

**Cleveland State University  
Maxine Goodman Levin School of Urban Affairs  
Levin College of Public Affairs and Education**

**CLEVELAND: THE AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE  
UST 202, Sections 1 and 501– 3 Credit Hours**

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**Office Hours:** By appointment via Zoom

***Welcome to Cleveland: The African American Experience!***

*This course is designed to center the historical and current experiences of Black Clevelanders, including their achievements, contributions, and impact on Northeast Ohio.*

*The content we study and discuss may at times test our current knowledge and assumptions. Content will inevitably cover topics such as race, class, privilege, discrimination, and fundamental inequality. But we will also study instances of brilliance, innovation, resilience, and joy. Balancing our learnings will ultimately enrich our understanding and leave us better informed.*

*Remember, this is a learning journey. So, at times, I may provide feedback on language and terminology. Please refer to the best practices on language provided below. Our content will cover serious and sensitive issues, so it is imperative that we are intentional about the language we use.*

*I am so grateful for the opportunity to lead you through this educational experience and ask that you remain open and amenable to courageous conversations.*

Best Regards,  
**Professor Hudnall**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The course will cover a wide range of historical and contemporary perspectives on the social, cultural, geographic, economic, and political development of Cleveland with emphasis on the African American experience. The course will focus on factors that have contributed to the growth and decline of Cleveland and the forces that have affected the African American community. The course will include an in-depth study of the consolidation of the original predominant African American areas of Cleveland and the establishment of middle-class neighborhoods in outlying areas of the city. The course will include writing throughout the semester.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- To explain the historical social, cultural, geographic, economic, and political development of Cleveland's African American communities.
- To compare past experiences of African Americans to present social, cultural, geographic, and political experiences in similar contexts.
- To discuss the complexity and diversity of the African American community and its impact on black life and the broader community in Cleveland.
- To identify and examine structural inequalities and forces that have affected African- American lives and communities.
- To critique the experiences of middle-class African Americans as they established neighborhoods in outlying areas of Cleveland.
- To analyze the factors that have contributed to the growth and decline of Cleveland.
- To enhance writing, research, critical thinking, and analytic skills.

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

All course materials are available at no cost through the Blackboard course. There is no textbook to purchase for this class.

## **ATTENDANCE**

- Section 1: Regular, engaged attendance is expected **in person and online**
- Section 501: All "attendance" is recognized through **regular and consistent** online participation
- You must stay current on course assignments, deadlines, and updates from the instructor via Blackboard and/or email.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- Read (view or listen to) all assigned readings and/or course materials.
- Complete all assignments satisfactorily and on time.
- Actively participate in online discussions.
- Edit written papers extensively before submission.

## **BEST PRACTICES: LANGUAGE + INTENTION**

**As simple as it may sound, words do mean things. As society evolves, so does our language.**

The way we speak about interracial relations has definitely evolved. Words and phrases that were once acceptable to publish in decades past, are inappropriate for today's lexicon. This will certainly be true for some of the assigned readings in this course. Though the language may be outdated, the material is required to read because it provides critical information pertaining to the course objectives.

This course requires a significant amount of writing about topics such as: Jim Crow era/laws; the Great Migration; health equity; social determinants of health like housing, economic opportunity, education, etc.; and predominantly Black neighborhoods in the City of Cleveland. Some of these topics may be new to you, and therefore, you may not inherently know how to describe your learnings/thoughts appropriately in writing.

Here are some best practices to guide you in your writing:

### **ANTIQUATED TERMS: GHETTO/SLUMS**

- Text that was published some time ago (30-50 years) may use terms such as 'Black ghettos' or 'slums' to describe areas lacking investment or quality housing. Please do not use the terms ghetto or slums to describe an area or neighborhood. Always remember that the geographic locations that we study were and are someone's home.

### **WHO ARE "THE 'BLACKS'?"**

- You may read text that refers to Black/African Americans as "Blacks," and to Caucasians as "Whites." Please don't use these phrases in your writings. Instead use phrases such as 'Black families', 'Black children', 'Black residents,' etc.

### **CAPITALIZE THE B**

- When referring to Black people as a racial and ethnic group, please capitalize the letter B in Black. If you wonder why, here's a great [resource](#).

