Course Description: This course will treat the historical, sociological, and political writings of W.E.B. Du Bois—historian, activist, philosopher, and social theorist, one of the foremost intellectuals of the twentieth century, and arguably the founder of the field of African and African American Studies. From *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America* (1896) to *The World and Africa* (1947), Du Bois traced a course across many of the most important currents of global, black, and intellectual history: Pan-Africanism, Marxism, and Anti-imperialism, in particular. An intensive reading course, the primary aim will be to comprehend the development of Du Bois’s ideas, placing them in historical context. The approach will be interpretive and critical; that is, we will be concerned with understanding and assessing Du Bois’s thought.

We will examine his views about black identity and Pan-Africanism, the meaning of American citizenship, the role of social science in social progress, slavery and resistance, democratic theory and practice, racial prejudice and “whiteness,” urban poverty and crime, the race concept, black advancement and group solidarity, the relationship between aesthetic and political ideals, self-respect and social protest, black gender relations and family structure, civil rights and political leadership, education and human development, women’s equality and political self-determination, colonialism and global capitalism, war and peace, Africa and modern development, and capital-labor dynamics and economic justice.

Requirements:

- Class participation (15%). This involves making regular and well-informed contributions to class discussion, which of course requires doing the reading and regularly attending class.
- A 2000-word interpretive and critical essay (roughly 7-8 double-spaced pages) on some aspect of Du Bois’s early writings, due by Monday, October 15th at 5:00pm (35%).
- A 2500-word interpretive and critical essay (roughly 8-10 double-spaced pages) on some aspect of Du Bois’s later writings (post-1920), due by Wednesday, December 12th at 5:00pm (50%).
- Instead of the two shorter papers, post-graduate students may write one 5000-6000-word term paper (roughly 18-22 double-spaced pages), due by Wednesday, December 12th at 5:00pm (85%). A brief prospectus (300-500 words) should be submitted for approval by early November.

Required Texts (* = available as an e-book from the course reading reserves list[]):

• Eric J. Sundquist, ed., *The Oxford W. E. B. Du Bois Reader* (Oxford University Press, 1996). [Note: *The Souls of Black Folk* and *Darkwater* are included in this reader. These two texts are also available as e-books from the course website.]
• Various readings available on the course website.

**Reading Schedule:**

September 5 (Week 1): Introduction

September 12 (Week 2):


**Recommended Secondary Readings**


September 19 (Week 3):


**Recommended Primary Readings**

• Du Bois, “The Study of the Negro Problems” (course website).

**Recommended Secondary Readings**

September 26 (Week 4):

• Required Reading: Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903).

Recommended Primary Readings

• Du Bois, “The Talented Tenth,” (course website).
• Du Bois, “The Development of a People” (course website).

Recommended Secondary Readings


October 3 (Week 5):


Recommended Secondary Readings

October 10 (Week 6):

• Required Reading: Du Bois, *The Gift of Black Folk* (1924)

Recommended Primary Readings

• Du Bois, “Criteria of Negro Art” (course website)

Recommended Secondary Readings


**Monday, October 15th at 5:00pm: First Paper Due**

October 17 (Week 7):

• Required Reading: Du Bois, *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil* (1920).

Recommended Secondary Readings


October 24 (Week 8):
Required Reading: Du Bois, *Dark Princess: A Romance* (1928)

Recommended Secondary Readings


October 31 (Week 9):


Recommended Secondary Readings


November 7 (Week 10):

- Required Reading: Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* (1940)

Recommended Primary Readings


Recommended Secondary Readings


November 14 (Week 11):

• Required Reading: Du Bois, *The World and Africa* (1947)

Recommended Primary Readings

• Du Bois, ”The Pan-African Congresses,” (course website).
• Du Bois, “The Realities in Africa,” in *DBR*, pp. 653-663.
• Du Bois, ”Whites in Africa after Negro Autonomy,” in *DBR*, pp. 667-675.

Recommended Secondary Readings


November 21: Thanksgiving Recess

November 28: No Class Meeting

December 5 (Week 12): Contemporary Critical Reception


**Wednesday, December 12th at 5:00pm: Final Paper Due**
Accommodations for students with disabilities: Students needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a documented disability must present their Faculty Letter from the Accessible Education Office (AEO) and speak with the professor(s) by the end of the second week of the term (Friday, September 14). Failure to do so may result in the Course Head’s inability to respond in a timely manner. All discussions will remain confidential, although Faculty are invited to contact AEO to discuss appropriate implementation.

Collaboration Policy: Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of paper topics and to share sources. You may find it useful to discuss your chosen topic with your peers, particularly if you are working on the same topic as a classmate. However, you should ensure that any written work you submit for evaluation is the result of your own research and writing and that it reflects your own ideas and approach to the topic. You must also adhere to standard citation practices and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. If you received any help with your writing (feedback on drafts, etc), you must also acknowledge this assistance.