***Race and Justice Seminar (2 credits)***

*Professor Nancy E. Dowd*

*Spring semester 2022*

*HH 285A, Wednesday 4-6*

*Contact information:* [dowd@law.ufl.edu](mailto:dowd@law.ufl.edu)*; 352-273-0930; office HH 317*

***Office hours TBD*** *(please make an appointment)*

***Course website:*** *on TWEN*

***Required text:*** *Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America, 1619-2019* (edited by Ibram X. Kendi and Keisha N. Blain) (New York: One World (2021)

***Additional reading, not required:***

Selected US Supreme Court cases (follow links to full cases) (on TWEN under Course Materials)

1619 Project, initial project published by the *New York Times* (2019) (link on TWEN Course Materials), or book, *1619 Project* (2021)

Review of 1619 Project book (link on TWEN Course Materials)

***Seminar Description, Purpose, and Goals***

The focus of this seminar is the goal of racial equality and justice, within the larger scope of civil rights and social justice. The federal Constitution encompasses critical principles of equality, liberty, justice and dignity under doctrines of equal protection and fundamental rights (including nearly all the Bill of Rights and substantive due process rights).

As a member of the seminar you will identify a topic for an in-depth seminar paper on any aspect of racial equality. Based on the schedule below you will identify a topic, preliminary bibliography and a rough outline. Drafts are strongly encouraged but not required prior to the final paper.

The reading weeks of the class (weeks 1-10) will include (1) identifying relevant data and issues; and (2) providing historical context and links to current inequalities by the readings in *Four Hundred Souls.*

You will be asked to reflect on the reading prior to class and propose a discussion question for the class, in a journal entry due prior to the start of class. Each member of the class will be responsible for signing up for a week when they will start the discussion of the reading with their question.

The last three sessions of the seminar will be devoted to presentations each seminar participant’s paper. The other members of the seminar will provide participate in discussion and also provide written critical feedback.

Your paper may focus on any aspect of racial equality or racial justice and can focus on any disciplinary perspective or multiple disciplines (eg, history, sociology, developmental psychology, or empirical work, as well as law).

The goal of the seminar is to give you an opportunity to seriously reflect upon and consider the relationship and actual functioning of law and public policy to achieve racial justice. Think in terms of real, meaningful change, to change the world and current conditions, no matter how large or incremental you can imagine positive change. Your discussions with others as well as your research are vehicles to achieve that goal. I encourage you to identify an organization that might benefit from your research. This paper may also be a writing sample that can be used to demonstrate the sophistication of your research skills and your analytic capabilities. If you plan to use the paper to satisfy the writing requirement, please let me know that at the time that you select your topic.

Finally, the form of your paper is not limited to a traditional research paper. It might, for example, be a brief, an advocacy paper, or some other construction of your project (social media, for example) that reflects thorough research and careful analysis.

***Learning Outcomes:*** By the end of this course students will have (1) explored the range of issues relating to constitutional law concepts of equality, liberty, justice and dignity, through reading, discussion, and research; (2) engaged in discussion and problem solving discussions typical of legal practice and policy work; (3) identified a topic for in-depth research for a substantial paper; (4) received additional research instruction in legal research tools for complex research; and (5) drafted, received input and feedback, and finalized a substantial research paper.

***Instructional Methods***: The course is structured as a participatory seminar, where every student is engaged in the learning process. This includes shared responsibility for raising key questions about the reading or during presentations, contributing critique and suggestions. Differences in potential policies and problem solving will be explored. In addition, each student will meet with the instructor to produce the best possible seminar paper in both substance and writing, which might in addition be useful to a real-world client or organization, or be used as a writing sample.

***Assignments/Schedule:***

January 19: Identifying inequalities and constitutional foundations

Identifying inequalities: contemporary issues and data. Each student should bring to class at least one report, statistic, study, article, book or collection of data relevant to issues of racial equality and identifying where things stand. We will develop a list of key issues.

Constitutional foundations: We will review foundational 13th and 14th Amendment cases.