### **SLAVERY WAS NOT A CHOICE**

- Chattel slavery in America began when the first group of Africans forced from their homeland arrived in Virginia in 1619. Being enslaved, degraded, and systematically oppressed was not their choice; it was a reality forced upon generations of people, that has had long-lasting effects on the millions of Americans who were born from enslaved ancestors. Therefore, please do not refer to this group of people as "slaves," or "the slaves," Instead, employ the phrases "enslaved person/s," or "former enslaved person/s" in your writing and conversation.

## **BEST PRACTICES: COMMUNICATION, EMAIL AND EXPECTATIONS**

*Adapted from Boston University, 'Writing Emails to Professors and TAs,' 2021*

As your professor and instructor for the course, my immediate goal is to support you in achieving academic success. I am here to help you. Emailing me (using the email address provided above) is the best method of communication.

Here are a few tips to ensure that our mutual communication is successful:

### **READ THE SYLLABUS, FIRST**

- Before emailing me, please read the syllabus and assignment instructions available via Blackboard
- If you email a question that is clearly outlined in the syllabus or Blackboard, it might seem like you aren't paying attention

### **BE PATIENT AND RESPECTFUL**

- **I will respond to your email within 3 business days; I do not email after 5pm on weekdays or on weekends**
- Please do not email me with the same request or question more than once
- Please email questions as far in advance as possible; expecting an immediate response days or hours before a due date is unreasonable

### **BE CLEAR**

- Please write the course number in the subject line of the email
- Please include a brief greeting and address me as *Professor Hudnall*
- Make sure to clearly state the reason for your email
- Ask politely; do not make demands or unreasonable requests
- Maintain a formal tone. Check your email for spelling errors. Avoid informal language you might use when texting your friends (e.g., "cuz" instead of "because," etc.).

## ASSIGNMENTS

- Required assignments will include online discussion board participation; formal written reading responses and reflections; journal article reviews; and a formal written research paper.
- All assignments and grades are available and posted on Blackboard.
- Writing assignments must be **typed, double-spaced with 1" margins and 12-point Times New Roman font.**
- Students will follow the American Psychological Association (APA) style format for research papers, citations, and works cited.
- No abstracts are required for any of the writing assignments.
- Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and writing style are graded along with content of all assignments.
- Late assignments will not be accepted except in *extenuating circumstances for which the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible*. The instructor has the discretion of accepting late assignments or not. Late assignments may be penalized.
- For additional writing assistance, the Writing Center is available and recommended.  
<https://www.csuohio.edu/writing-center/writing-center>

## ASSIGNMENTS x POINTS

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS
Journal Article Review (1)	25 (25 pts. x 1 review)
Discussion Board: Original Post (2)	5 (2.5 pts. x 2 posts)
Discussion Board: Comments on peer responses (2)	5 (2.5 pts. x 2 responses)
Reading Response and Reflection (10)	100 (10 pts. x 10 reflections)
Draft Introduction, Detailed Outline, And Draft Reference Page	25 (25 pts. x 1 draft)
Final Research Paper	40 (40 pts. x 1 final paper)
<b>TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS</b>	<b>200</b>

## FINAL GRADES

Grade	Percentage	
A	94-100	<p><b>Grade of "I"</b>  <i>I – Incomplete. The "I" grade is given when the work in a course has been generally passing, but when some specifically required task has not been completed through no fault of the student.</i>  <i>An "I" grade can be assigned by the instructor when all three of the following conditions are met:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Student is regularly attending/participating in the class and has the potential to pass the course.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Student has not completed all assignments and has stopped attending/participating for reasons deemed justified by the instructor; and</i></li> <li>3. <i>Student has notified the instructor prior to the end of the grading period.</i></li> </ol>
A-	90-93	
B+	87-89	
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	
C+	77-79	<p><b>WAC</b>  <i>This class may be used to fulfill the CSU requirement for Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC). Please note that the student must receive a "C" or better grade in the course to fulfill the WAC requirement. The student will not fulfill the WAC requirement with a grade of "D" or lower.</i></p>
C	70-76	
D	60-69	
F	0-59	

## ONLINE DISCUSSION BOARD

You are responsible for *writing both an original response to the discussion prompts and responding to a peer's post* on the Discussion Board. You have until the stated due date to post a response and to comment on one of your peer's responses.

