SYLLABUS

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES AFAS C1001X
INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES
FALL SEMESTER, 2005

Dr. Manning Marable-Professor of Public Affairs, History, and African American Studies
Director, Center for Contemporary Black History
Office Location: 760 Schermerhorn Extension; email mm247@columbia.edu
Office Hours: Thursdays, 3:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m. and by appointment through Dr. Marable’s assistant, Ms. Glenda Walker at the Center for Contemporary Black History, 760 Schermerhorn Extension, 212-854-1489, gvw2102@columbia.edu.

Dr. Mio Matsumoto-Professor of African American Studies Program
Office Location: 760 Schermerhorn Extension; email mm936@columbia.edu
Office Hours: Thursdays, 4:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.

Service Learning Project Assistant: Montse Ferrer; email mf2115@columbia.edu
T.A. Office & Hours: 760 Schermerhorn Extension, Mondays, 4:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

Teaching Assistant: Zaheer Ali; email za22@columbia.edu
T.A. Office & Hours: 760 Schermerhorn Extension, Thursdays, 2:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

Course Location: 602 Hamilton Hall
Course Day/ Time: Tuesday & Thursday, 1:10 p.m.-2:25 p.m.
Credits: 3 points
Call Number: 76253

INTRODUCTION

The African-American experience spans four hundred years, from the initial settlement of the American continent by Europeans and the establishment of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and down through the present day. Throughout their sufferings and ordeals, the people of African descent who were brought involuntarily to this country found the courage and creativity to "make themselves." They constructed their own unique rituals, traditions and symbols; a distinct spirituality, music, art, dance and folklore; a rich cultural heritage, kinship and community; and a complex body of political and social ideas about the contradictory nature of American democracy and the position of black people within it. In effect, black Americans made their own history, although not always in the manner in which they chose, because they were encumbered by the constraints of institutional racism and white privilege.

This introductory course in the African-American experience is largely constructed around the voices and language used by black people themselves. The course is organized chronologically, with an emphasis on the ideas of black social thought, political protest and efforts to initiate social change. About one half of the course covers the historical foundations and background to the modern black experience, from the struggle against slavery to the Harlem
Renaissance. The second half of the course focuses on the past seventy years, from the Great Depression to the twenty-first century.

During our course, we will talk about a wide spectrum of African-American leaders, intellectuals, organizations and institutions. Some have focused their energies primarily in finding ways for the black community to survive discrimination and oppression. Through the development of their unique cultural and social traditions, and the establishment of African-American organizations, black people have managed to sustain themselves in the face of almost constant adversity. Other African Americans have advocated strategies of collective political change, challenging the barriers of inequality in white America. And still others have resorted to more radical means, from the slave rebellions of the nineteenth century to the ghetto uprisings of the late twentieth century, to improve the conditions of the black people. Despite these differences, what brings together nearly all representatives of the black experience are the common efforts to achieve the same goals: the elimination of racism, the realization of democratic rights and greater social fairness within a racially pluralistic society, and achievement of cultural integrity of the black community.

Through the course lectures, required readings and discussions, hopefully students will acquire a fuller understanding about the historical development and social construction of black America: what African Americans have thought about themselves and the larger society, how they have evolved as a community with a distinct culture from slavery to the twenty-first century, and where they may be going as a people.

**GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

There are four essential requirements for the successful completion of this course in African-American Studies:

First, all students should attend class lectures and regularly scheduled weekly discussion section meetings. Attendance will not be taken at lectures, but failure to attend regularly may result in a lack of preparation for the final examination. Attendance will be taken at discussion sections, and teaching assistants assigned to this course will lead the meetings. The discussion sections are an extremely important aspect of the course, because students have the opportunity here to exchange perspectives and explore issues in greater detail than during the lectures. Your attendance and participation in the discussion section, your ability to answer questions, and to initiate dialogue based on the required readings, will comprise one-sixth (16.6 percent) of your total course grade for this course.

Second, at each discussion section meeting beginning in Week III, one or more students will be responsible for leading the section in a general discussion about that week's readings. They will present the key ideas within the assigned readings, making connections with information from previous readings and lectures from class. Each student's initial presentation should be about 10 minutes in length, and accompanied by a one or two page outline or short paper. If more than one student is assigned to a particular week, they should meet together prior to class to determine which topics or readings each individual will present. All grades are based on individual performances, not by the group as a whole. The discussion section presentation will comprise one-sixth (16.6 percent) of your total course grade.
Third, all students must write at least one paper, on topics that are directly relevant to the subjects addressed during this course. In the planning and writing of the paper, students are free to utilize information from required readings, as well as information from lectures. Additional research materials will be found in the library, such as academic publications, books, newspapers, oral history transcriptions, and other information. Endnotes or footnotes are strongly suggested, but not required, for papers. You must, however, document all references cited in your paper. All papers must have a bibliography. Papers must be at minimum ten typed, double-spaced pages. The first paper, which all students in the course must turn in, is due at class, on Thursday, October 13. This first paper will comprise one-sixth (16.6 percent) of your total course grade.

After the submission of the first paper, students have an opportunity to choose from two different options:

**OPTION 1:**

Students may select to write a second paper, on a different topic. This paper must be at minimum ten typed, double-spaced pages, with a bibliography listing all sources and publications used in the preparation of your paper. The second paper is due at your discussion section meeting, on Tuesday, November 29. This second paper will comprise one-sixth (16.6 percent) of your total course grade.