January 26 *Four Hundred Souls,* part1 and 2, 3-73

February 2: *Four Hundred Souls,* part 3 and 4, 73-145

February 9: *Four Hundred Souls,* part 5 and 6, 149-221

February 16: *Four Hundred Souls,* part 7 and 8, 225-304

February 23: *Four Hundred Souls,* part 9, 307-347

March 2: *Four Hundred Souls,* part 10, 351-388

SPRING BREAK

March 16: summary/conclusions on *Four Hundred* Souls and discussion of each seminar partiticpant’s project

March 23: research week/individual meetings on your project with Prof. Dowd

March 30: research week/individual meetings on your project with Prof. Dowd

April 6 presentations

April 13 presentations

April 20 presentations

Topic and bibliography February 9

Outline and introduction March 16

Rough draft due April 15

Final draft due May 2 *(if this creates a problem for you due to competing deadlines, please see me well in advance of this deadline for an accommodation)*

***Seminar grade***

Your final grade in the seminar will be determined based on your research paper and satisfactory completion of the other seminar requirements.

In addition to your research paper, you are required to: (1) submit your journals during the reading weeks as described below, and (2) participate in the class as described below. These are ungraded assignments. If your journals are not satisfactory or if you do not participate as described below, then this may result in a deduction of up to one grade (eg, from an A to an A-) in your final grade.

***Journal***

During the reading weeks (up to Spring Break), please submit a weekly journal entry *prior to each seminar meeting* reflecting on the reading and including at least one question for discussion that you will bring to the class. Your journal entry should be submitted on TWEN, in the dropbox, under the heading “Journal”. Please do not describe the reading; rather, critically evaluate and respond to the reading. There is no minimum or maximum page requirement; as a guideline, 1-2 pages is fine (double spaced). You will receive feedback on your journal.

***Class Participation***

Class participation during reading weeks will involve leading and/or participating in the discussion of the reading and other subjects for discussion in the seminar. During the reading weeks, we will rotate the student who will begin our discussion of the reading and rotate the responsibility for one person to be the community notetaker for the class. Notes should be emailed to the class as a group through TWEN.

During the class presentation weeks, when each student presents their project, we will be discussing the projects and every class member will be expected to provide constructive feedback to the presenter by email, copied to Professor Dowd, which can be done through the email function on TWEN.

***Paper***

Your paper should be an in-depth research paper, a critical examination of a topic related to the seminar. A rough guideline is 20-25 pages, with 20-25 sources, but this is not a rigid requirement; it depends very much on the project you choose.

Each student will submit a topic proposal, bibliography, and a final paper. You must meet with me to discuss each phase. A rough draft is strongly encouraged but is not required.

Every phase should be submitted in writing on TWEN under the box titled “Paper”. All deadlines for the paper are on or before 5 pm on the dates below:

Topic and bibliography February 9

Outline and introduction March 16

Rough draft due April 15

Final draft due May 2

***Preparation time/workload*:** It is anticipated that you will spend approximately 2 hours out of class reading and/or preparing for in class assignments for every 1 hour in class. In addition, you will spend approximately an equivalent amount of time researching and writing your paper over a similar time period to the readings.

***Attendance and Absence Policy***

Attendance will be taken at each class meeting by sign in sheet. Students are allowed 2 absences during the course of the semester. An absence is counted if you are not present for the full class. Students are responsible for ensuring that they are not recorded as absent if they come in late. A student who fails to meet the attendance requirement will be dropped from the course.

***You may have no more than two absences from the seminar. If you exceed two absences you will be dropped from the course.***

***Laptop policy:*** In past semesters, I have found in-class laptop use distracting, for me and for students (including both those who were using laptops and those who were not). Accordingly, I am asking you **not** to turn on your laptops during class (and please turn off your cellphone and any other device unless you must be available for an emergency call), with the exception of the person taking notes for the seminar.

***College of Law Policies:***

Academic honesty:

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>.

Grading scale:

The Levin College of Law’s mean and mandatory distributions are posted on the College’s website and this class adheres to that posted grading policy. The following chart describes the specific letter grade/grade point equivalent in place:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Letter Grade | Point Equivalent |
| A (Excellent) | 4.0 |
| A- | 3.67 |
| B+ | 3.33 |
| B | 3.0 |
| B- | 2.67 |
| C+ | 2.33 |
| C (Satisfactory) | 2.0 |
| C- | 1.67 |
| D+ | 1.33 |
| D (Poor) | 1.0 |
| D- | 0.67 |
| E (Failure) | 0.0 |

The law school grading policy is available at: <http://www.law.ufl.edu/student-affairs/current-students/academic-policies#9>.

Accommodations:

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Disability Resource Center (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (Dean Mitchell) when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Diversity of Viewpoints/policy adopted by the Faculty Senate Academic Policy Council, July 2021

“Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled.  The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding.  All other purposes are prohibited.  Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does notinclude lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.”