School for New Learning
DePaul University

Liberal Arts in Action
The Underground Railroad
LL 280

Term & Year: Winter 2018
Course Number: 806 - 810 (25695 - 25699)
Credit Hours: 4, or 6 if registering for 3 competencies; or, LA1 only (6 credits)
Location: TBA
Day/Time: Saturdays, January 9 AM – 12:15 PM
Meeting Dates: January 6 – March 17, 2018

Faculty: Deborah W. Holton, PhD, MFA
School for New Learning
DePaul University
14 E. Jackson, Suite 1400
Chicago, IL 60604
Phone: 312/362-8595
E-mail: dholton@depaul.edu (Preferred communication)

Course Description:

This course directs students to analyze an engaging topic (the Underground Railroad) from multiple perspectives in the liberal arts. Students strengthen their problem-solving skills by drawing upon the ideas and methods of three different liberal arts disciplines. The learning activities clarify how the liberal arts can be put into action to solve problems. The course strengthens students’ development of critical thinking and academic writing across the

1 http://www.learnnc.org/lp/media/uploads/2009/05/underground_railroad_map.jpg
curriculum. Students also will learn about resources that will be useful for their academic success at DePaul.

Our topic, 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 people, resources, systems and technologies that supported their resistance. 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.

Learning Outcomes

This course consists of multiple sections with distinctive learning outcomes. Students enroll in specific sections to develop respective learning outcomes as follows.

Liberal Arts in Action (LA1) Section 810 – 6 credits
This section satisfies the Liberal Arts in Action requirement of the Liberal Learning core curriculum for the School for New Learning’s professional studies majors. Students who successfully complete this section will be able to compare typical questions, methods of inquiry and kinds of evidence in the liberal arts. Specifically, students will be able to

- Identify, compare and contrast the questions, methods of inquiry and kinds of evidence that characterize three liberal-arts approaches to knowing; and
- Compare and contrast the uses of writing in each of these approaches.

Competencies (BAIFA, BAC, BAGB) Sections 806 – 808 – 2 credits each

For students enrolled in SNL’s competence-based program only, this course may be taken for up to 3 competencies (6 credit hours). Students are responsible for all assignments pertaining to each competence.

A-1-H Can explain the function of folk arts in the transmission of culture and values.
- Explains the characteristics of folk art.
- Describes dynamics or mechanisms of how culture and values are transmitted.
- Describes the role folk art may play in the transmission of culture and values.
- Applies (3) to one or more specific examples.

H4 Can analyze power relations among racial, social, cultural, or economic groups in the United States.
- Describes the unequal power relations between at least two racial, social, cultural, or economic groups in the U.S.
- Discusses the historical, sociological, or economic dynamics under which these groups came to be in conflict.
FX Relative to [one’s focus area], can synthesize one’s understanding of the history and development of American slavery, based on scholarly research and analysis.

- Demonstrates an understanding of connections among selected events over time as they pertain to the pre-Civil War African American experience
- Uses an informed historical approach to analyze events or roles of individuals, groups, or states from at least two perspectives
- Presents one’s learning in class for discussion and further development

Negotiated Competencies (with college approval)
For students in competence-based programs at SNL, other learning outcomes in alignment with the course content and faculty expertise may be available. To petition for a negotiated competence, consult with your instructor and faculty mentor, and submit the online form. See https://snl.depaul.edu/student-resources/undergraduate-resources/Pages/forms.aspx.

Crosscutting Learning Outcomes

In addition to the section-specific outcomes, all students will develop cross-cutting competencies including: inquiring, reflecting, connecting, deciding, communicating, and engaging.

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 our topic and its complexities, beyond the required texts below. All other required readings and videos may be embedded within the course on D2L or available on the web for download.

Douglass, Frederick. Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass. Public Domain. 

Recommended:


Learning Deliverables

Assignment details will be provided in separate documents. Note: to support your learning development, your instructor may also assign short low-stakes writing activities in class.

Written Work = 50%
  30% Learning Journal Entries (5 total)
  50% Essays (2)
       1 analytical (25)
       1 synthesis (25)
  20% Annotated bibliography

Class participation = 50%

Rev. 10/10/17
60% In-class discussion and activities
40% Student Showcase (synthesis projects based on scholarly research)

All students are expected to show that they have read the assigned texts, that they comprehend the reading, 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 to 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91 to 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88 to 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85 to 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81 to 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 to 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73 to 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>69 to 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>65 to 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>61 to 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>60 or below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students are encouraged to view and apply the standards explained in the SNL Writing Guide: https://snl.depaul.edu/student-resources/writing/Pages/Paper-Grading-Rubric.aspx

The following rubric will be used in assessing student work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Work</th>
<th>Discussions and In-Class Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **A** | Work of extraordinarily high quality, reflecting unusual thoroughness, comprehensiveness, cogency of argument and development of ideas, as well as creativity in writing assignments; work also characterized by exceptional writing skills, free of serious grammatical, spelling, and syntactical errors; sophisticated application of a standard writing style to college work (MLA, APA, etc.); accomplishes the above within given word count/page requirements.
| | Student has read the assignment(s) and engaged in assigned activities, and can provide a clear summary of assigned texts and reflect on assigned activities in a thoughtful and contributive manner; can ask questions, express judgments and/or pose other areas to explore at each discussion session based on comprehension of reading assignments and class activities at a sophisticated level. |
| **B** | Work of high quality regarding the organization and development of ideas; work substantively addresses issues/topics as stated in guidelines of assignments; writing is free of serious grammatical, spelling, and syntactical errors; good application of a standard writing style to college work (MLA, APA, etc.); accomplishes the above by exceeding given word count/page requirements.
| | Student participates as stated above in 50% of discussions. |
| **C** | Work that minimally meets acceptable requirements as stated in course guidelines for assignments; writing skills reflect weakness in organization and development of ideas; superficial
<p>| | Student only participates when asked; and/or, student only enters a conversation to ask a question, or make general remarks that shows only vague familiarity with assigned readings |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>treatment of issues and ideas; work may only address part of an assignment; work may demonstrate serious grammatical, spelling, and syntactical errors; minimal application of a standard writing style to college work (MLA, APA, etc.); work may minimally reflect given word count/page requirements.</td>
<td>and/or activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Work does not meet minimum acceptable requirements of assignments; poorly written in organization, development, grammar, spelling, and/or syntax; may indicate student has not thought through assignments, as reflected in superficial or simplistic treatment of issues and ideas; may indicate that student has not attended to reading assignments thoroughly; poor application of a standard writing style to college work (MLA, APA, etc.).</td>
<td>Student is unable to respond to questions posed, summarize readings, and is silent during most sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Work does not meet minimum standards.</td>
<td>Student is not engaged at all.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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-hour 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**

A tentative schedule will be provided and subject to change prior to the second session. Assignment details 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.
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: **LL 280.** If you send me a message through D2L, I should get it without difficulty. **Messages without the subject heading above 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 Submissions box.

**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 undistruptive 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](http://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-envision 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.