

AFAM 200
Freedom Papers: Narratives of Race and Nation
University of South Carolina
[Semester]

Instructor Name:
Phone/Email:
Office:
Office Hours:

Academic Bulletin Description

A study of the United States founding documents that emphasizes how the experiences of African American citizens throughout history and culture shape the country's values, norms, and ideals.

Full Course Description

Nikole Hannah-Jones writes in her introduction to *The 1619 Project*, "No one cherishes freedom more than those who have not had it. And to this day, black Americans, more than any other group, embrace the democratic ideals of a common good." Students in this course will explore the evolving definitions of freedom in the United States through an analysis of the lives and writings of African Americans who have struggled to realize the country's founding principles and core values. We will couple our study of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Federalist Papers, and the Emancipation Proclamation with deeper interdisciplinary inquiry into how the principles and provisions of these documents affect the everyday lives of black citizens from the seventeenth-century to the present. Central to this effort will be questions, readings, and assignments that help students to understand the societal values and norms that frame the call for self-governance, individual rights, and free expression. Students will be asked to identify and contextualize the consequences of these practices in the United States with particular attention to the ways that black Americans have worked to make the ethical codes and moral theories more inclusive.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify the source and function of values through an analysis of the content and form of the United States founding documents, including the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Federalist Papers, and the Emancipation Proclamation.
2. Compare the values, norms, and ideals of freedom expressed in the U.S. founding documents and selected works by African Americans.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of values, ethics, and social responsibility for the self and for contemporary society as discussed and brought out in a range of interdisciplinary writings and cultural materials by African Americans.
4. Reflect on how values shape personal and community ethics and decision-making, both within the texts and in the societies they describe.
5. Relate course discussions of values, ethics and responsibilities to students' own capacities to address ethical and social challenges.

Carolina Core Outcomes

(VSR) Students will be able to examine different kinds of social and personal values, analyzing the ways in which these are manifested in communities as well as individual lives.

Course Materials

- John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell, *March: Book One* (2013)
- This course requires a course packet of readings which are available at Quick Copy (in the basement of the Russell House).

Course Assignments and Grading

Evaluation and Grading Scale

All grades will be posted on Blackboard. You are strongly encouraged to check your scores in Blackboard regularly. A final letter grade will be assigned based on percentages.

Assignment Weights	Percent
Values Journal	30%
Founding Documents Quizzes	20%
Ethical Challenges Discussion Leader	10%
Beyond the Classroom Activity (1)	10%
Final Exam	30%
Total	100%

Grading Scale		
89.5% - 100%	=	A
84.5% - 89.4%	=	B+
79.5% - 84.4%	=	B
74.5% - 79.4%	=	C+
69.5% - 74.4%	=	C
64.5% - 69.4%	=	D+
59.5% - 64.4%	=	D
0% - 59.4%	=	F

Course Assignments

Values Journal

Each unit will focus on a different value or ideal that is based on the U.S. founding documents: **Democracy, Liberty, Equality, Popular Sovereignty, Justice, and Truth**. You will be asked to keep a course journal of designated writing prompts and

activities that: 1) relate the methods and frameworks of each value to the week's required reading; and 2) applies an aspect of the value to your own social groups and lived experiences.

The journal entries are designed to focus your thoughts on a particular set of questions or ideas about the reading and on occasion, you will be asked to share what you've written. The assignments will most often be completed in class, although you may be asked to write a response or two outside of class. The journal will be collected at least twice during the semester.

Ethical Challenges Discussion Leader

For each unit that we study, the class will break into small groups for more focused discussion. Every student will have to serve as a discussion leader on at least one occasion during the semester. You will bring to class a description of a representative problem or ethical challenge from our contemporary moment that your group can work through, applying the historical lessons that we have learned in our readings about responsibility, accountability, and/or justice.

Beyond the Classroom Activity

During the semester, you must attend at least one campus event related to African American Studies. Within one week of the event, you must submit a written response that includes: 1) a description of the activity, and 2) its potential relevance to our study of how values inform, define, and condition the way lives are lived. (Minimum 500 words.)

Final Exam

The Final Exam will include a comprehensive mix of short answer questions (to test your knowledge of terms and concepts) and essay questions (to evaluate how you apply ideas through deeper analysis). Blue Books are not required.

