



**HIST 6328 AFRICAN AMERICAN CHRISTIANITY
THEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL STUDIES DIVISION
SPRING 2023 TUESDAY 2:00-4:50
NOLA2U FLEX**

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We hope that you are as excited about the study of African American Christianity as we are! One of the reasons we love teaching is the opportunity to relate to students. Please feel free to contact us by email or phone or to come by our offices. We want to help you in any way we can. **Call us if you have a problem or a question. Do not wait until it is too late for us to help!** This syllabus is subject to minor, necessary or beneficial changes during the semester.

I. Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

II. Course Description:

This course provides a general historical survey of African American Christianity from the seventeenth century to the present. Attention is given to significant African American Christians; their contributions to society and the church; the contexts in which they lived and worked; African American churches, conventions, and movements. Attention also will be given to contemporary endeavors to foster racial reconciliation.

III. Student Learning Outcomes:

- The student demonstrates an understanding of significant African American Christians, movements, institutions, and theological concepts in African American Christianity.
- The student demonstrates an ability to apply principles learned from the study of African American Christianity to church and ministry as well as racial reconciliation.
- The student demonstrates an ability to communicate understanding and application of principles learned from the study of African American Christianity.

IV. Required Texts:

There are two required textbooks for all students in this class:

Juan Williams and Quinton Dixie, *This Far by Faith: Stories from the African-American Religious Experience* (New York: Amistad, 2003).

Jarvis J. Williams and Kevin M. Jones, eds., *Removing the Stain of Racism from the Southern Baptist Convention* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2017).

There will be additional required reading from sources that are available on the Internet.

V. Requirements:

- A. *Assigned Reading:* Students are expected to read the assignments listed for each unit. A report is due on the last day of each unit on the percentage completed (in 20% increments) of that unit's assigned reading. Each report is worth up to 5 points. Reading Reports are found at the end of each unit's assignments under Course Documents. An additional 5 point bonus will be awarded to students who have completed **all** the assigned reading by **May 6**. This allows you to catch up on reading you have missed during the semester.

Unit 1: January 31

Unit 2: February 28

Unit 3: March 21

Unit 4: April 4

Unit 5: April 18

Unit 6: May 9

- B. *Biography:* Each student will conduct research and write a Biography on a significant person in African American Christian history. **The Biography is worth 100 points. Due March 7.**

The Biography will be 8-10 pages long (not including cover sheet or bibliography; no table of contents is necessary) and should reflect scholarly research. You should discuss the historical context and influence of your subject in church history and conclude with a summary statement about the contributions and lasting consequences of your subject to history. It will be written according to standard guidelines (Turabian; Times New Roman 12 pt. font; double-spaced; standard margins; footnotes, etc.) and include a bibliography of at least three resources (You must consult at least one significant autobiography or biography about your subject).

Application point: After writing a conclusion to your research paper, each student will add at least one application point learned from the subject of the Biography. This application point might be a sermon illustration, an application to your ministry, or a lesson learned for your personal life.

The Biography will be evaluated as follows:

1. Grammar and style: Spelling, sentence and paragraph development; punctuation; and conformity to the 6th or 7th edition of Turabian. (20 points)

2. Clarity and Coherence: Balance; thoroughness; organization; logical development; overall sense of the paper. (20 points)
3. Research: Bibliography; type and variety of sources (primary, secondary, monographs, journal articles, websites, etc.); most bibliographic entries should be accompanied by footnote citations. (20 points)
4. Historical Awareness and Insight: Factual accuracy; awareness of historical connections (continuity/discontinuity, cause/effect, contrasts/comparisons); sensitivity to historical context; awareness of the historical impact of a person. (20 points)
5. Analysis and Evaluation: Going beyond the mere reporting of facts to include explanation, interpretation, analysis of material; evaluation of strengths and weakness of a person; demonstration that you have thought about the material that you have researched. Give strong and insightful introduction and conclusion. Include an application point. (20 points)

A list of suggested subjects along with suggested resources are included in this syllabus.

