The United States incarcerates more people than any other country in the world. And people of color make up a highly disproportionate number of the over 2 million individuals incarcerated in the U.S. today. For example, Black people are incarcerated at more than five times the rate of whites. This course will explore the historical causes and origins of the United States' mass incarceration crisis. Beginning with slavery and continuing through the rise of prisons, debt peonage, Jim Crow, and beyond, the course will explore how efforts to police, detain, and control Black bodies have been at the center of U.S law and legal practice since the nation's founding.
On the course Moodle, you will find all relevant documents, such as:
- the syllabus
- assignments as they are handed out
- PDFs of all readings (other than those found in the required books)
- links to all assigned films
- copies of the Powerpoint presentations I give in class

Course Requirements:

- **Weekly response papers (25%)**: you will sign up to write an approximately 1 page (300 word) reading response, for either each Tuesday or each Thursday. Reading responses are due on Moodle by 9 am on the day of class. Each person will write 10 responses per semester. You may miss two per semester without penalty. Also, you will not write a response during your week to present in class.

- **In-class presentation (10%)**: you will sign up to present the readings for one class period during the semester. Presentations will be made in groups of two.

- **Midterm paper (6 pages) (15%)**: due on Moodle by Friday, Oct. 19, 12 PM.
- **1- to 2-page final paper proposal (5%)**, due on Moodle by Friday, Nov. 30, 5 PM
- **10- to 12-page final paper (25%)**, due on Moodle by Friday, Dec. 14, 5 PM
- **Attendance and participation**: 20%

Required Course Readings (Books)
The following books are available for purchase at R J Julia Bookstore and are on reserve at Olin Library:


*** All other readings are available as PDFs on Moodle, under the respective class dates. I highly recommend that you print out the online readings and bring them with you to class, with your own questions, notes, highlights, etc. marked throughout them. Although the printing will be a slight expense, it is still less than buying a course pack.
Course Expectations: Our Community Standards

Attendance: Attendance at class sessions is mandatory. Attendance will be taken regularly in order to protect the interests of those students who diligently come to class and help create a community by their presence. More than three unexcused absences (i.e. for grave illness, family emergency, etc.) will lead to a reduction in the final participation grade.

Late papers: Late papers will be downgraded 1/3 grade for the first day they are late and an additional full letter grade for each additional day. Extensions will be given only for medical reasons or family emergencies. All other work must be completed on time as well.

Academic Integrity: All work for this course must be done in compliance with the University Honor Code. Any cases of plagiarism or cheating will be dealt with according to university policy. According to the Wesleyan University Student Handbook, in submitting papers students, “affirm that this work is my own and all content taken from other sources has been properly acknowledged.” In sum, any time you refer to information from a source beyond yourself, you need to cite the relevant primary or secondary source. We will use footnotes for all citations and refer to the Chicago Manual of Style for proper guidelines.

Courtesy: Please come to class on time, and be prepared to stay for the duration of the class.

Smartphones: Phones should be away during class.

Laptops are generally prohibited during discussion, unless used as a reference with the permission of the class. Everyone should, therefore, bring their own notebook and pen or pencil to each class.

Discussion Guidelines: Creating a Community of Care
I expect our classroom to be a place where any participant can pose an idea without fear of ridicule or failure and where all viewpoints are taken seriously. This is a setting where we can take intellectual risks and ask even the most basic questions. I will not tolerate a) willfully offensive or aggressive comments, b) ad hominem attacks, or c) racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, or generally hateful speech. With that said, an accountable, respectful environment for discussion is not necessarily an always-comfortable environment for discussion. Transformative change rarely occurs without discomfort.

Accommodations and Resources
This course strives to nourish a learning environment in which everyone thrives. I will always be available during office hours or by appointment. You are particularly encouraged to see me outside of the classroom if you seldom speak in class or are experiencing any difficulties in or outside of class. Students with documented physical or cognitive differences that require accommodations should collaborate with Disability Resources (http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/disabilities/Stu-dent/index.html) to develop pathways to academic accessibility. I’d appreciate receiving information about accommodations as soon as possible so that I may adjust my teaching accordingly. I encourage all students to make use of the Wesleyan Writing Workshop (http://www.wesleyan.edu/writing/workshop/) well ahead of assignment due dates. Should you encounter academic difficulties in the course please consult me directly. You may also wish to consult the Peer Advising Program (http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/
resources/peeradvisors/index.html) or the Peer Tutoring Program (http://www.wesleyan.edu/stUDENTAFFAIRS/resources/peertutoring/) for additional support.