**OPTION 2:**

Instead of writing a second paper and leading a discussion section review of assigned course readings, students may choose to receive credit for doing a service learning project. The service learning project offers students a chance to volunteer for 15 hours throughout the semester in a local community organization (about an hour a week, depending on the kind of volunteer activity). The intention is to offer students the opportunity to move beyond lecture halls and be part of organizations struggling with concrete social problems that affect African American communities in New York City. More details, such as the names of the community organizations the students can work with, will be found in the addendum to this syllabus and during separate workshops, whose schedule will be found in the same addendum. Students who take this option must then write a 2-3 page report on their experiences and present it during a discussion section. Presentations will start during the fifth discussion meetings. The report should include a brief description of the community organization you have been working with, your assigned work, and your personal reflection on the experience. Finally, instead of writing Paper II (10 pages), students will write a second 3-4 page, about their experience as a whole, which is due November 29. The discussion section presentation and final 3-4 page paper combined will comprise one-third (33% percent) of your total course grade.

Any papers submitted after the due dates listed above will be considered late. All students have an opportunity to turn in late papers up to two weeks after the original due dates. The last date for the submission of the first paper with a late penalty is Thursday, October 27. The last date for the submission of the second paper with a late penalty is Monday, December 12. The penalty for submitting late papers is one full letter grade (e.g., an A paper submitted late is
graded as a B, a B- would become a C-, etc.) The only exceptions that would be permitted are students who have health-related excuses provided from a physician or an academic adviser, or family emergencies requiring them to leave campus. Such requests for extension must be submitted prior to the dates that the papers are due, not on the day they are to be turned in, or afterward. I strongly discourage requests from students to obtain "incompletes" from any course, and will not grant them except for health-related and family emergencies. All papers, whether on time or late, must be submitted by students directly to their respective teaching assistants, not to me, and not with the staff at the office of the Institute for Research in African-American Studies. Students are strongly advised to keep one copy each of all papers submitted in this course.

Fourth, all students must take the final examination for the course. The final exam will be comprehensive, covering the totality of information presented from readings, lectures, discussions, etc., and will consist of short essays. All students must bring their own pencils or pens to class on examination day. Students who fail to show up for the final examination, or students who arrive late and/or have no valid excuse, will not be given an opportunity to take a make-up test. The final examination will represent one-third (33.3 percent) of your total course grade.

The grading for the entire course will be done by graduate teaching assistants. Students who have questions or concerns regarding individual assignment grades, or the grading for the course overall, should first talk with their teaching assistants.

During the semester, one or more of our class lecture or discussion dates may conflict with religious holidays or observances. Students who observe these religious holidays are excused from class or discussion on those dates. They must, however, plan to turn in all papers on the dates that they are due, and keep up with regular weekly readings.

**Summary of Course Evaluation and Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 1:</th>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Class attendance and discussion participation</td>
<td>16.6 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2) Oral presentations on the assigned readings during discussion section.</td>
<td>16.6 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3a) Paper I (10 pages)</td>
<td>16.6 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3b) Paper II (10 pages)</td>
<td>16.6 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) Final examination, short essay format, 2 hrs.</td>
<td>33.3 %</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100 %</td>
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**Option 2:** If you choose to do a service learning project:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Class attendance and discussion participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Paper I (10 pages)</td>
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</table>
(3b) Service Learning project that will include a short oral presentation during discussion section (2-3 page presentation report) as well as a 3-4 page final paper.

<table>
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<th>33.3 %</th>
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<tr>
<td>(4) Final examination, short essay format, 2 hrs.</td>
<td>33.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100 %</td>
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**OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT**

Introduction to African-American Studies has been designed to acquaint students with the diverse aspects of the black experience. The Institute for Research in African-American Studies will sponsor several public lectures and events this semester, which enrich the learning experience of our course. The dates, times and locations of the presentations will be given well in advance.

Students who attend any of these events will receive extra credit for their class participation grades. Students must sign the sign-in sheet at each event, in order to receive credit.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

All students should purchase their own individual copies of the required texts. They should be purchased at Labyrinth Bookstore, on 112th St. between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue. The course book, *Introduction to African American Studies: A Reader*, will be available at the same bookstore.

*Introduction to African American Studies: A Reader* (course book)

**SCHEDULE**

**WEEK 1: African Heritage and the Slave Trade**
9/6 --- Introduction to the Course, review of course syllabus, and short lecture
9/8 --- Lecture
Required Readings
Harding, There Is A River, pp. 3-51.
Marable and Mullings, eds., Let Nobody Turn Us Around, "Introduction," pp. xvii-xxv; Section One: "Introduction," pp. 3-7; Document Number 1, pp. 7-16; Number 6, pp. 41-42; and Numbers 8-9, pp. 48-50.

*** START READING DU BOIS, THE SOULS OF BLACK FOLK.

Suggested Visual and Internet Resources
Films
Amistad; Sankofa; The Middle Passage (HBO); Africans in America Series, Part 1-2 (PBS, 1998).

Websites:
"Africans in America"
(www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/home.html)
"American Slave Narratives, an Online Anthology" (xroads.virginia.edu/utc/abolition/abhp.html)

Week 2: The Slave Community: Oppression and Resistance
9/13 --- Review of Multimedia Studies Environment (MSE) The Souls of Black Folk, and Service Learning Project presentation
9/15 --- Lecture

Required Readings
Giddings, When and Where I Enter, Chapter 2, pp. 33-55.
Harding, There Is A River, Chapters 3-5, pp. 52-116.
Marable and Mullings, eds., Let Nobody Turn Us Around, Section One: Document Number 5, pp. 35-41; Numbers 10-12, pp. 50-64; Number 17, pp. 91-109; and Number 19, pp. 114-116.