You may choose a subject not on this list for your Biography, but you must have prior approval from the professors. Send your top three choices by email to both professors. **DUPLICATIONS ARE NOT ALLOWED.** First come; first served.

Turnitin: Canvas offers a service known as “Turnitin.” A paper submitted through this service will be compared to other papers in the database and checked for the percentage of copying from other sources. Your work will not be used for any purpose other than preventing plagiarism in the Seminary and other participating institutions. Ownership of the intellectual property contained in your written work will not be transferred to any third party.

Your paper will be assessed for the amount of material copied from other sources and returned to you. The highlighted passages do not indicate plagiarism necessarily, but they point out the percentage of your paper that can be found in other sources. You need to be sure that you properly quote and cite such passages, and you may need to put more of your paper in your own words. By the way, you probably will find that your footnotes and bibliographical entries are highlighted. That should be expected, since the papers in the database also cite the same sources that you use.

NOBTS Writing Center: Students have access to *Write Stuff, the NOBTS Writing Center*. Information about the Writing Center and the process for submitting papers can be found at <http://www.nobts.edu/writing>. The writing center staff will review the paper and work with the student as necessary to improve it before the final paper is submitted. Working with the writing center should help you in all of your academic writing, as well as help you produce an excellent biography for this course.

NOBTS Style Guide: A copy of the approved NOBTS Style Guide can be found in the course Canvas shell, or can be located online at the Writing Center’s page on the seminary website at: https://www.nobts.edu/_resources/pdf/writing/StyleGuide.pdf

- C. *Two Book Reviews*: Every student will write reviews of two books. The first book will be chosen from the Bibliography included in this syllabus. A student may choose a book not on this list with approval from the professors.

The second book is: John M. Perkins, *One Blood: Parting Words to the Church on Race and Love* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2018).

Each review should be between four to five double-spaced typewritten pages in length. Bibliographical information should appear at the top of the first page of the review. The review also should contain 1) a brief biographical sketch of the author or editors, 2) a brief summary [two to three pages] of the contents of the book, 3) a concluding evaluation, and 4) one or more application points. Submit the Book Reviews under Assignments. **Each Book Review is worth up to 60 points.**

First Book Review – due March 28

Second Book Review – due April 25

- E. *Reflection Paper*: Each class participant will prepare a personal reflection paper. **The Reflection Paper is worth up to 50 points. Due May 2.**
- a. The personal reflection paper should be **3-4 double-spaced pages**.
 - b. Personal reflections will be submitted and presented during the last class meeting
 - c. Reflections should be guided by the following questions:
 - i. What have I learned from this class during this semester?
 - ii. How can I apply what I have learned?
 - iii. What are next steps toward reconciliation that I can take?
 - iv. What are next steps toward reconciliation that the SBC can take?

VI. Submission of Assignments

1. The Unit Exams and Reading Reports will be conducted on Canvas. Unit Exams and Reading Reports are under Course Documents and under each respective unit.
2. Your Book Reviews and the Reflection Paper will be submitted under Assignments. Click on the link to each assignment, click on the button to Browse My Computer, and attach your document.
3. You will submit the Biography under Assignments and on the Discussion Board. Attach your paper by clicking on the Browse button. The reasons for submitting your paper both ways are: 1) for ease in grading; and 2) to make it available to the other students. I want every student to be able to benefit from each other's research and writing.
4. Please do not send your assignments to me as email attachments unless I request you to do so or unless there is a compelling reason. I enjoy hearing from my students, but my Inbox fills up pretty quickly with attachments, and then I have to shift them over to the proper location.

VII. Penalties:

Attendance: No student who misses more than nine classroom hours – or the equivalent of three class meetings – can receive credit for this course. Three occasions of arriving late for class or leaving early will count as one absence. For more information, see the online Graduate Catalog: <http://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/GraduateCatalog.pdf>

Unit Exams & Reading Reports: Unit Exams and Reading Reports must be submitted by the date of the unit completion. After the deadline, Unit Exams and Reading Reports will NOT be re-opened. One unit exam grade will be dropped.

