School for New Learning  
DePaul University  

The Underground Railroad  
AI 277

Term & Year: Winter 2017  
Course Number: AI 277: 801-804 (23600-23603)  
Credit Hours: 4  
Location: TBA  
Day/Time: Tuesdays 5:45 – 9 pm  
Meeting Dates: January 2 – March 14, 2016  

Faculty: Deborah W. Holton, PhD, MFA  
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Course Description:  

This course, the Underground Railroad, centers on the actions of African American fugitives from slavery during the Pre-Civil War era; the cultural artifacts that expressed their values; and the systems and technologies that supported their escape. It will draw from primary and secondary texts, national and regional resources, as well as the current scholarship to help shape our understanding of the Underground Railroad in general, and its operation in Illinois in particular. Students will engage in a range of activities, not limited to virtual field trips and media viewing, to support their experiential and collaborative learning. Students will synthesize their learning through poster presentations and other visual products, accompanied by written analytical reports.  

1 http://www.learnnc.org/lp/media/uploads/2009/05/underground_railroad_map.jpg
Competencies (for students enrolled in SNL’s competence-based program only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A-1-H</th>
<th>Can explain the function of folk arts in the transmission of culture and values.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Explains the characteristics of folk art.</td>
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<td>➢ Describes dynamics or mechanisms of how culture and values are transmitted.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Describes the role folk art may play in the transmission of culture and values.</td>
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<td>➢ Applies (3) to one or more specific examples.</td>
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<td>H-1-F</td>
<td>Can describe and explain the roles of individuals, groups, societies, or states in history.</td>
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<td>➢ Demonstrate an understanding of connections among selected events over time.</td>
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<td>➢ Uses an informed historical approach to interpret events or roles of individuals, groups, or states.</td>
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<tr>
<td>FX</td>
<td>Can trace the history and development of American slavery with emphasis on the Underground Railroad in Illinois</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Demonstrates an understanding of connections among selected events over time as they pertain to the pre-Civil War African American experience in Illinois.</td>
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<td>➢ Uses an informed historical approach to interpret events or roles of individuals, groups, or states with regard to the Underground Railroad in Illinois.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>➢ Creates an original work that reflects a synthesis of 1 and 2, addressing the question “What if ...?”</td>
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Learning Strategies and Resources

All students will be responsible for assignments, discussions, activities, and written work pertaining to their registered competence or program. These include and are not limited to the following:

1. Reading assigned texts, including audio and visual materials;
2. Writing registered competence related assignments;
3. Writing journal assignments that address a particular reading, topic, or response;
4. Active participation in discussions and activities;
5. And when appropriate, service as a knowledge resource.

Course Resources

To buy your books, go to http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/depaul.htm. Or, go to the DePaul Loop Campus Bookstore: Barnes & Noble, DePaul Center.

Required Reading:

Students are encouraged to read broadly to grasp and speak intelligently about topic and its complexities, beyond the required texts below. All other required readings and videos are either embedded within the course on D2L or available on the web for download.

Recommended:


Learning Deliverables

Note: to support your learning development, your instructor may also assign short low-stakes writing projects for in-class work or as homework assignments.

Written Work = 50%
- 20% Learning Journal Entries (5)
- 40% Essays (2)
  - 1 comparative
  - 1 curatorial
- 40% Student Showcase (synthesis project)

Class participation = 50%
- 40% Collaborative projects
- 40% In-class discussion and activities
- 20% Field trip

All students are expected to show that they have read the texts provided, that they comprehend them, and that they are thinking critically about them, including their potential applications and implications beyond the classroom, and do so to communicate with all members of the class. As you demonstrate your learning, essential is a mindfulness of others as you “share space and time” in discussions and activities. In other words, let the Golden Rule be your guide, “do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

Course Grading Scale

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>94</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>90</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>87</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>81</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<td>68</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60 or below</td>
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Pass/Fail Grading Options