Theodore Kornweibel, "Railroads, Race, and Reparation," Souls v.5 #3 (Summer 2003), 23-32. (In Introduction to African American Studies: A Reader)

Suggested Visual and Internet Resources
Films
Africans in America, Part 3; Nat Turner's Rebellion (PBS); Roots of Resistance (PBS 1989)

Websites
"Third Person, First Person: Slave Voices From The Special Collections Library, Broadside Collection, Special Collections Library, Duke University"
http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/slavery/

Week 3: The Free Black Community
9/20 --- First Discussion Sections (for lectures and readings from weeks 1-2)
9/22 --- Lecture
Required Readings
Marable and Mullings, eds. *Let Nobody Turn Us Around*, Section One: Document Numbers 2-4, pp. 16-35; Number 7, pp. 42-47; Number 12, pp. 58-64; Numbers 14-16, pp. 67-91; and Number 18, pp. 110-114.

Required Viewing:
*The Souls of Black Folk* MSE:
Clips of Tuskegee Institute, Fisk University, and Calhoun School.

Suggested Visual and Internet Resources
Films
*Frederick Douglass: When the Lion Wrote History* (PBS 1994); *The Life and Legend of Sojourner Truth* (Princeton University, 2001).

Websites
"The Underground Railroad"
www.nationalgeographics.com/features/00/railroad/1.html
"The Church in the Southern Black Community"
docsouth.unc.edu/church
"Abolitionism, 1830-1850"
www.iath.virginia.edu/utc/abolition/abhp.html

Week 4: War, Reconstruction, and Reaction
9/27 --- Second Discussion Section (for lecture and readings from week 3)
9/29 --- Lecture

Required Readings:

Required Viewing:
*The Souls of Black Folk* MSE: Clips of Birth of a Nation and Within Our Gates

Suggested Visual and Internet Resources
Films
*Glory; Roots; Burn! Mandingo; The Massachusetts 59th Colored Infantry* (PBS 1991); *The Civil War Series* (PBS 1989); *In the White Man's Image* (PBS 1989); *One Woman, One Vote* (PBS 1995); *I'll Make Me a World* (PBS 1998)
Websites
"American Experience: Reconstruction, the Second Civil War"
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/reconstruction/index.html
"America's Reconstruction: People and Politics After the Civil War"
http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/reconstruction/index.html
"John Brown's Holy War"
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/brown/

10/4 --- Lecture
10/6 --- Lecture

Required Readings
Giddings, *When and Where I Enter*, Chapters 1, pp. 17-31; and Chapters 4-7, pp. 75-131.
Marable and Mullings, eds., *Let Nobody Turn Us Around*, Section Two: Document Number 8, pp. 167-172; Numbers 11-14, pp. 181-212; and Number 16, pp. 227-230.

Required Viewings
*The Souls of Black Folk MSE*:

Suggested Internet Resources
"African American Odyssey: Booker T. Washington Era"
memory.loc.gov/ammem/aaohtml/exhibit/aopart6.html
"Ida B. Wells-Barnett and Her Passion for Justice"
www.duke.edu/~ldbaker/classes/AAIH/caaih/ibwells/ibwbkgrd.html

Week 6: The New Negro
10/11 --- Third Discussion Section (lecture and readings from weeks 4 and 5)
10/13 --- Lecture
*** FIRST PAPER DUE ***

Required Readings
Giddings, *When and Where I Enter*, Chapters 8-11, pp. 135-197.
Required Viewing

The Souls of Black Folk MSE:
Interview with Dr. Robert O’Meally, and clip, “African American children in Harlem.”

Suggested Visual and Internet Resources

Films
Rosewood (1997); Against the Odds: Artists of the Harlem Renaissance (PBS); Born on the Fourth of July, A. Philip Randolph (CA Newsreel 1996).

Websites
See the listings at http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/harlemrenaissance.html
"Goin' To Chicago"
http://www.pbs.org/gointochicago/index.html
"American Experience: Marcus Garvey, 'Look for Me in the Whirlwind'"
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/garvey/
"The Jacob Lawrence Virtual Archive and Education Center"
www.jacoblawrence.org
"African American Odyssey: World War I and Postwar Society"
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aaohtml/exhibit/aopart7.html

"Remembering Rosewood"
http://www.displaysforschools.com/history.html
"Harlem 1990-1940: An African American Community"
www.si.umich.chico/harlem/index.html

Week 7: Depression, World War II, and the Cold War

10/18 --- Fourth Discussion Sections (readings & lectures from week 6)
10/20 --- Lecture

Required Readings
Giddings, When and Where I Enter, Chapters 7-9, pp. 199-258.
Williams, Eyes on the Prize, Chapters 1-2, pp. 2-57

Suggested Visual and Internet Resources

Films
Oh Freedom after While: The Missouri Sharecroppers' Strike of 1939 (CA Newsreel, 1999); Scottsboro: An American Tragedy (PBS).

Websites
"America from the Great Depression to World War II" Photographs from FSA-OWI, 1935-1945"
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/fsowhome.html
"The Trials of The Scottsboro Boys"
www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/FTrials/scottsboro/scottsb.htm
"American Experience: Scottsboro: An American Tragedy"
www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/scottsboro/
"Paul Robeson"
http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/njh/PaulRobeson/
"African American Odyssey: The Depression, The New Deal, and World War II"
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aaohtml/exhibit/aopart8.html
"The Desegregation of the Armed Forces"
www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/desegregation/large/desegregation.htm

**Week 8: The Second Reconstruction, 1954-1962**
10/25 --- Fifth Discussion Section (lecture and readings from week 7)
10/27 --- Lecture

**Required Readings**
Williams, *Eyes on the Prize*, Chapters 3-5, pp. 60-161.

**Suggested Visual and Internet Resources**

**Films**
*Eyes on the Prize Series* (PBS, 1990); *Boycott* (HBO); *Mississippi, America* (PBS 1990); *Fundi: The Story of Ella Baker* (1986); Emmett Till Documentary (PBS 2002); *Malcolm X* (Spike Lee, 1992)