Tardiness: A late written assignment will be assessed a **10 percent penalty if it is submitted after the deadline and a 20 percent penalty after five days. After one week past the deadline, the penalties become very severe.**

Posting your Biography under Assignments and to the Discussion Board: Failure to post your research paper in both locations will result in a 5-point deduction.

Plagiarism: **NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism..**

VIII. Electronics:

Cell Phones: Turn off your cell phones.

Lap Tops: Use lap tops for purposes suitable for this class only.

IX. Possible Points & Grading Scale:

<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Grading Scale</u>
Reading: 30 pts.	A = 280-300 pts.
1 st Book Review: 60 pts.	B = 255-279 pts.
2 nd Book Review: 60 pts.	C = 230-254 pts.
Biography: 100 pts.	D = 180-229 pts.
<u>Reflection Paper: 50 pts.</u>	F = 179 - 0 pts.
300 pts.	

X. NOLA2U FLEX

If you are taking this course as a NOLA2U Flex student, please note the following attendance policies:

1. You are required to be in class either through viewing the lectures live or viewing the recorded lectures on Canvas. When you view the recorded lecture, you will be considered present for that class. Regardless of if you watch the class live or recorded, you are only allowed to miss the amount of class time specified in the NOBTS attendance policy as stated in the graduate catalog. (See page 184 in the graduate catalog: https://www.nobts.edu/_resources/pdf/academics/GraduateCatalog.pdf).
2. You will be asked to certify that you have been present for the live session or have viewed the recorded session. This certification will be done through the reporting of the professor's Key Word after having watched the class live or viewing the recorded session.
3. All video lectures are available for 7 days after the video is posted. If you are unable to view the video within that time frame, you will be considered absent for that class session.
4. Technical issues will not be considered a valid reason for missing a lecture.

XI. Need technical assistance? Contact the ITC today!

Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)

CanvasHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Canvas Learning Management System NOBTS.Canvas.com.

ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.

504.816.8180 - Call for any technical questions/support requests.

www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

XI. Emergency Plan

In case of hurricane or any other emergency, go to the seminary web site for information: www.nobts.edu

The administration will communicate information that relates to the seminary: the nature of the emergency, instructions for responses, evacuation, contingency plans, duration of the emergency, and plans to return to campus and/or resume the schedule.

Also, check Canvas for instructions related to this class. Because this class is available on Canvas, there should be minimal disruption unless the emergency affects electrical power and connection to the Internet.

In any emergency, communication is important, and our best means of staying connected is through the seminary's web site and Canvas.

XII. Course Schedule

TFF = *This Far by Faith*

RSR = *Removing the Stain of Racism*

Week	Date	Daily Topic	Assignments Due
Week 1	Jan. 17	Introduction – Professors & Syllabus	
Week 2	Jan. 24	Slavery	<i>Read TFF 1-73</i>
Week 3	Jan. 31	Abolition	<i>Read TFF 74-99</i> Frederick Douglass: https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h2927t.html Sojourner Truth: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJucKgFosu4 UNIT ONE READING REPORT
Week 4	Feb. 7	Emancipation	<i>Read TFF 100-124</i>
Week 5	Feb. 14	Jim Crow	<i>Read TFF 125-147</i>
	Feb. 21	Mardi Gras	NO CLASS
Week 6	Feb. 28	Civil Rights	<i>Read TFF 148-197</i> MLK – Letter from a Birmingham Jail: https://billofrightsinstitute.org/e-lessons/letter-from-birmingham-jail UNIT TWO READING REPORT
Week 7	Mar. 7	Civil Rights & the Black Church	<i>Read TFF 198-253</i> MLK – I Have a Dream https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_yOBncaiito MLK – I’ve Been to the Mountaintop https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKWCxKq0i1k Biography due
SPRING BREAK	March 14		
Week 8	Mar. 21	Freedom Songs	<i>Read TFF 254-303</i> UNIT THREE READING REPORT
Week 9	Mar. 28	Worship in Black Churches	<i>Read RSR xxxv-14</i> 1st Book Review
Week 10	Apr. 4	African American Preaching	<i>Read RSR 15-52</i> Rev. C.L. Franklin: http://abacus.bates.edu/~cnero/rhetoric/CLFranklin.pdf https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjJS5KKj4kw UNIT FOUR READING REPORT
Week 11	Apr. 11	Discipleship & Education in the Black Church	<i>Read RSR 53-80</i>
Week 12	Apr. 18	SBC & Reconciliation	<i>Read RSR 81-112</i> UNIT FIVE READING REPORT
Week 13	Apr. 25	CRT	<i>Read RSR 113-148</i> 2nd Book Review
Week 14	May 2	Next Steps toward Reconciliation	Reflection Paper
Finals Week	May 9		UNIT SIX READING REPORT

