

WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE

Spring Semester, 2015

"THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, I"

History 41 (1230)/African-American Studies 4 (0220)

Class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:35–11:00 AM, in GC 470.

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Instructor:	Dr. Richard Olivas
Office location:	GC 380A (in the General Classroom building, 3d floor)
Office hours:	Mon, 11 AM–1 PM; Tues & Thur, 12:45–2:00 PM; Wed, 5:00–6:30 PM; and by arrangement
Office phone:	310-287-4509
Email:	<a href="mailto:rolivas@wlac.edu">rolivas@wlac.edu</a>
Course site:	<a href="http://www.wlachistory.com">www.wlachistory.com</a> (Lecture outlines, syllabus, study guides, study helps, announcements, etc.)

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** History 41, organized in three parts, surveys the history of African-Americans from the colonial era to the Civil War. It looks at political history, social history, and cultural history.

The course's first part, "Becoming African-American," analyzes the processes through which African men, women, and children became African-Americans. This section covers African ways of life, the Middle Passage, and Afro-Americans in British North America. The second part examines slavery, abolition, and the struggle for freedom in the new nation. The final part examines the growth of slavery, abolitionism, the 1850s, and events leading up to the Civil War.

The class as a whole will stress the fact that African-Americans, despite the oppressive, brutal nature of slavery, responded creatively to their painful ordeals and positively influenced their destiny to the present hour. Finally, you will learn to think more critically and write more analytically.

**REQUIRED READING:** Please purchase two (2) books at WLAC's bookstore: Clayborne Carson et al. *The Struggle for Freedom: A History of African Americans*. 2d ed., Vol 1: To 1877. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, Penguin Academics, 2011 (ISBN-10: 0134056760; ISBN-13: 9780134056760); and Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, ed. and intro., Houston A. Baker, Jr., New York: Penguin, 1982. While most exam questions are drawn from the class lectures, you should nevertheless read the book to familiarize yourself with the historical narrative. If you would like to improve your reading skills, please consider taking a course like Learning Skills 030, "Reading/Computer Aided Instruction" or Learning Skills 050, "Intro to Computer Assisted Instruction–Language Arts" (choose "reading speed and comprehension" option) at the Library's Learning Skills Center (see Spring 2015 Schedule of Classes, pp. 77-78).

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** In accordance with Board Rule 9803.28, academic dishonesty is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Cheating will result in automatic failure in the course and referral to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action (Schedule, pp. 134-35).

**STANDARDS OF STUDENT CONDUCT:** According to Board Rule 9803.15 and related rules, disruption of classes or college activities is prohibited and will not be tolerated. To maintain a positive learning environment, the instructor reserves the right to separate disruptive students who sit next to, or nearby, one another (See "Rules & Regulations," §6, in Schedules of Classes, p. 134).

**COURSE STUDENT-LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Using primary and secondary sources, students will be able to explicitly and critically convey their knowledge about colonial America, the origins and significance of the U.S. Constitution, the growth of slavery, and westward expansion in the antebellum U.S., and how these historical events relate to important issues in 21st-century America.

**ATTENDANCE:** Class attendance is mandatory. Students who are excessively absent [i.e., more than three (3) classes] may be dropped at the instructor's discretion. Absences begin to accumulate from the first day of class (i.e., February 10), not from the date students add the class. Roll is taken at the beginning of class. Three (3) late arrivals equal one (1) absence. Students are expected to attend every class meeting, to arrive on time, and stay throughout the class period: "every time, on time, for the whole time."

**DROPPING THE CLASS:** Students are responsible to drop themselves from classes they no longer attend (Schedule, pp. 11, 136).

**TAPE RECORDING POLICY:** State law in California prohibits the use of any electronic listening or recording device in a classroom without prior consent of the instructor and college administration. Any student who needs to use electronic aids must secure the consent of the instructor. If the instructor agrees to the request, a notice of consent must be forwarded to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for approval (see Schedule of Classes, p. 137). Recorders and Google Glass are strictly prohibited. If you need help learning how to take notes, consider taking Learning Skills 051B, "Efficient Note Taking," at the Learning Skills Center (see Schedule of Classes, p. 78). ©

**POLICY ON VISITORS:** Class sessions are reserved for students officially enrolled in WLAC (See Schedule of Classes, p. 135). Visitors may be brought to class by prior consent of the instructor only.

