The Black Power Movement

Dr. Peniel E. Joseph
Fall 2018
PA 388K (unique# 60710)/HIS 389 (unique# 39445)
GAR 1.122 Thu 9:30AM-12:30PM

Office: GAR 3.114
Office Hours: Th 12:30-2:30pm
Office phone: 512-475-7241
peniel.joseph@austin.utexas.edu
@PenielJoseph

Course Description

The Black Power Movement represents one of the most important and controversial social and political movements in postwar American history. This graduate readings course examines how the movement for black political self-determination during the 1960s and 1970s transformed American race relations, accelerated the pace of black elected officials nationally, erected new educational, social, political, and cultural institutions nationwide and redefined black politics, identity, and culture. We will also explore the movement’s critique of, and participation in, civil rights struggles; its reimagining of American Democracy; efforts to gain political and economic power within America society while redrawing the landscape of race relations.

Students interested in black politics, civil rights, social policy and the deep connections between the historical development of racial justice struggles and contemporary policy debates and challenges would find this course of interest.

Students will be evaluated based on five criteria:
1) Weekly three-paragraph critical analysis of the readings.
2) Class participation and presentation
3) Research Progress Reports
4) Draft of Historiographical Paper
5) Final Historiography Paper

Readings:

The course books will focus on the Black Power Movement, its relationship with civil rights struggles, and the way it became institutionalized in culture, politics, higher education, feminist politics, and community organizing. Black Power era politics simultaneously criticized American domestic and foreign policy even as they tried to gain power within entrenched and longstanding democratic institutions. From the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee to the Black Panthers, Third World Women’s Alliance, and the Congressional Black Caucus, Black Studies programs and departments, Black Student Unions, and black professional and civic organizations, the era unleashed a cascading politics of radical political self-determination not witnessed since the Garvey era.
Assignments

A weekly three-paragraph response on the assigned reading is due by 5 PM the day before our seminar. Each student should read everyone’s essay before the start of class and provide comments, both positive and critical, that will be used for class discussion. Your responses should be submitted in the “Discussion” section of Canvas which will allow you to post your response as well as comment on the responses of others.

Each paragraph should be five sentences and consider the following:
1. How does the author approach Black Power? How does the history being explored connect to our contemporary understanding of black and Africana identity and what are the theoretic and political implications of the work, both historically and contemporaneously?
2. What’s the argument being laid out and how persuasive do you find it to be? Examine the sources in the bibliography and endnotes to consider the way in which the author has marshaled their evidence.
3. How does the work merit analytically and stylistically? Does the author’s analysis seem persuasive and insightful, even when you disagree?
4. Think about the readings in tandem, both thematically, chronologically, and theoretically. How does Black Power’s critique of American democracy play out in the work? What are some of the movement positive, negative, and unexpected or unanticipated outcomes, legacies?

Meetings with Professor Joseph: All students are required to meet with Professor Joseph one-on-one once during the semester.

Midterm Assignment: Rough Draft of Final Historiographical Paper.

Final Assignment: Students are required to write a critical twenty-five-page historiographical essay examining the development, evolution, and impact of the Black Power Movement

This historiographical essay will chart the the historiographical contours of the burgeoning scholarship on the Black Power era; its relationship with the history of the Civil Rights Movement; its local, national, and global contours; the movement’s impact on policy, politics, culture, and society; its critique of American democracy and how its remembered in American history and popular culture; its impact on radical, liberal, feminist, conservative and other intellectual and political perspectives during the Black Power era and now; its resonance with contemporary social movements in the Age of Black Live Matter, Occupy, March For Our Lives, #MeToo, and LGBQT movements.

This final project is due in Professor Joseph’s GAR office by 6PM on Thursday, December 6, 2018.
Class Schedule

Part 1. The Black Power Movement and American History

            Joseph, Neighborhood Rebels, Intro and Chap. 1.

September 6  Joseph, Waiting Til the Midnight Hour

September 13  Farmer, Remaking Black Power

September 20  Carmichael and Hamilton, Black Power

Part 2: Black Power and American Democracy

September 27  Bloom and Martin, Black Against Empire

October 4  Nelson, Body and Soul

October 11  No Class Read Neighborhood Rebels, Chs. 2, 6, 7

October 18  Shakur, Assasta: An Autobiography

Part 3. The Politics of Culture/Cultural Politics in the Age of Black Power

October 25  Baldwin, No Name in the Street

November 1  Alkalimat, The Wall of Respect

November 8  Ford, Liberated Threads
            Joseph, Neighborhood Rebels, Ch. 8

November 15  Godfrey and Whitley, Soul of a Nation


November 22  Thanksgiving

November 29  Joseph, Neighborhood Rebels, Chs. 3-5

December 6  Moore, The Defeat of Black Power and Joseph, Neighborhood Rebels, Ch. 9.
Assigned Readings

Books can be found at the MAIN Co-op, on Guadalupe, under HIS 382/unique# 39345. They are also on reserve at the Benson Latin American Collection Library in SRH 1 and can be borrowed for 24 hours. In addition, those that are offered as e-books for checkout from UT are noted below.


Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259 (voice), 512-410-6445 (video phone) or via email ssd@austin.utexas.edu For more information on available services, please see http://diversity.utexas.edu/
By UT Austin policy, you must notify Professor Joseph of any pending absence to observe a religious holy day at least 14 days in advance of the day you wish to take an absence. If you miss a class to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete any missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

For information on UT policies on Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, please see http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/