For SNL students, competencies awarded for prior learning or in the Lifelong Learning Domain do not count towards the twenty credit hours limit on the pass/fail option. In addition, SNL students can select this option for most SNL courses. SNL students must notify faculty prior to the end of the second week of the course for which the pass-fail is requested. If the course is passed, the credit hours earned are entered on the student’s record; the grade is not included in computing the grade point average. If the
course is failed, the F grade is recorded on the record and the credit hours attempted are included in computing the grade point average. For Lifelong Learning Domain courses that provide a grading option, students must notify faculty prior to the end of the second week of the course they are requesting that option.

Course Schedule (tentative)

Please note that this schedule is tentative and is subject to change prior to the second week of the course. Details regarding reading and written assignments will be provided in class. If we need to make significant changes, we’ll discuss them first in class and with student consensus approval. See Policies below.

Topics
Session 1: Introduction – Ways of Knowing and the Underground Railroad (UGRR) experience; mapping what we know

Session 2
UGRR: The historical perspective; collaborations

Session 3
UGRR: The arts perspective: collaborations

Session 4
UGRR: The science perspective; collaborations

Session 5
UGRR: Tensions & Controversies

Session 6
UGRR: Illinois – a closer look

Session 7
Review: What we know now

Session 8
Collaborations, revisited

Session 9
Synthesis development

Session 10
Student showcase
Course Policies

SNL Attendance Policy

Attendance is both mandatory and essential in SNL courses. Students and faculty are expected to arrive on time, and to actively participate in every scheduled class session. Specific course policies may be listed in the course syllabus. Acceptance of the syllabus indicates agreement to policies outlined in that document.

Students are expected to attend each class and to remain for the duration. Coming 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early constitutes an absence for the student. The overall grade for participation drops one-third after any absence. Students who miss class due to illness or other significant personal circumstance are required to complete the Absence Notification Process through the Dean of Students Office (DePaul Center #1100) in order to have their absence excused. Two absences for any reason, whether excused or not, may constitute failure of the course.

Missing class makes assessment a difficult process; students who miss any class work are subject to a grade reduction. Students who miss more than 10% of any given course are subject to failure. This means that if you miss participating in more than two classes you may not have met the requirements for a passing grade. For example, missing one all-day (two sessions) class (9 am – 4 pm) = 20%. It is within your instructor’s right to fail you—just so you know.

Your instructor should be notified if your life events do not allow you to participate in the course for more than one week. This is particularly important when there are small group discussions or you are working as part of a team.

If you find yourself getting behind, please contact your instructor immediately.

Time Management and Attendance

SNL's courses, be they on-ground or online, are not self-paced and require a regular time commitment each week throughout the quarter. You are required to prepare assignments as well as prepare for discussions.

You will have to dedicate some time every day or at least every second day to your studies. A typical four credit hour "face to face" course at SNL involves three hours of classroom meeting per week, plus at least three to six hours of study and homework per week. If you have any problems with your technology, or if you need to improve your reading or writing skills, it may take even longer.
Your Instructor's Role

Your instructor's role in this course is that of a discussion facilitator and learning advisor. It is not your instructor’s responsibility to make sure you participate regularly and submit your assignments. You will receive feedback on written assignments submitted on time.

Your Role as a Student

As a student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the course instructor’s role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of the leader in your own learning. You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course, and you will also be expected to take a more active role in peer learning.

Please also note that this is a course offered by DePaul University's School for New Learning (SNL), a college for undergraduate and graduate degree-seeking students 24 years and older. SNL welcomes the perspectives and encourages the participation of all DePaul students, and students who take this course should respect and be mindful of SNL's mission in supporting a diverse and inclusive environment. More information about SNL can be found here.

Late Submissions

This course will demand a significant investment of your time and energy. Readings will include sections from various texts, and may include selections from the DePaul's eReserve site and other resources. In discussions, you will be asked to reflect upon readings and course exercises. You will also write formal and informal papers, plans and assessment documents.