Formatting Requirements:
All assignments must be typed in Times New Roman 12-point font and double-spaced with one-inch margins on all sides. Assignments must be submitted as Microsoft Word attachments (.doc or .docx). No PDFs please (because I need to be able to type comments on your paper, using Track Changes).

Course Schedule

*** This schedule may be adjusted slightly, depending on our interests and needs as a class. Any changes will be announced on Moodle and in class. If any adjustments are made, the reading and writing assignments as written on Moodle will always be the most accurate, up to date version.

Week 1: Introduction and Conceptual Overview

Tu, Sep. 4: Introduction: The Roots and Rise of Mass Incarceration

Th, Sep. 6:
Read:
Angela Y. Davis, Are Prisons Obsolete?, ch. 1 and ch. 2 (required book)

Part I. U.S. Slavery (North and South) and the Pre-Civil War Birth of Prisons

Week 2: Northern Slavery and the 18th-century Rise of Prisons

Tu, Sep. 11: The Rise of the United States, the Rise of Incarceration
Read:
- Davis, Are Prisons Obsolete?, ch. 3 (required book)
- Manion, Liberty’s Prisoners, introduction and ch. 4 (on Moodle)

Reading response writing question:
In her second chapter, Angela Davis discussed incarceration as a way to control African Americans in the decades following the end of southern slavery. But what about northern slavery? What do you learn from Manion about the relationship between northern slavery, northern abolition, and the rise of prisons?

Th, Sep. 13: Case Study: From Slavery to Incarceration in Middletown, Connecticut
Read:
- Caron, A Century in Captivity, Preface and ch. 1, ch. 2, and ch. 3 (pp. 1-30) (on Moodle)
- “Wethersfield Prison,” connecticuthistory.org (on Moodle)
- Warschauer, Matthew, “Connecticut within the Nation, 1776-1860: Slavery, Race, and Politics,” pp. 9-12 (on Moodle)

Primary sources (on Moodle)
- *Middlesex Gazette*, Middletown, CT, “Runaway Slave” Ad, August 10, 1793
- *Middlesex Gazette*, Middletown, CT, “Be On Your Guard,” January 25, 1826

Reading response writing question: same question as for Tuesday, except draw on specifics from Middletown and/or Connecticut more broadly.

**Week 3: Race and the Early American Penitentiary**

**Tu, Sep. 18:** Field trip: Walking in Prince Mortimer’s footsteps (visit Middlesex County Historical Society and Main Street, Middletown)

* Begin the readings for Thursday (below)

**Th., Sep. 20:**
Read:
- Price, “The Birth of the Penitentiary” (on Moodle)
- McLennan, *The Crisis of Imprisonment*, ch. 3, “Contractual Penal Servitude and its Discontents, 1818-1865” (pp. 53-86) (on Moodle)

Primary source:
- Austin Reed, *The Life and the Adventures of a Haunted Convict* (pages TBA on Moodle)

**Week 4: Southern Slavery and the Carceral State**

**Tu, Sep. 25:**
Read:
- Derbes, “Secret Horrors” (on Moodle)

**Th, Sep. 27:**
Read:
- Primary source: William Walker, *Buried Alive* (pp. 1-35) (on Moodle)

**Part II: Race and the Roots of the Prison Industrial Complex, 1865-1965**

**Week 5: “Freedom” and Its Limits**

**Tu, Oct. 2:** *Incarceration and the Limits of Southern Emancipation*
Read:
- Oshinsky, *Worse Than Slavery*, ch. 1 and ch. 2 (on Moodle)

Primary source:
- William Walker, *Buried Alive*, (pp. 36-90) (on Moodle)
- The Thirteenth Amendment (on Moodle)
Th, Oct 4: The Thirteenth Amendment: “Except for the Punishment of Crime”
Watch:
- 13th (the link to watch this documentary is on Moodle)

