Black Geographies considers the capacity of the concept and discipline of geography to give recognition and identification to multiple subjective orientations. Using theoretical and ethnographic texts drawing on the theme of geography from offerings in critical race, black feminist, diaspora and queer studies, the course will cover various approaches, arguments, and sentiments of lives lived within the geographical categorization of blackness. In the first half of the course, ‘black geographic,’ the class takes ‘geography’ as a productive analytic capable of exploring, examining, and determining the lived experiences, conceptual limits, and theoretical purchase of blackness through the reading of some seminal and contemporary texts by black geographers. In the second half, ‘geographic blackness,’ it considers how blackness as a modality of analysis, in turn, gives insight and shape to the concept and discipline of geography through texts by non-geographers that engage or invoke geographic themes.

Reading List and Class Schedule (subject to change)

1.19  No One Knows the Mysteries at the Bottom of the Ocean (intro to Black Geographies)—Katherine McKittrick & Clyde Woods
      Making Room for Black Feminist Praxis in Geography—Camilla Hawthorne & Brittany Meché

black geographic

1.26  Demonic Grounds—Katherine McKittrick
2.02  Black Marxism—Cedric Robinson
2.09  Spatializing Blackness—Rashad Shabazz
2.16  Golden Gulag—Ruth Wilson Gilmore
2.23  Black Faces, Whites Spaces—Carolyn Finney
3.02  Trace: Memory, History, Race, and the American Landscape—Lauret Savoy

geographic blackness

3.09  Territories of the Soul: Queered Belonging in the Black Diaspora—Nadia Ellis
3.16  Freedom as Marronage—Neil Roberts
3.23.  Physics of Blackness—Michelle Wright
4.13  Black Atlas—Judith Madera
4.18*  In the Wake: On Blackness and Being—Christina Sharpe
4.27  Poetics of Relation—Edouard Glissant

3.30  Spring Break
4.06  No Class—AAG
4.20  No Class—Tulsa *propose to meet on the 17th or 18th

Assignments

In order to test this course’s proffered theses, class members are asked through discussion and assignments to reflect on course themes and accompanying readings through the concrete or tentative questions of their research. In addition to rigorous weekly class discussions (40%), two formal assignments make up class assessment: weekly ‘QAQCs’ (30%) and final short 10 page essay (30%), due May 11 at 3 pm by email. In order to aid stimulating and critical reading and discussion each student will submit one QAQC each week. QAQCs are tools for discussion and resources for future review and should be done with care. Each QAQC should be around 1 page comprised of the following items:

1. **Quotation**: Quote a sentence from the text that you think is central to the author’s implicit or explicit argument.
2. **Argument**: In five or six sentences, state the author’s argument. Be sure to include both what the author is arguing for and arguing against.
3. **Question**: Raise a question you think is not fully, or satisfactorily, answered by the text. The question should not simply be a question of fact.
4. **Connection**: Connect the argument of this text to an argument or point you find in another reading from your research. Present a quote from the other text (citing it properly), and explain how the primary text’s argument with the other text’s argument or point.
Further Reading—Black Geographies Reading List - compiled by LaToya Eaves PhD, contributions by Black Geographies speciality group


Alderman, Derek H. “Street Names as Memorial Arenas: The Reputational Politics of Commemorating Martin Luther King Jr. in a Georgia County.” *Historical Geography* 20 (2002): 99–120.


Davis, Angela Y. *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Gertrude Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2011.


