCE IN THE LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY</b>	<p>Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O. Nigel Bolland, “Systems of Domination after Slavery: The Control of Land and Labor in the British West Indies after 1838” <i>Comparative Studies in Society and History</i>, 23 (1981), pp. 591-619</li> <li>Ida B. Wells, <i>Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All its Phases</i>, 1892</li> </ol> <p>ACTIVITY/QUIZ #4</p>
Thur	Apr 28	<b>WEEK 15: PRESENTATIONS</b>	PROJECT PRESENTATIONS
Thur	May 6		FINAL EXAM DUE