**POLICY ON PAGERS & CELLULAR TELEPHONES:** The policy is simple: pagers and cell phones should never sound in class. Please silence them before class begins. If your phone accidentally rings in class, turn it off without answering it. If you answer a cell phone in class—or get up and leave class to do so—you will be asked to leave for the remainder of that day. Phones, purses, and backpacks are not allowed in laps or on desktops during class. Please put them away. Bluetooth headsets, audio head gear, and Google Glass may not be worn during class, nor should you text-message during class. Students using laptops or other tablet-type computers for note-taking must sit at the back of a row in the last seat or desk. These rules help ensure that students are free to learn in a distraction-free environment. ©

OFFICE OF DISABLED STUDENT PROGRAMS & SERVICES: The DSP&S office is located in Student Services Building, Room 320. The College recognizes and welcomes its responsibility to provide an equal educational opportunity to all disabled individuals. The DSP&S has been established to provide support services for all verified disabled students pursuing a college education.

EXAMS AND STUDY GUIDES: There will be three in-class, closed book exams. Their format combines multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Study guides are provided before the exam to students as a courtesy, not as a right.

MAKE-UP EXAM POLICY: Make-up examinations are given only under exceptional circumstances, and they must be arranged in advance with the instructor.

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:           Exam I (Tuesday, Mar 17):           30%  
  Exam II (Thursday, Apr 30):       35%  
  Exam III (Tuesday, Jun 2):       35% (To verify final date, see Schedule of Classes, p. 16)

COURSE GRADING SCALE:    A=     88% and above           C=     68%-77%  
  B=     78%-87%                 D=     56%-67%                 F=55% & below

LECTURE/READING SCHEDULE: N.B. Instructor reserves the right to modify the plan below.)

PART I: BECOMING AFRICAN-AMERICAN

I. Course Introduction; Africa and the African Past (2/10, 2/12, 2/17)

Required Reading: Carson, African American Lives, Chapter 1

II. Slave Trade and Middle Passage (2/19, 2/24)

Required Reading: Carson, African American Lives, Chapter 2

III. African-Americans in British North America (2/26, 3/3)

Required Reading: Carson, African American Lives, Chapter 3

IV. African-Americans Struggle for Independence (3/5, 3/10, 3/12)

Required Reading: Carson, African American Lives, Chapters 4,5

Exam 1: Tuesday, March 17. Review Carson, chapters 1-5 and the lecture notes.

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PART II: SLAVERY, ABOLITION, AND THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

V. African-Americans in the Early Republic (3/19, 3/24)

Required Reading: Carson, African American Lives, Chapter 6

VI. Expansion of Slavery (3/26, 3/31, 4/2. There is no class Tues., 4/7, or Thurs., 4/8, due to Spring Break. Class resumes Tuesday, 4/14.)

Required Reading: Carson, African American Lives, Chapter 6 (continued)

VII. Free Blacks in Antebellum America (4/14, 4/16)

Required Reading: Carson, African American Lives, Chapter 7

IX. Anti-Slavery (4/21, 4/23)

Required Reading: Carson, African American Lives, Chapter 7 (continued)

X. Black Anti-Slavery and Resistance (4/28)

Required Reading: Carson, African American Lives, Chapter 8

Exam 2: Thursday, April 30. Review Carson, chapters 6-8 and the lecture notes.

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PART III: SECTIONALISM, THE PIVOTAL DECADE OF THE 1850S & ONSET OF WAR

XI. National Disunity over Slavery (5/5, 5/7, 5/12)

Required Reading: Carson, African American Lives, Chapter 9

XII. Slavery Up Close and Slavery's Place in the West (5/14, 5/19)

Required Reading: Carson, African American Lives, Chapter 10

XIV. The 1850s, Slavery as a Moral Evil, and Civil War (5/21, 5/26, 5/28)

Required Reading: Carson, African American Lives, Chapter 10 (continued).

Exam 3: Tuesday, June 2, 10:15 AM-12:15 PM. Review Carson, chapters 9-10 and lecture notes.