**Websites**
"Brown At 50: King’s Dream or Plessy’s Nightmare?"
www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/ research/reseg04/resegregation04.php
"The Civil Rights Movement: Sites for Researchers and Students"
www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlpubs/crlnews/backissues2004/september04/civilrights.htm

" Voices of Civil Rights: Ordinary People, Extraordinary Stories"
www.voicesofcivilrights.org/index.html

11/1 --- Lecture
11/3 --- Sixth Discussion Section (lectures and readings from weeks 8-9)

**Required Readings**
Williams, *Eyes on the Prize*, Chapters 6-8, pp. 164-287.
Kevin Gaines, "African American Expatriates in Ghana as Black Radical Tradition," *Souls*, v.1 #4 (Fall 1999), pp. 64-71. (In Introduction to African American Studies: A Reader)

**Week 10: The Black Power Rebellion**

11/8 --- Election Day- University Holiday (No class)
11/10 --- Lecture

**Required Readings**

*Giddings, When and Where I Enter*, Chapter 16, pp. 277-297.


**Suggested Visual and Internet Resources:**

**Films**

*Nation of Law? Eyes on the Prize II* (PBS); *A Panther in Africa* (PBS 2004); *Black Panther/ San Francisco State: On Strike* (CA News Reel, 1969)

**Websites**

"A Panther in Africa"
http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2004/apantherinafrica/special_today.html
"It's about Time: Panther News"
http://www.it'sabouttimebpp.com/home/home.html
"COINTELPRO"
http://www.icdc.com/~paulwolf/cointelpro/cointel.htm

**Week 11: Contemporary African-American Thought: The 1970s**

11/15 --- Seventh Discussion Section (lecture and readings from week10)
11/17 --- Lecture

**Required Readings**

*Giddings, When and Where I Enter*, Chapters 17-18, pp. 299-335.


**Suggested Visual and Internet Resources**

**Films**

*In Motion -- Amiri Baraka* (Facets Multimedia 1985); *Eyes of the Rainbow: Assata Shakur and Oya* (Gloria Rolando, 1997).
Websites
"Amiri Baraka"
www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/poets/a_f/baraka/baraka.htm
"Buffalo Soldiers of the Vietnam War"
personal.centenary.edu/~csnipe/final.html

**Week 12: Contemporary African American Thought: the 1980s**
11/22 --- Lecture
11/24 --- No class (Thanksgiving Break)

**Required Readings**

**Suggested Films and Internet Resources**
Film
*Critical Resistance to the Prison Industrial Complex* (Video Activist Network).

Websites
"Prison Industrial Complex"
www.thetalkingdrum.com/prison.html

"The Prison Industrial Complex and the Global Economy"
www.prisonactivist.org/crisis/evans-goldberg.html

**Week 13: Contemporary African American Thought: the 1990s**
11/29 --- Eighth Discussion Section (lectures and readings from weeks 11-12)
** *** SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT PAPER AND SECOND PAPER DUE 12/1 --- Lecture

**Required Readings**
Musgrove, George Derek. “Good at the Game of Tricknology: Proposition 209 and Struggle for the Historical Memory of the Civil Rights Movement,” *Souls*, v.1, #3 (Summer 1998), pp. 7-24. (In *Introduction to African American Studies: A Reader*)

**Suggested Visual and Internet Resources**
Films
*Hill vs. Thomas* (CBS 1997); *Do the Right Thing*; *Boyz in the Hood*; *New Jack City*
Websites
"An Outline of the Anita Hill and Clarence Thomas Controversy"
http://chnm.gmu.edu/courses/122/hill/hillframe.htm
"The Million Men March"
"Black American Feminism: Bibliography"
http://www.library.ucsb.edu/subjects/blackfeminism/bio.html
"Afrocentricity: Selected Publications"
www.library/cornell.edu/africana/library/afrocentricity.htm

Week 14: Contemporary African American Thought, 2000-2005
12/6 --- Ninth Discussion Section (readings and lecture from week 13)
12/8 --- Lecture

Suggested Internet Resource
"University of Michigan Document Center: Elections 2000"

Final Exam: TBA

Introduction to African-American Studies Course Calendar, At A Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>LECTURE TOPIC / ASSIGNMENTS DUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 6</td>
<td>Introduction to the course; Short Lecture: African Heritage and the Slave Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep. 8</td>
<td>Lecture: African Heritage and the Slave Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep. 13</td>
<td>Review of Multimedia Study Environment (MSE) and Community Service Learning Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep. 15</td>
<td>Lecture: The Slave Community: Oppression and Resistance</td>
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<td>Sep. 20</td>
<td>1st Discussion Section Meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep. 22</td>
<td>Lecture: The Free Black Community</td>
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<td>Sep. 27</td>
<td>2nd Discussion Section Meetings</td>
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<td>Sep. 29</td>
<td>Lecture: Civil War, Reconstruction, and Reaction</td>
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<td>Oct. 4</td>
<td>Lecture: Accommodation v. Reform</td>
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<td>Oct. 6</td>
<td>Lecture: The New Negro</td>
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<td>Oct. 11</td>
<td>3rd Discussion Section Meetings</td>
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<td>Oct. 13</td>
<td>Lecture: The New Negro</td>
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<td>Oct. 18</td>
<td>4th Discussion Section Meetings</td>
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<td>Oct. 20</td>
<td>Lecture: Depression, World War II, and the Cold War</td>
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<td>Oct. 25</td>
<td>5th Discussion Section Meetings</td>
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First Paper Due
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 3</td>
<td>6th Discussion Section Meetings</td>
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<td>Nov. 8</td>
<td>Election Day - No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 10</td>
<td>Lecture: The Black Power Rebellion</td>
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<td>Nov. 15</td>
<td>7th Discussion Section Meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 17</td>
<td>Lecture: Contemporary African American Thought: the 1970s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 22</td>
<td>Lecture: Contemporary African American Thought: the 1980s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 24</td>
<td>Thanksgiving - No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 29</td>
<td>8th Discussion Section Meetings</td>
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<td>Service Learning Project Paper and/or Second Paper Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 1</td>
<td>Lecture: Contemporary African American Thought: the 1990s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 6</td>
<td>9th Discussion Section Meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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ADDENDUM TO SYLLABUS
SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT

African American Studies AFAS C1001X
Introduction to African-American Studies
Fall Semester, 2005

Project Coordinator: Montse Ferrer, mf2115@columbia.edu
T.A. Office Hours: 760 Schermerhorn Extension, Mondays, 4:30pm-6:00pm
T.A. Office: 760 Schermerhorn Extension

1. WHAT IS SERVICE LEARNING?

Service learning is an experiential form of education through which you can enrich your academic experience with thoughtfully organized service and reflection, while simultaneously contributing to the needs of the community beyond the classroom. Service learning is based on the premise that educational success lies in the ability to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Essential to the goals of service learning is the careful selection of service projects which are not only relevant to, but will also enhance the course material presented within the traditional academic classroom. The final (and perhaps most important) aspect of service learning is the post-service reflection which should ensure that you all have the opportunity to solidify your new understandings of the connection between theories present in academia and of the application of such theories to the outside world. Welcome to Columbia College’s first official service learning course!

2. WHY SERVICE LEARNING?

The Institute for Research in African-American Studies motto has always been “academic excellence and social responsibility.” The incorporation of service learning into this course will serve to fulfill both of these objectives, with an innovative focus on applying the course’s concepts to understand your social responsibility. You will have the choice of volunteering with one of four organizations that work with African American communities. By volunteering with them, you will have a chance to apply and further understand the concepts, ideas, and theory you are exposed to in the classroom and throughout the assigned texts.

For more than a century, Columbia University has been located near the cultural and political heart of black America, the community of Harlem. In what is today remembered as the golden age of the 1920s, Harlem became the center of black literary and cultural life, home to outstanding artists, poets, and novelists. Harlem was a central site for the rise of black nationalism beginning with the popular emergence of Marcus Garvey and his Universal Negro Improvement Association; and a generation later with the charismatic leadership of Malcolm X. History has left an imprint on Harlem and this course will give you the opportunity of discovering it. Through your service in the community, you will be encouraged to critically examine contemporary black social relations, culture, and politics. But most importantly, you
will have the opportunity to penetrate Harlem by actively effecting change, improving living and educational standards, and empowering those who have no voice. You will have the chance of transforming a part of the African American community of New York City.

3. SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT

Instead of writing Paper II and leading a discussion section with an oral presentation, you will have the choice of doing this service learning project. You will have to volunteer a total of 15 hours a semester which could either entail working at an organization for an hour a week or else volunteering at a specific event for a weekend. If you decide to work on this project, you will make an oral presentation where you will have the chance to talk about your experience, including the impact it had on you and the impact YOU had on the community you worked with. The report should include a brief description of the community organization you have been working with, your assigned work, and your personal reflection on the experience. Finally, instead of writing Paper II (10 pages), you will be writing a 3-4 page paper that will expand your oral presentation. Your TA will let you know what exactly this final short paper should include. The presentation and final paper will comprise one-third (33% percent) of your total course grade.

Because service learning is a two-way experience, “commitment” will become a key requirement to fulfilling your service. The community organization will depend on your timeliness and your attendance as an important component of their programming. It is critical that the agency staff and the participants at the organization who look forward to your participation are not disappointed. Therefore, it is crucial that you commit to a day (or set of days) and time that you are able to consistently attend. If you are experiencing any difficulties, it is very important that you talk with Montse about your ability to maintain your commitment EARLY in the semester’s service learning experience. If you are absent more than two times without a legitimate reason, your service learning activity will be terminated because of the hardship it will create for the community organization staff. It is your responsibility to turn in your service learning attendance sheet that is signed by agency staff each week to Montse. Montse will be assisting you throughout the semester to find the service learning project that best suits you and to make sure that you are satisfied with your volunteering experience.

4. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

The Projects:

The projects you will be working with can be classified under three broad types: voter education, youth development, and reintegration into society (of homeless people, many of whom have gone through the incarceration system). You should think about your particular interest in any of these issues as well as your time availability when picking among them. The specific times you would be working at the community organization depends on your schedule and will not be determined until at least the second week of class. The community organizations include the following: the DOE Fund – Ready, Willing & Able Project, the New York City Voting Assistance Commission, the Harlem Education Activities Fund, and Harlem Fifty.
DOE Fund – Ready, Willing, and Able:

Ready, Willing & Able is the Doe Fund’s holistic, residential, work, and job skills training program which empowers, employs, and supports homeless individuals in their efforts to become self-sufficient, contributing members of society. The program targets the segment of the homeless population considered the hardest to serve: single, able-bodied adults, the majority of whom have histories of incarceration and substance abuse. Criteria for acceptance into the program is that the applicant be ready, willing, and able, both physically and mentally, to work and maintain a drug-free lifestyle.

Over 75% of the homeless men who enter a Ready, Willing & Able facility have a history of incarceration. Some are homeless at their release from prison and join Ready, Willing & Able immediately, others come to us after failing to re-integrate into the community. By offering housing, meaningful work and support services, Ready, Willing & Able offers a perfect platform for homeless ex-offenders to successfully overcome barriers to employment. From past success working with homeless people with criminal backgrounds, Ready, Willing & Able has become a model program for prisoner reentry not only for those who are homeless but also for those living in the community without employment and supports.