Some assignments will require research. All assignments, however, are designed based on your attention to the learning activities and exercises that precede them. It is, therefore, essential that you read the materials associated with each assignment thoroughly and carefully.

If you are unable to complete an assignment by the established deadline, you should contact me immediately for guidance on how to proceed. The expectation of receiving satisfactory credit, beyond quality and quantity, on any course deliverable (discussions, assignments, assessments, etc.) depends on timely submission. Exceptions to this policy will be considered only in cases involving extreme circumstances (emergencies) in which you have notified me. Remember: timely feedback requires a timely submission. I will deduct points for late work, and I reserve the right to refuse late submissions. You are responsible for meeting all deadlines.

Attitude

A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measureable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when your instructor is speaking; mocking another’s opinion; cell phones ringing; emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer when not requested specifically by your instructor. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom. Your instructor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

Civil Discourse
DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be Socially Responsible Leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue (discussions, informal interactions, one-on-one meetings, etc.) associated with this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of all participants—each student and your instructor. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student’s ability to be successful in the course. Your instructor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

Golden Rule Guidelines In-Class and Online

Class discussions, both online and on-ground, are an important part of your overall academic experience. To ensure a positive learning environment, please follow the following minimum expectations. Use your common sense, as not all situations can be covered:

- Be polite
- Respect other participants’ views or opinions
- Think before you write or speak, and ask yourself if you would say the same thing in person
- Use positive phrases (i.e., "Good idea!" or "Thanks for the suggestions," etc.)
- Be sensitive to cultural differences
- Avoid hostile, curt or sarcastic comments
- No objectionable, sexist, or racist language will be tolerated
- Create a positive community, both on-ground and online, by offering assistance and support to other participants.
- Use correct grammar and syntax at all times

Student participation in class discussions will be measured in two ways. First, students are highly encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the discussed topic. When available, use the rubric provided in class to self-assess the quality of your participation. Participation allows your instructor to “hear” each student’s voice when grading papers. Secondly, your instructor will call upon students so that they may offer comments related to the reading assignments. Students must keep up with the readings to participate in class discussions and activities. See Julian Treasure’s TED talk: https://www.ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_how_to_speak_so_that_people_want_to_listen

Phone/Fax/Email Etiquette

**Emails:** Feel free to email questions to me through D2L. Be as comprehensive in your message as possible, and provide your student identification number and other pertinent information. To practice safe emailing, please include in your subject line: AI 260. If you send me a message through D2L, I should get it without difficulty. **Messages without subject headings and missing the [#] tag may be considered spam and the DePaul system may not deliver it.**

**Phone:** Email is my preferred means of communication, but sometimes it’s necessary to reach me by phone. Please be kind. Speak clearly, leave a detailed message and phone number, speaking S-L-O-W-L-Y, twice. If you don’t leave a phone number, I’ll assume you don’t want me to return your call. I’ll return your call as soon as possible, usually within 48 hours during the business week.

**Attached Assignment, Faxes, and D2L:** Please do not attach documents to email messages unless previously arranged. Plan to turn in assignments either in class or through the D2L Dropbox.
Computers, Cell Phones on call:

Your instructor may use a computer, applications, and the Internet to support and enhance your learning experience, as your assignments and resources suggest. However, no matter how well-meaning the intention, students who multi-task and surf the web in class via their computers and mobile devices, unless specifically requested by your instructor to do so, are less likely to benefit from the learning exchange. Further, students may be unaware of the devices’ disruptive impact on their classmates’ learning. In short, using a computer and mobile devices without your instructor’s prior agreement is “bad form.” Computer and mobile device usage in class is thus not allowed unless special circumstances warrant. See the university-wide policy on accommodations based on the impact of a disability.