The discussion is an exercise in "writing-to-learn," and intended to foster deeper understanding of the course materials beyond memorization or recitation. All responses are to be submitted to the discussion thread on Blackboard. Email responses will not be graded.

To present a sufficient original response, you must thoroughly address each tenet of the assignment instructions/prompt. Your original response must be original, unique, and at least 100-200 words. There will be no credit for simple responses like "I disagree", or for responses copied from another student. If you post more than one original response and/or more than one comment to a peer, you will not receive extra points for these additional posts. This is not meant to discourage interaction and openness with your peers.

Please note, any language or comments that are offensive or do not promote a culture of respect and civility in the course will be deleted.

### **JOURNAL ARTICLE REVIEW**

Students are required to complete a journal article review, by the stated due date, using the article assigned via Blackboard. The purpose of this assignment is for you to write an **evaluative** review of the provided journal article.

Journal Article Review Expectations:

- **The review must meet *all* of the following criteria:**
  - 750-1,000 words in length
  - At least 3 pages (not including title or reference pages)
  - Double-spaced with 1" margins
  - 12-point Times New Roman font
  - Written in APA format (APA style guide here: <http://www.ulib.csuohio.edu/research/vrd/citations.html>)
  - Reference Page
- Read the entire article (or the required pages) carefully. It is important that you understand the author's purpose. For your own purposes in preparing to write your review, develop a statement that conveys the main idea of your review.
- **The review should match the following format:**
  - Brief introduction of the topic
  - Brief summary of the article, highlighting the most important details
  - Include the purpose of the article, how the research was conducted, and any other pertinent information
  - Strengths/Weaknesses
  - Conclusion
- Present your ideas and opinions about the article. This may be two to three paragraphs. You may think of this section as the strengths and weaknesses of the article. Give reasons for your opinions. *Restating what the author wrote is not the same as forming your own opinion.* Go beyond commenting on the organization and length of the article. Think critically about the article and convey what you think it all means. Be able to support your statements with citations.
- Write a concluding paragraph that summarizes your review and discusses what the information in the article means in our society. Discuss what you learned from reading this article and how knowledge or work in this area could be expanded.
- Cite direct quotes or paraphrases from the article in APA format.

### **READING RESPONSE AND REFLECTION**

Students are required to complete and submit written personal reflections, by the stated due date, using the assigned readings/content via Blackboard. **Please ensure that your reflection responds to each tenet of the writing prompt in the assignment instructions on Blackboard.**

Reading Response and Reflection Expectations:

- **The reading response and reflection response must meet all of the following criteria:**
  - 300-500 words in length
  - Double-spaced with 1" margins
  - 12-point Times New Roman font
  - Written in APA format (APA style guide here: <http://www.ulib.csuohio.edu/research/vrd/citations.html>)
  - Reference Page (if applicable)
- **Read/complete the required readings/assignments before submitting the written reflections. If it is found that the reflection was completed without actually completing the assigned readings, you will receive zero credit.**
- **In your reading response and reflection, please remain respectful to yourself, your peers, the persons we're studying and your professor.** Any assignments consisting of harmful, biased, or offensive language will be flagged for review. A student may be required to resubmit assignments that do not meet language expectations for this course. Please support your statements with citations whenever possible.
- Cite direct quotes or paraphrases from the article in APA format. if applicable.

#### **FINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

The final research paper will draw from topics and issues covered in course readings/assignments, journal articles, and other scholarly sources.

**Students must choose a topic of their own interest about the African American experience (e.g., education/schools, housing, politics, culture/arts, employment, neighborhoods, economics, etc.), with specific research and relevance to Cleveland.** Papers that have a statewide, national, or international focus; or papers that address the experiences of anyone other than African Americans in Cleveland, will not receive credit.

Research for the paper requires students to identify and utilize legitimate scholarly sources to support the thesis and develop the content of the paper. Each student will formulate a thesis and write a clearly written, well-researched, organized, and coherent paper based upon this thesis.