As a volunteer, you can be involved in a range of activities. The staff at the Doe Fund is willing to use your help in as many ways as possible, preferably in that particular way you feel most comfortable. Although activities can range from tutoring the participants in basic reading and writing skills to preparing them for job interviews, you will also have the opportunity to pick any specific role within the Ready, Willing & Able training program. To learn more about this program visit their website at: www.doe.org

NYC Voting Assistance Commission:

The role of the Voter Assistance Commission (VAC) is to encourage and facilitate voter registration and voting by all eligible United States citizens residing in New York City. VAC’s mission is to increase participation in the democratic process. To achieve this goal, VAC monitors voter registration and voting in New York City. VAC also works with Mayoral agencies, private groups and individuals, and community-based organizations to promote voter registration and voter participation. VAC is comprised of 16 Commissioners and its day-to-day operations are managed by the Coordinator. VAC is strictly nonpartisan, and does not promote any candidate for elected office, political party, or political agenda.

As a volunteer, you will be involved in a 2-3 day city-wide campaign to inform African American communities of the HAVA, Help America Vote Act. This campaign will focus on the younger New Yorkers, or on the first-time voters. Although not yet confirmed, you will working with other students from Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn. Together you will be out in the streets of New York educating voters about their voting rights and options. For more information on the NYC Voting Assistance Commission visit their website at: http://www.nyc.gov/html/vac/html/home/home.shtml

HEAF:
The Harlem Education Activities Fund (HEAF) is a comprehensive college preparatory program that helps motivated students develop the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to ensure success in school, career and life. HEAF Continuum identifies scholars in middle schools and support and develops those scholars academically and socially until they graduate from college through a variety of after-school, Saturday and summer educational and youth development programs.

As a volunteer you will get a chance to work with children from ages 12-18, in a series of activities. Depending on your interest you will volunteer in one of their main programs such as the Social Identity Program, Youth Development 101, Counseling Program, High Expectations.

The Social Identity Program explores the student’s gender, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, and religion. Students learn how social identities influence their experiences in society. The Youth Development 101 provides the foundation for the youth development programming introducing students to key life skill concepts (positive values, self-esteem, communication, decision making, goal setting, conflict resolution) that will encourage and develop the social and personal competencies. The Counseling Program provides short-term goal oriented individuals and family psychological counseling to both middle school and high school students. Counselors work closely with the youth development and academic staff to provide crisis intervention, conflict resolution and behavior modification for students. The High Expectations participants are accepted into the program in 6th grade. These students will have academic enrichment classes, test preparatory sessions, and college preparatory programs.

To learn more about these programs visit their website at: www.heaf.org

Harlem Fifty:

Harlem Fifty is a newly created organization currently supporting and educating 15 young African-American men with the ages of 18-25. Most of these men have been in prison or in other kinds of detention centers for minors and many of them have no High School diplomas (or a GED equivalent).

If you volunteer with Harlem Fifty you will get a chance to do a variety of different activities with them. They are currently taking seven classes at the center, some of which include: a course designed to prepare them for the SAT but mostly as a foundation for them to learn how to think critically and analytically; a reading course that will cover different works of literature all of which deal with social unrest; GED and computer literacy classes; and a course on social and moral values.

Harlem Fifty’s men have had numerous problems in the past and most have been rejected by their communities and families. The program’s main objective is to get them out of the streets and prepare them to apply and to get accepted into a college. An integral part of the volunteer project is the creation of an open space in which Columbia students and Harlem Fifty’s young Black men can discuss the impact of the African American experience in the United States. They are the effects of many of the policies inflicted on African American communities, and together, you will be able to discover why and how this has come about.
Service Learning Project

African American Studies AFAS C1001X
Introduction to African-American Studies
Fall Semester, 2005

Project Coordinator: Montse Ferrer, mf2115@columbia.edu
Office Hours: Mondays, 4:30pm-6:00pm in room 760, Schermerhorn Extension

I. The Requirements

1. 1 hour training workshop:
   a. Either Thursday 09/15 at 6pm or Friday 09/16 at 1pm. Inform Montse if you cannot make any of those times.
2. 15 hours of volunteer work
3. Oral presentation
4. Personal Reflection Paper

II. The Grade

If you have chosen to do a service learning project it will count for 33% or 1/3 of your total course grade, divided in the following manner:

1. 11% - Oral Presentation
2. 11% - Personal Reflection Paper
3. 11% - Volunteering

Your final grade will be an average of these three grades and will be given by your assigned TA.

III. The Components: A Description

1. Presentation (11%):
   You will have to do an oral presentation during the discussion session that you are assigned to by your TA. The presentation should be 10-15 minutes. Since most of you will be presenting before you have finished your volunteering project, we are not expecting you to put forward a comprehensive analysis of your overall volunteer experience. However, your presentation will have to include a description of your project, the people you work with, the site and neighborhood you’re working in, and some personal thoughts about your first weeks of volunteering. Use the Oral Presentation Guide, page 3 of this document, as a guide to what your presentations should include.

   As part of the oral presentation, you will also have to write a 2-3 page paper. It should summarize the points you will be discussing during your presentation.

2. Personal Reflection Paper (11%):
   Crucial to writing a successful reflection paper is the ability to connect theory and practice. This means that when describing what you learned from your volunteering experience, you will need to use the readings and material you have discussed in lectures and discussion sessions. Not doing this will seriously affect your grade.