Course Policies and Procedures

Attendance Policy

When you miss class, you miss important information. If you are absent, you are responsible for learning material covered in class. If you are absent when an assignment is due, you must have submitted the assignment prior to the due date to receive credit. If you miss more than 10% of the classes, whether excused or unexcused, your grade will be dropped one letter grade.

Academic Integrity

You are expected to practice the highest possible standards of academic integrity. Any deviation from this expectation will result in a minimum academic penalty of your failing the assignment, and will result in additional disciplinary measures. This includes improper citation of sources, using another student's work, and any other form of academic misrepresentation.

Plagiarism

Using the words or ideas of another as if they were one's own is a serious form of academic dishonesty. If another person's complete sentence, syntax, key words, or the specific or unique ideas and information are used, one must give that person credit through proper citation.

Class Conduct

Professionalism will be expected at all times. Because the university classroom is a place designed for the free exchange of ideas, we must show respect for one another in all circumstances. We will show respect for one another by exhibiting patience and courtesy in our exchanges. Appropriate language and restraint from verbal attacks upon those whose perspectives differ from your own is a minimum requirement. Courtesy and kindness are the norm for those who participate in my class.

Laptop/Smartphone Policy

The use of laptops and smartphones is allowed only when it is required for course assignments. Please place your laptop under your seat during class. Cellphones should be placed on silent and should be put away in your pocket or bag. If there is a serious need to leave your phone on vibrate (such as a family emergency), please let me know. If you happen to leave the class to accept a phone call, I will have advanced knowledge of the potential emergency.

Late Work/Make-up Policy

No late or make-up work is accepted. All assignments, quizzes, and exams are due by the deadline as posted on the course schedule.

Please plan accordingly, and complete these assignments in advance of their deadlines to ensure any unanticipated circumstances do not result in a missed assignment. User error does not qualify you for any kind of makeup or retake opportunity.

Completing and submitting the assignments or quizzes responses by the due date is the sole responsibility of you. If you receive an incomplete score because of failure to submit the assignment or test by the due date, then your score for that assignment will be recorded as "zero."

Late assignments and quizzes will be subject to the following penalty: 10% will be deducted from your grade for the first day late, and an additional 5% will be deducted on each subsequent day.

Be Careful: The clock on your computer may be different than the clock in Blackboard. If the clock is different by one second, you will be locked out of the assignment or quiz. Plan accordingly. I recommend that you submit your assignments, quizzes, and exams well before deadline.

Course Communication

I will be communicating with you regarding grades and assignments. If you need to get in touch with me, the best method is via email. Generally, I will reply to emails within 24 hours and will provide feedback on assignments within 48 hours.

If you are having trouble with this course or its material, you should contact me via email to discuss the issues.

Emails will be sent your email address. In addition, announcements may be posted in Blackboard. If you primarily use another email account, you should make sure that the Blackboard account is linked to that address. It is your responsibility to ensure that your email account works properly in order to receive mail. Please be sure that the email you check regularly is set in Blackboard:

- Click on the My USC tab along the top of the page in Blackboard
- In the Tools module, click on "Personal Information"
- Click on "Edit Personal Information"

- Scroll down to the listing for Email
- In the box will be listed what Blackboard has as your email address. If you wish to change it, delete the email address in the box and type in the email address you want to use.
- Click on the Submit button at the top or bottom of the page.

Academic Success

Disability Services

[Student Disability Resource Center \(http://www.sa.sc.edu/sds/\)](http://www.sa.sc.edu/sds/): The Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) empowers students to manage challenges and limitations imposed by disabilities.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me to discuss the logistics of any accommodations needed to fulfill course requirements (within the first week of the semester). In order to receive reasonable accommodations from me, you must be registered with the Student Disability Resource Center (1523 Greene Street, LeConte Room 112A, Columbia, SC 29208, 803-777-6142). Any student with a documented disability should contact the SDRC to make arrangements for appropriate accommodations.