BIOGRAPHY SUBJECTS

- David George
 - Christopher Brent Ballew, *The impact of African-American antecedents on the Baptist foreign missionary movement, 1782-1825*
- George Liele
 - David T. Shannon, ed., *George Liele's Life and Legacy: An Unsung Hero*
- Andrew Bryan
 - James M. Simms, *The First Colored Baptist Church in North America*
- Lemuel Haynes
 - Timothy Mather Cooley, *Sketches of the Life and Character of the Rev. Lemuel Haynes*
 - John Saillant, *Black Puritan, Black Republican: The Life and Thought of Lemuel Haynes*
 - Thabiti Anyabwile, *The Faithful Preacher: Recapturing the Vision of Three Pioneering African-American Pastors*
- Richard Allen
 - Richard Allen, *Life, Experiences, and Gospel Labors*
- Jarena Lee
 - Jarena Lee, *Religious Experience and Journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee*
- Lott Carey
 - Leroy Fitts, *Lott Carey: First Black Missionary to Africa*
- Phillis Wheatley
 - Phillis Wheatley, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*
 - Vincent Carrera, *Phillis Wheatley: Biography of a Genius in Bondage*
- Frederick Douglass
 - Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
- Harriet Tubman
 - A number of biographies
- Sojourner Truth
 - *Sojourner Truth, The Narrative of Sojourner Truth: A Northern Slave*
- Booker T. Washington
 - Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery*
- George Washington Carver
 - William Federer, *George Washington Carver: His Life & Faith in His Own Words*
- Henry McNeal Turner
 - Andre E. Johnson, *The Forgotten Prophet: Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and the African American Prophetic Tradition*
 - A number of other biographies
- Daniel Alexander Payne
 - Daniel Alexander Payne, *Recollection of Seventy Years*
 - Thabiti Anyabwile, *The Faithful Preacher: Recapturing the Vision of Three Pioneering African-American Pastors*
- Francis J. Grimké
 - Thabiti Anyabwile, *The Faithful Preacher: Recapturing the Vision of Three Pioneering African-American Pastors*
 - A number of book by & about Francis J. Grimké

- Amanda Berry Smith
 - Amanda Smith, *An Autobiography*
- Charles Octavius Boothe
 - Charles Octavius Boothe & Walter R. Strickland II, *Plain Theology for Plain People*
- William Seymour
 - William Seymour, *The Great Azusa Street Revival: The Life and Sermons of William Seymour*
 - Synan Vinson, *William J. Seymour: Pioneer of the Azusa Street Revival*
- Adam Clayton Powell Sr. & Jr.
 - Adam Clayton Powell Sr., *Against the Tide: An Autobiography*
 - Adam Clayton Powell Jr., *Adam by Adam: The Autobiography of Adam Clayton Powell Jr.*
- Thomas Dorsey
 - Michael W. Harris, *The Rise of Gospel Blues: The Music of Thomas Andrew Dorsey in the Urban Church*
 - Kathryn B. Kemp, *Anointed to Sing the Gospel: The Levitical Legacy of Thomas A. Dorsey*
 - Robert Darden, *People Get Ready: A New History of Black Gospel Music*
- Jackie Robinson
 - Michael G. Long & Chris Lamb, *Jackie Robinson: A Spiritual Biography*
 - Ed Henry, *42 Faith: The Rest of the Jackie Robinson Story*
- Howard Thurman
 - Howard Thurman, *With Head and Heart: The Autobiography of Howard Thurman*
 - Paul Harvey, *Howard Thurman and the Disinherited: A Religious Biography*
- Martin Luther King Jr.
 - Martin Luther King Jr., *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King Jr.*
 - Numerous other books by & about Martin Luther King Jr.
- John R. Lewis
 - John R. Lewis, *Across that Bridge: Life Lessons and a Vision for Change*
 - John R. Lewis, *Walking with the Wind: Memoir of a Movement*
- Andrae Crouch
 - Andrae Crouch, *Through It All*
- John M. Perkins
 - John M. Perkins, *Let Justice Roll Down*