#### **FINAL RESEARCH PAPER: INSTRUCTIONS**

The Research Paper consists of two assignments. Both assignments are required to gain full credit for the final research paper. Each assignment must be completed, or the student will receive an "F" on the Research Paper regardless of the quality of the writing.

- Assignment 1: Draft Introduction, Detailed Outline, And Draft Reference Page (*please refer to the assignment instructions on Blackboard*)
- Assignment 2: Final Research Paper

## FINAL RESEARCH PAPER: EXPECTATIONS + GRADING CRITERIA

Your research paper will be graded upon and **must meet all of the following criteria:**

- 2,000-2,500 words
- 8-10 pages (not including title or reference pages)
- A minimum of eight (8) legitimate reference resources, at least six (6) of which must be sources other than reading materials assigned in the course
- APA style format for references and citations.
- High quality writing style, with correct grammar; free of typos and errors

The final paper should match the following format:

- Introductory paragraph(s): Clearly present the research question or argument/thesis of your paper
- Quality evidence from legitimate reference sources to support your thesis;
- Critical, relevant analysis of the topic that connects the evidence and the thesis;
- Organization and integration of information with logical development of the thesis;
- Conclusions and recommendations for future development, e.g., public policy, research, community action;

## FINAL RESEARCH PAPER: RESOURCES

Students are required to use a minimum of eight (8) legitimate reference resources, at least six (6) of which must be sources other than course textbooks and other reading materials.

1. Legitimate reference resources include the use of scholarly journals/articles, books, data cited from databases (i.e., U.S. Census, etc.), and reports (i.e., United States General Accountability Office, etc.). Citations from Internet sources that are merely web pages constructed by individuals airing their personal views are unacceptable sources. However, legitimate websites accessing refereed academic journals/reports (i.e., articles published in The Urban Institute, Journal of Urban Affairs, etc.) are legitimate resources.
2. Utilization of information/data or articles found on websites such as Wikipedia is not acceptable. One way to determine if a website is acceptable or not is to ask yourself, "If the Internet did not exist, would I be able to find this article in the university library?" Sources with "dot com" and/or "dot net" suffixes are not legitimate and will not count toward your eight sources. If you do use such sources, they must be in addition to your legitimate sources.

## FINAL RESEARCH PAPER: PAPER FORMAT AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The format and content of your assignment must be consistent with the publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition (2010), including the proper acknowledgement of all quotes and other attributions of facts or ideas using parenthetical citations and a "reference" or "works cited" page. **Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for this assignment.**

Your paper should demonstrate mostly original writing ("your own words") with a reasonable incorporation of direct quotes. Your assignment should include a cover page stating the title of your essay, your name, and your CSU e-mail address. Include "Running head" at the top of your cover page, followed by a capitalized, shortened version of your title, which will continue to appear at the top of subsequent pages. No abstract is required.

Late papers will be penalized based on information included on the syllabus. Please note that this assignment is worth a significant portion the overall course grade and must be completed successfully in order to receive WAC credit for the class. There will be no opportunity to resubmit your work for additional credit.

**IMPORTANT: Please consider partnering with the CSU Writing Center for assistance with the assignment:**  
<http://www.csuohio.edu/academic/writingcenter/index.html>

## **STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Educational access is the provision of classroom accommodations, auxiliary aids, and services to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of their disability. Any student who feels that he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services Office (216) 687-2015, email at [ods@csuohio.edu](mailto:ods@csuohio.edu) or to connect with a staff member visit the Office's Virtual Front Desk at <https://www.csuohio.edu/disability/disability>.

Accommodations need to be requested in advance and will not be granted retroactively. Students should notify the instructor as soon as possible if they have been granted an accommodation through the Office of Disability Services.

## **WRITING ASSISTANCE**

Students with difficulty writing or who want to strengthen their writing skills may contact the Writing Center for assistance at <https://www.csuohio.edu/writing-center/writing-center>. Tutors are available for online appointments; check out the guidelines on <https://www.csuohio.edu/writing-center/online-writing-assistance>.

Students should use the American Psychological Association (APA) format for citations and reference pages.