   Identify a particular experience or set of events at your service site and reflect upon as well as analyze this experience within a broader context. For example, you can choose a perplexing, frustrating, or confusing incident at your community-based organization. You will then identify one or several important social issues related to the course that may be underlying this circumstance. Discuss the multiple perspectives from which the issue can be analyzed and how it might be the basis for making recommendations to influence community agency operations, regional and/or national policies, or societal preconceptions and conventions. You will need to focus on three perspectives: personal, academic, and civic. Use the Paper Question Guide, pages 4-5 of this document, as a guide of what your papers should include.
3. **Volunteering** (11%):
Factors that will contribute to your volunteering grade include:

- Commitment (attendance and punctuality)
- Supervisor’s evaluation
- Overall Effort (attitude, flexibility, initiative, motivation…)
- Relationship building (general interpersonal skills, understanding, empathy…)

Although your supervisor at the community-based organization will evaluate your work, the overall grade of this portion will be done by Montse. She will consider not only what the organization’s supervisor says about your volunteer work but also what she observes throughout the semester as she will be working closely with all of the volunteers.
Question Guide for the Oral Presentation

Since most of you will be presenting before you have finished your volunteering project, we are not expecting you to put forward a comprehensive analysis of your overall volunteer experience. Your presentation should try to answer as many questions as possible from the ones listed below:

1. The community-based organization and project
   a. What community-based organization are you working with?
   b. What issues does the agency engage? What is the mission of the organization?
   c. What kind of work are you doing at the community-based organization?
   d. Are you working with other volunteers from other institutions? If so, where are they from and how are they different from you and your Columbia classmates?
   e. Why did you choose your community organization?

2. The people
   a. Describe the age, sex, race, ethnicity, and any other significant characteristics of the people involved in your project.
   b. Describe their lives, their views, their goals in life. Include some personal reaction to the individual or individuals with whom you are working.
   c. How do the student(s), trainee(s) with whom you work react to you? Cite specific examples. How does their reaction make you feel?
   d. What are some of the unique strengths and challenges facing the students and the school/trainees and the institution?

3. The site
   a. Describe the social and physical context of your community-based site.
   b. How does the site compare with the social context of Columbia’s campus?
   c. How does it compare with the social context of the environment you grew up in?

4. You
   a. How do you think your presence in the community has been impacting the people with whom you work?
   b. What impact is the assignment having on you? Illustrate your points with experiences you have had during your weeks of volunteer work.

5. Other
   a. You also have the chance of answering and developing answers to some of the questions found in the Paper Question Guide. Choose questions that you can answer now taking into consideration that you might have still not finished your volunteer project.
Question Guide for the Personal Reflection Paper

When writing your Personal Reflection Paper, you should cover three perspectives: personal, academic, and civic. You should answer at least one question of each section in depth. If you rather come up with your own questions to answer, you can also do that, although they must be cleared by Montse beforehand. Although this is NOT a research paper, it is very important to include readings and material you have discussed in lecture and in the discussion sessions. The minimum number of pages for this paper is of 4. Depending on the quality and topic of your paper, fragments of your paper can be selected for publication in a national service learning journal.

Personal Perspective:
- Why did you, or did you not, experience difficulty working/interacting with certain people?
- How did your experience reveal your own attitudes or biases?
- How did this volunteering opportunity challenge your personal identity, i.e. how you define and think of yourself as a (gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, ethnicity/race, nationality)?
- What kinds of stereotypes were challenged in the process of volunteering for you?
- How do you think the students/trainees with whom you worked perceive the concepts of race and class? (Illustrate your response with examples or anecdotes from your experiences in the community.) Consider how they have discussed their own racial and/or ethnic identity, class, or gender.
- Has your experience shifted your thinking about social inequality? If it has not, please explain why.
- What important differences and similarities have you found with the students and trainees you worked with?
- What changes do you want to make in your life based on this volunteering experience? In the life of others?

Academic Perspective:
- Where you able to find any connection between the history of African Americans in the United States and what the students or trainees you worked with currently experience in their daily lives?
- What principles, concepts, or historical facts have you learned in class which relate to your volunteering experience?
- Based on your experience as a volunteer, what are some of the most immediate or severe problems facing Harlem and African American communities in NYC?
- How have your experiences in the community helped you learn about structural racism today? In what way did you encounter structural racism at your organizations or with the people you worked?

Civic Perspective
- What agendas did you bring (and did others bring) to the situation? How are these agendas related to larger social systems? What are the sources of those systems, and how do you reinforce or challenge the system through your participation?
- In what ways did power differentials emerge in this experience? What are the sources of power in the relationship you had with the people in these organizations? What systems underline the power dynamics here and who benefits and who is harmed from these systems being place?
- Which ethical dimensions (rights, duties/obligations, justice, integrity, personal responsibility, equality, freedom) emerged in this experience?
- What change is needed for the groups of people you worked with? How can this change be accomplished: with individual action or collective action—within the system or challenging the system?
- What privilege did you bring to the situation? What privilege did others bring? What systems are the sources of such privilege? How are you or others disempowered by your/their lack of such privilege? How might you empower myself or others?
- How does this experience highlight the relationship between individual choices/actions and the operation/constraints of institutions/society as a whole?
- What are some of the important policies, laws, and political debates related to the primary issues facing the people you worked with?
- Drawing from your experiences in class and in the community, what do you think needs to be done, from a policy perspective, to better serve the individuals at the community-based organization?
The Service Learning Projects: The SPECIFICS

If you have chosen Option 2, otherwise known as the service learning project, you will volunteering in one of these four projects for a total of 15 hours. Transportation costs will be covered by Columbia University.

Harlem Fifty

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Harlem Fifty’s men have had numerous problems in the past and most have been rejected by their communities and families. The program’s main objective is to get them out of the streets and prepare them to apply and to get accepted into a college. An integral part of the volunteer project is the creation of an open space in which Columbia students and Harlem Fifty’s young Black men can discuss the impact of the African American experience in the United States. They are the effects of many of the policies inflicted on African American communities, and together, you will be able to discover why and how this has come about.