Student Success Center

In partnership with USC faculty, the Student Success Center (SSC) offers a number of programs to assist you in better understanding your course material and to aid you on your path to success. SSC programs are facilitated by professional staff, graduate students, and trained undergraduate peer leaders who have previously excelled in their courses. Resources available to you in this course may include:

- **Peer Tutoring:** You can make a one-on-one appointment with a [Peer Tutor](http://www.sc.edu/success) (www.sc.edu/success). Drop-in Tutoring and Online Tutoring may also be available for this course. Visit their website for a full schedule of times, locations, and courses.
- **Supplemental Instruction (SI):** SI Leaders are assigned to specific sections of courses and hold three weekly study sessions. Sessions focus on the most difficult content being covered in class. The SI Session schedule is posted through the SSC website each week and will also be communicated in class by the SI Leader.
- **Peer Writing:** Improve your college-level writing skills by bringing writing assignments from any of your classes to a Peer Writing Tutor. Similar to Tutoring, you can visit the website to make an appointment, and to view the full schedule of available drop-in hours and locations.
- **Success Consultations:** In Success Consultations, SSC staff assist you in developing study skills, setting goals, and connecting to a variety of campus resources. Throughout the semester, I may communicate with the SSC via Success Connect, an online referral system, regarding your progress in the course. If contacted by the SSC, please schedule a Success Consultation. Success Connect referrals are not punitive and any information shared by me is confidential and subject to FERPA regulations.

SSC services are offered to all USC undergraduates at no additional cost. You are invited to call the Student Success Hotline at (803) 777-1000, visit the [SSC website \(www.sc.edu/success\)](http://www.sc.edu/success), or stop by the SSC in the Thomas Cooper Library on the Mezzanine Level to check schedules and make appointments.

Writing Center

[Writing Center \(http://artsandsciences.sc.edu/write/university-writing-center\)](http://artsandsciences.sc.edu/write/university-writing-center)

This course has many of writing assignments. The University Writing Center is an important resource you should use! It's open to help any USC student needing assistance with a writing project at any stage of development. The main Writing Center is in Byrnes 703.

Library Resources

[Library Resources \(http://library.sc.edu\)](http://library.sc.edu)

The university library has great resources for finding out how to cite materials in your projects. Remember that if you use anything that is not your own writing or media (quotes from books, articles, interviews, websites, movies – everything) you must cite the source in MLA format.

Blackboard and Technology

[Blackboard and Technology](#)

[\(http://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_technology_services/\)](http://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_technology_services/)

As a student in this course, you have access to support from the Division of Information Technology (DoIT) for Blackboard and computer issues. The service desk can be reached at 803-777-1800.

Counseling Services

[Counseling Services](#)

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_health_services/medical-services/counseling-and-psychiatry/index.php: The University offers counseling and crisis services as well as outreach services, self-help, and frequently asked questions.

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Course Schedule

Race and Revolution		
Week 1	Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Declaration of Independence</i> (1776) • Founding Documents Quiz 1
Week 2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpts from Jefferson's <i>Notes on the State of Virginia</i> • Phillis Wheatley's poetry
Week 3	Popular Sovereignty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The U.S. Constitution and the Federalist Papers</i> (1788) • Founding Documents Quiz 2
Week 4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>David Walker's Appeal</i> (1829) • Excerpt from Peter Hinks, <i>To Awaken my Afflicted Brethren: David Walker and the Problem of Antebellum Slave Resistance</i>.
Week 5	Liberty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fugitive Slave Act of 1850</i> • Excerpt from Douglass, <i>My Bondage, My Freedom</i> • Excerpt from Jacobs, <i>Incidents in the Life of Slave Girl</i> • Founding Documents Quiz 3
Week 6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentary Film: <i>Nat Turner: A Troublesome Property</i>
Emancipation and the Aftermath		
Week 7	Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Emancipation Proclamation</i> (1863) • Founding Documents Quiz 4
Week 8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpt from Glenn, <i>Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor</i>
Week 9	Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film: <i>Birth of a Nation</i> • Film: <i>Within our Gates</i>
Week 10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpt from Richard Wright's <i>Black Boy</i>
Week 11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpt from Alice Walker, <i>The Color Purple</i>
Week 12	Truth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, Nate Powell, <i>March: Book One</i>
Week 13		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, Nate Powell, <i>March: Book One</i>
Week 14		Columbia 63 Walking Tour
Week 15		Final Exam