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is stealing and/or writing the ideas or writings of another in a paper or report and claiming them as one's own. This includes but is not limited to the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment.

The penalties for plagiarism are found in full in the Student Handbook (Office of Student Life) under Academic Regulations and Procedures (3.1.2 Policy on Academic Misconduct) at the following link <https://www.csuohio.edu/sites/default/files/StudentCodeOfConduct.pdf>

## **OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY**

Federal law, including Title IX, and University policy require that CSU address discrimination, harassment and sexual violence and enable students affected by these issues to have the same opportunity to succeed as other students. To do this, the CSU Office for Institutional Equity (OIE) provides information, identifies resources (counseling, medical, advocacy, safety planning), issues academic accommodations (excused absences, extended deadlines, late withdrawals, alternative assignments) and other accommodations (No Contact Directives, changing living arrangements). Any student affected by discrimination, harassment and/or sexual violence and seeking assistance, should contact the Office for Institutional Equity by calling 216-687-2223, sending an email to [OIE@csuohio.edu](mailto:OIE@csuohio.edu), or visiting AC 236.

## **SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

Written assignments must be submitted on Turnitin on Blackboard by the required times and due dates. No email submissions will be accepted or graded.

## **FEEDBACK ON ASSIGNMENTS**

You will receive feedback from your major writing assignments within 14 days. Keep in mind, it may take a little longer to provide feedback depending on the assignment.

## **RESERVATIONS**

Please note that the instructor reserves the right to make modifications to the course content and course requirements at any time during the semester and will notify students promptly of any changes.

## **GENERAL EDUCATION STATEMENT**

This course is approved as a General Education course meeting the requirements for The African American Experience. It meets the requirements for Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC). Skill areas for this class include Critical Thinking and Information Literacy.

### **AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE CRITERIA**

This course has a primary focus on the contemporary experience of African Americans and maintains the perspectives, experiences and/or achievements of African Americans themselves as central to the course.

This course provides students with knowledge of how the field of Urban Affairs studies and analyzes the African American experience.

This course provides students with a theoretical and empirical framework for understanding inequality and the distinguishing aspects of the African American experience.

### **SKILL AREA: CRITICAL THINKING CRITERIA**

1. This course requires that at least 15% of the student's grade in the course is based on an evaluation of critical thinking.
2. This course requires students to attain skills beyond lower-level knowledge, thereby requiring skills that involve the use of content knowledge (e.g. finding information to solve a problem).

Skill Area: Information Literacy

1. Designate that at least 15% of the student's grade in the course is based on an evaluation of information literacy.
2. Require students to evaluate the accuracy, authority, currency, objectivity, and reliability of information sources.
3. Require students to address the ethical and legal uses of information.

### **WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM CRITERIA**

This course also fulfills the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) requirement. The criteria for meeting the WAC requirement are:

1. The course requires students to write between 3,000 and 5,000 words (10-14 pages, double-spaced, in 12-point font with 1" margins) in writing assignments (which may include drafts).
2. Final versions of at least one assignment should total at least 2,000 words (eight pages).
3. The course teaches students writing-to-learn strategies that foster students' experience in learning, and writing-to-communicate strategies that foster students' respect of readers' experiences. Whenever possible, planning assignments (e.g., reading logs, pre-writing strategies) will be included in class assignments.
4. Students will be assigned writing complex enough to require substantive revision for students. Students will be given feedback to assist them in preparing subsequent papers or drafts of papers. This feedback will consist of more than mechanical correction of punctuation and grammar.
5. The course provides instruction in discipline-appropriate forms of texts, arguments, evidence, style, audience, and citation. Students will be required to use the American Psychological Association (APA) style.

The CSU Library website lists citation guides including links to the APA style guide:

<http://www.ulib.csuohio.edu/research/vrd/citations.html> ; or go to the APA website, <http://www.apastyle.org/>

6. There will be writing assignments throughout the semester.
7. The course will address the needs of students regarding library competency.
8. In order to receive a C or better in the course, students must write at a satisfactory skill level (C or better). If the student's writing is weak, but shows understanding of the course material, the student may be assigned a D, in which case WAC credit will not be received for the course.