Week 6: The South: From Slavery to the Chain Gang, 1865-1910s
Read:
- McLennan, *The Crisis of Imprisonment*, ch. 3 (on Moodle)
- Oshinsky, *Worse Than Slavery*, ch. 3 (on Moodle)

Th., Oct 11
Read:
- Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World: Alabama, 1865-1900* (pages TBA on Moodle)
- Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, ch. 5 (required book)
Primary sources:

Week 7: The North: The “Condemnation of Blackness” and the Making of Modern Urban America
Tu, Oct 16: Race and “Crime Statistics”
Read:
- Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, introduction, ch. 1, ch. 2, ch. 6, and conclusion (required book)
- King, “Not Just a World Problem: Segregation, Police Brutality, and New Negro Politics in New York City” (on Moodle)

Th, Oct 18: Black Women and the Early Carceral State
Read:
- Gross, *Colored Amazons*, ch. 3 and ch. 5 (on Moodle)

- Midterm paper (6 pages): due on Moodle by Friday, Oct. 19, 12 PM.

Tu, Oct 23: fall break- no class

Week 8: Race, Gender, and “Juvenile Delinquency”

Th, Oct 25
Read
- Chávez-García, “Youth of Color and California’s Carceral State” (on Moodle)
- Case Study: Long Lane Farm, Middletown, CT (articles and primary documents on Moodle)
Week 9: Race and Policing in the Post-World War II U.S.

Tu, Oct. 30

- Escobar, “The Unintended Consequences of the Carceral State: Chicana/o Political Mobilization in Post-World War II America” (on Moodle)

Th, Nov. 1:
- Primary source: “We Charge Genocide” (1951) (on Moodle)
- additional reading to be announced on Moodle

Part 3: The Prison Industrial Complex:
Race, Mass Incarceration, and Resistance Since 1965

Week 10: The Rise of the “War on Crime” and the Prison Industrial Complex

Tu, Nov. 6:
Read:
- Hinton, From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime, introduction and ch. 1 (required book)
- Primary sources: to be announced on Moodle

Th, Nov. 8:
- Alexander, The New Jim Crow, introduction and ch. 1 (required book)


Tu, Nov. 13
Read:
- Chase, “We Are Not Slaves: Rethinking the Rise of Carceral States through the Lens of the Prisoners’ Rights Movement” (on Moodle)
- Primary source: Jackson, Soledad Brother (pages TBA on Moodle)

Th, Nov. 15
Read:
- Stewart-Winter, “Queer Law and Order: Sex, Criminality, and Policing in the Twentieth-Century United States” (on Moodle)
- Blood in the Water (pages TBA on Moodle)

Week 12: Black Women and the Prison Industrial Complex

Tu, Nov. 20
Read:
- Breaking Women (pages TBA on Moodle)
- Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, ch. 4 (required book)

**Th. Nov. 22: Thanksgiving break- no class**

**Week 13**

**Tu, Nov. 27: Education and Prison Writing as Resistance**

Read:
- Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, ch. 3 (required book)
- Abu-Jamal, *Writing on the Wall* (pages TBA on Moodle)
- * get a jump start on *The New Jim Crow*, for Thursday

Watch:
- The Last Graduation (the link to watch this film is on Moodle)

**Th, Nov 29: “The “War on Drugs” and the New Jim Crow**

Read:

** 1- to 2-page final paper proposal: due on Moodle by Friday, Nov. 30, 5 PM

**Week 14: Race, Policing, and Mass Incarceration Today**

**Tu, Dec. 4: Policing, Racial Profiling, and Black Lives Matter**

Read:
- Camp and Heatherton, *Policing the Planet* (pages TBA on Moodle)
- Patrisse Khan-Cullors & Asha Bandele, *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir* (pages TBA on Moodle)

**Th, Dec. 6: Final Reflections, and Visions for a World Without Prisons**

Read:
- Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, ch. 6, “Abolitionist Alternatives,” (pp. 105-115), and “Resources” (pp. 116-118) (required book)

** 10- to 12-page final paper: due on Moodle by Friday, Dec. 14, 5 PM

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