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Thabiti Anyabwile, *The Faithful Preacher: Recapturing the Vision of Three Pioneering African-American Pastors* – Three preachers are highlighted in this book: Lemuel Haynes, Daniel Payne & Francis Grimké.
- Thabiti Anyabwile, *The Decline of African American Theology: From Biblical Faith to Cultural Captivity* – The author outlines a systematic and historical examination of African American theology.
- Carl F. Ellis, *Free at Last? The Gospel and the African-American Experience* – The author traces the dynamic faith of African Americans from the era of slavery to the present with an emphasis on Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X.
- Leroy Fitts, *A History of Black Baptists* – This African-American historian surveys the history of Black Baptists in America and around the world.
- Henry Louis Gates Jr. *The Black Church: This Is Our Story, This Is Our Song*. Based on a PBS special, this book surveys the Black Church with an emphasis on preaching and music.
- Paul Harvey, *Through the Storm, Through the Night: A History of African American Christianity*. One of the leading commentators on African American Christianity provides a brief survey of this topic.
- Bryan Loritts, ed., *Letters to a Birmingham Jail: A Response to the Words and Dreams of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* – This collection of essays was written by men of various backgrounds in response to MLK's famous "Letter from a Birmingham Jail."
- Martin Luther King Jr. *I Have a Dream: Writings and Speeches that Changed the World*, ed. James Melvin Washington – This collection of King's selected writings and speeches provides a chronological approach to primary resources from the Civil Rights movement.
- Esau McCaulley, *Reading While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope* – A contemporary New Testament scholar discusses the interpretation of Scripture from the perspective of the Black Church perspective.
- Solomon Northup, *Twelve Years a Slave* – This true account relates the story of a freeman from New York who was kidnapped and sold into slavery in the South. His faith, hope, and spirit sustained him during twelve years of injustice and suffering.
- John M. Perkins, *One Blood: Parting Words to the Church on Race and Love* – In one of his later books, John Perkins shares his philosophy of racial reconciliation & his work toward that goal.
- Albert Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* – An expert on the African-American religious experiences, Raboteau writes about "slave religion" before the Civil War.

- Albert Raboteau, *A Fire in the Bones: Reflections on African-American Religious History* – Raboteau continues the story of African-American religious experiences beyond the Civil War.
- Milton Sernett, *Black Religion and American Evangelicalism* – Sernett's published dissertation is packed with information on black religion from 1787-1865.
- Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited* – In this classic theological treatise, acclaimed theologian Howard Thurman asserts that hatred does not empower – it decays. Only through love of self and one another can God's justice prevail.
- Jarvis L. Williams and Kevin M. Jones, eds., *Removing the Stain of Racism from the Southern Baptist Convention: Diverse African American and White Perspectives* - This collection of essays from a mostly African American group of authors issues a call to a commitment to Christian unity for the sake of the gospel and our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Juan Williams and Quinton Dixie, *This Far by Faith: Stories from the African-American Religious Experience* – Based on a PBS special, this book surveys African American religious history through biographical vignettes of key leaders from the early years of slavery through the Civil Rights movement and beyond.
- Reggie Williams, *Bonhoeffer's Black Jesus* – When Dietrich Bonhoeffer came to America, his critique of the American church was informed by liberal white religion on one hand & vibrant black Christianity on the other.