That said, there may be times in which you may need to use your cell phone. If you bring a cell phone to class, it must be off or set to a silent mode. Should you need to answer a call during class, students must leave the room in an undisruptive manner. Out of respect to fellow students and your instructor, texting is never allowed in class. If you are required to be on call as part of your job, please advise your instructor at the start of the course.

Syllabus changes

A revised syllabus will be posted during the first meeting week of the course. Students will be notified of any minor changes or updates to it thereafter via communication tools within Desire 2 Learn (D2L). Any significant changes to it will be discussed in class and with student consensus approval.

University-wide policies

This course includes and adheres to the college and university policies described in the links below:

- Academic Integrity Policy
- Incomplete Policy
- Course Withdrawal Timelines and Grade/Fee Consequences
- Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability
- Protection of Human Research Participants

Course Resources

General Assessment Criteria for All Writing Assignments

This course will follow the MLA citation format. All writing assignments are expected to conform to basic college-level standards of mechanics and presentation.

- For help with organizing your ideas, grammar, citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, sample SNL assignments and much, much more, see the SNL Writing Guide, linked below.

- Consider visiting the Writing Center to discuss your assignments for this course or any others. You may schedule appointments (30 or 50 minutes) on an as-needed or weekly basis, scheduling up to 3 hours worth of appointments per week. Online services include Feedback–by–Email and IM conferencing (with or without a webcam). All writing center services are free.
Writing Center tutors are specially selected and trained graduate and undergraduate students who can help you at almost any stage of your writing. They will not do your work for you, but they can help you focus and develop your ideas, review your drafts, and polish your writing. They can answer questions about grammar, mechanics, different kinds of writing styles, and documentation formats. They also can answer questions and provide feedback online, through IM/webcam chats and email.

Obviously, the tutors won’t necessarily be familiar with every class or subject, but they are able to provide valuable help from the perspective of an interested and careful reader as well as a serious and experienced student-writer.

Schedule your appointments with enough time to think about and use the feedback you’ll receive. To schedule a Face-to-Face, Written Feedback by Email, or Online Appointment, visit www.dePaul.edu/writing.

University Center for Writing-based Learning
SNL Writing Guide
Dean of Students Office

Faculty Biography:

Deborah Wood Holton is an associate professor at DePaul University’s School for New Learning (SNL). She received her BFA in Theatre and Drama with an emphasis in playwriting from Howard University; her MA in English with a concentration in African and African American literature from Atlanta University; and, her PhD in American Theatre Studies from the University of Wisconsin - Madison. A fiction writer and poet, Holton holds a Creative Writing MFA from Solstice at Pine Manor College. While Holton’s scholarly work explores a range of topics such as African American culture and literature, her own creative endeavors re-envisions African and women-centered folklore, myth and culture. Her creative work and critical essays have appeared Essence, Jump Up and Say, the Eugene O’Neill Review, Staging Difference, Black Theatre, and Adult Education and Theological Interpretations among other collections. A Black Earth Institute Fellow Emeritus, she is a recipient of a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute Fellowship on the Black Aesthetic (2014). She has taught courses on Zora Neale Hurston at SNL over the years as well as at Chicago’s Newberry Library. Holton’s own speculative fiction novel that draws from ancient Egyptian mythology and the Black Aesthetic, “The Amen Prophecy,” is currently in progress. “Little Sparrow,” a short story developed from that work, appeared in Heart of the Sun: An Anthology in Exaltation of Sekhmet (2011). Her most recent publication, “Musings on Octavia Butler’s Parable of the Sower,” in About Place, a literary online journal (2014), reflects a merging of her ongoing Butler research and her NEH work on the Black Aesthetic. In addition, Holton’s experience as the first archivist at the Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection at the Carter G. Woodson Regional Chicago Public Library, the largest history and literature collection in the Midwest, as well as her prior experience as Director of Education at Chicago’s DuSable Museum of African American History, brings a personal excitement and enthusiasm for this topic and its learning potential.