During the semester, you will be forced to ask yourself, “Why am I here and where are we going?” The young men and you will interact, debate, and initiate the search for a right—right for you—answer to this complex question. The staff at Harlem Fifty encourages Columbia students to be as open minded as possible as well as willing to express themselves with respectful freedom.

When:
Classes will run every Monday through Friday from 10am to 2pm and depending on your schedule you will be able to volunteer with them any time within this framework of hours.

Where:
Saint James Presbyterian Church, 409 West 141st Street and St. Nicholas Avenue.
Telephone: (212) 283-4541
Taxi: Depending on the group of students, it might be better to take a taxi.
Subway: The closest subway stop is on 145th and St. Nicholas Avenue and the following subway lines stop there:

A B C D

** In partnership with the DOE Fund **

Voting Registration Project
Three main components/issues:

I. Medgar Evers College students
   a. This project will be done jointly with Medgar Evers College students. You will meet them in the pre-workshop and will then have a chance to work intensely with them during the two-day events. It will give you an opportunity to meet students with different backgrounds and educational opportunities and work together in teams.

II. Ex-incarcerated men
   a. The first event, although open to general public, will be featured by the registration of men who have recently come out of prison or finished their paroles. As a volunteer, you will help them register as well as get a chance to work with them.

III. New immigrant communities
   a. For the second event, also open to the general public, the majority of people you will be registering will be new immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean.

Three main requirements:

1. A Pre and a Post Workshop
   a. These workshops will each take about 1-2 hours and will occur at Columbia University. More importantly, it will give you an opportunity to interact and get to know the students from Medgar Evers College who you’ll be working with.
   b. In the Pre-workshop, Bryan Stevenson, Executive Director of Equal Justice Initiative and Professor of Clinical Law at New York University School of Law, will come to speak. After his speech, you and the Medgar Evers students will begin a discussion based on Stevenson’s thoughts and on topics related to voting and the rights of those in prison.

2. The first voting registration campaign will take place on Friday, September 30 from 7am to 12pm and will be organized by the Doe Fund.
   a. It will take place at one of the DOE Fund facilities, the Harlem Shelter, 155th Street and 8th Avenue.
   b. Fox Five Good Day New York will feature the event as part of their morning show.

3. The second voting registration campaign will take place on Saturday, October 8, from 10am to 3pm in Jackson Heights, Queens, and will be organized by the Voter Assistance Commission.
   a. This campaign will focus on new immigrant communities in Queens.

HEAF

Harlem Educational Activities Fund Fact Sheet

HEAF’s Mission

The Harlem Educational Activities Fund, Inc. (HEAF) is a comprehensive education and youth development organization. HEAF’s mission is to assist college-bound students from educationally and/or economically disadvantaged communities in developing the intellectual and life skills required of tomorrow's global leaders.

What We Do

HEAF identifies students in middle school and supports them until they are successfully admitted to four-year colleges through a variety of after-school, Saturday and summer educational and youth development programs.
Volunteer Opportunities

**Study Hall/Tutoring**
- 7th & 8th grade: Monday –Thursday, 2:30 pm-4:15 pm
- 9th – 12th grade: Monday –Friday flexible
Requirements: school year commitment

**Math and English classes**
- 8th grade: Mondays, 4 pm-6 pm
- 7th grade: Thursdays, 4 pm-6 pm
- All grades: Saturdays, 9 am-1 pm (flexible)

**Youth Development classes**
- Pro-abstinence/responsibility: Tuesdays, 4 pm-6 pm
- Media Literacy: Wednesdays, 4 pm-6 pm (begins October 26th)
- Speak Up-public speaking: Wednesdays, 4:30 pm-6:30 pm
- Youth Leadership Council: Fridays, 4:30 pm-6 pm
- Service Learning: January 2006, TBA

**College Prep**
College application process: Thursdays, 4:30 pm-6:30 pm

**How to get to HEAF?**
Walking: Walk North until you reach 125th Street and then turn East and walk until you reach 7th avenue, about 5 blocks (10-15 minute walk).
Subway: The closest subway stop is 125th street and the following subways make a stop there:

* All volunteers must attend a HEAF orientation.

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The Doe Fund - Ready, Willing & Able

*Ready, Willing & Able* is the Doe Fund’s holistic, residential, work, and job skills training program which empowers, employs, and supports homeless individuals in their efforts to become self-sufficient, contributing members of society. The program targets the segment of the homeless population considered the hardest to serve: single, able-bodied adults, the majority of whom have histories of incarceration and substance abuse. Criteria for acceptance into the program is that the applicant be ready, willing, and able, both physically and mentally, to work and maintain a drug-free lifestyle.

By offering housing, meaningful work and support services, *Ready, Willing & Able* offers a perfect platform for homeless ex-offenders to successfully overcome barriers to employment. From past success working with homeless people with criminal backgrounds, *Ready, Willing & Able* has become a model program for prisoner reentry not only for those who are homeless but also for those living in the community without employment and supports.

As a volunteer you will be able to participate in the process of preparing Doe Fund trainees to reintegrate themselves into society. The two options you will have as a volunteer are:
1- **GED Tutoring**  
   a. As a GED tutor you will be able to teach the DOE Fund trainees the basics of math and reading.  
      This experience will give you the chance to get to know the trainees you tutor and learn about their past experiences.

2- **Resume and Job Interview Preparation**  
   a. This kind of preparation should be done only by upper class students who have some experience in writing resumes and being interviewed for jobs. Volunteers will also get a chance to interact on a personal level with the trainees.

**WHEN:**  
The GED tutoring takes place every Monday from 4-6pm and the Resume/Job Interview Training on Monday mornings.

**WHERE:**  
The Doe Fund facility you will volunteer is their Harlem Facility, located at 2960 Frederick Douglass Blvd.  
Telephone: (212) 690-6480

The closest subway stop is on 155th street and the subway stops there.