



UIC

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Faculty in the
News..... p. 3

Classroom Happenings
..... p. 4

Faculty Spotlight: Helen
Jun p. 4

Spring 2018 Course
Offerings.....
p. 6

Department
Life..... p. 7



FACULTY IN THE NEWS

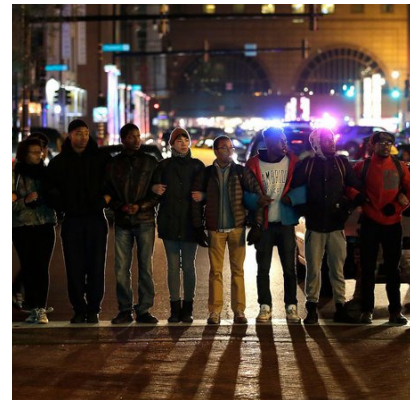
New York Times Features Op-Ed by Professor Barbara Ransby



Sunday's New York Times featured an op-ed by Barbara Ransby, UIC distinguished professor of African American studies, gender and women's studies, and history,

on the organization and leadership of The Movement for Black Lives.

Ransby, who is also director of the Social Justice Initiative at UIC, writes that the group's model is an example of democracy in action as local organizers are better able to address the top issues impacting their communities rather than having social justice priorities handed down by one national figure.



[Click here to read Ransby's article](#)

Andy Clarno Interviewed on the Hidden Sides of Apartheid



In a segment for Under the Olive Tree, Associate Professor Andy Clarno is

interviewed about a recent article he has written with Dr. Haidar Eid in which they argue that when it comes to economic structures and wealth/land distribution, Apartheid is still well-alive in South Africa.

Clarno's book, *Neoliberal Apartheid*, analyzes the

political, economic, and social changes in South Africa and Palestine/Israel since 1994.

[Click here to hear Clarno's interview.](#)

CLASSROOM HAPPENINGS

Associate Professor Johari Jabir Takes Class on Field Trip to Quinn Chapel AME Church



Professor Johari Jabir shares with us photographs and a description of the field trip he took with his African American Religious Traditions class (AAST 125)

Last month the AAST 125 class toured the entire church structure, which was erected by newly freed African Americans in 1891. Students learned that the earliest congregants of the church had established themselves in Chicago 1841, years before the Civil War. These early parishioners were connected to the Underground Railroad. Quinn is part of the nation's first

black denomination, the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The pastor explained several aspects of the church that were part of an original structure and architecture, such as the curve shaped pews, and even a small pipe organ that the church purchased during the Colombia Exposition here in Chicago. Several notable figures in African American studies spoke from the pulpit at Quinn Chapel, such as Booker T.



Washington, Frederick Douglass, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

To learn more about AAST 125 [click here](#)

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR HELEN JUN



As the new associate head for African American Studies, Associate Professor Helen Jun speaks about her new initiatives for major and minors in the department.

AAST: How long have you been at UIC, and in what departments have you worked?

Helen Jun: I moved from California in 2003 and I've been at UIC for 14 years, teaching for the Departments of African American Studies and English. As an undergrad student, I was an Ethnic Studies and English double major at UC Berkeley and I received my Ph.D. in Literature at UC San Diego. I was born and raised in California and I was ready for something else -- being at UIC and working and living in Chicago has been a great experience.

AAST: As the new associate head for the African American Studies department, what do you strive to do within the department?

HJ: I'd like to initiate some short-term and long-term programs to support our undergraduate students. I think the current political moment has made it more important than ever that students feel connected to each other and to the department. We are pursuing ideas for off campus field

trips, student-led programming for speakers and events (like open mic nights), as well as more simple things like sponsoring AAST "study hall" hours so that students have a comfortable place to sit, study, and read between classes. At a commuter campus, it can be tough for students to feel anchored at UIC, however, I'm hoping that we can mobilize the urgency that many students are feeling to create new opportunities for connection and engagement.

AAST: You're holding open office hours for all majors and minors right? How can we expect them to be different from a regular advising session? And how often can students attend?

HJ: So yes, we have Open Office Hours every Thursday from 12:30-2:30 in 1250 University Hall (the AAST conference room).

I want students to know that there's always a faculty person in the department that's here for them on a weekly basis to talk

about anything they want -- questions about grad school, if they want to talk about something that happened in a class, a summer reading list, whatever. In fact, even if students don't want to talk to me at all but just want a welcoming space where they can sit and relax and read between classes -- they can come to 1250 UH on Thursday afternoons. We will look into expanding these hours across more days, so stay tuned.

To continue reading this spotlight, click [here](#)

SPRING 2018 COURSES

AAST 101: INTRODUCTION TO AFRICA AND ITS DIASPORAS



Introduction to African Diaspora Studies examines the historical and contemporary, forced and voluntary, migrations of peoples out of the continent of Africa from the 15th-century to the present; the complex histories and experiences of identity formation and transformation; the cultural, religious and creative possibilities that have flowed from these movements. This course will provide the background to this subject area from diverse perspectives, introducing students to a range of key debates in the field, while paying particular attention to questions of resistance.



Instructor:
Lynette Jackson
Associate Professor of
African American Studies
& Gender & Women's
Studies

AAST 262: BLACK CULTURAL STUDIES



Introduction to approaches, methods, and key debates in the study of black culture in a transnational and diasporic context.



Instructor:
Lori Baptista
Director, African
American Cultural Center

AAST 407: SEMINAR IN COMPARATIVE RACIALIZATION



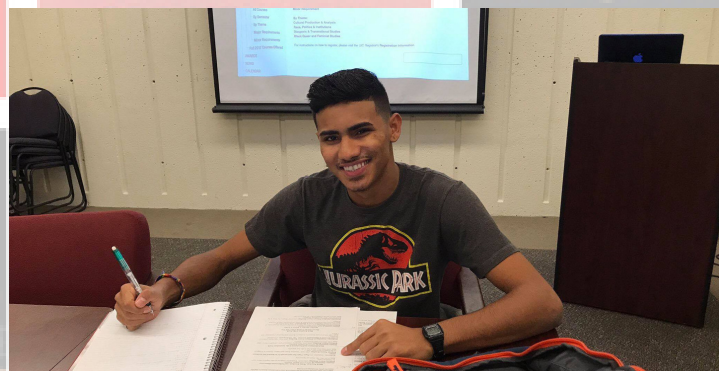
This course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to explore racial formation from a global, transnational, and comparative perspective. Moving beyond an exclusive focus on race in the United States, we examine historical and contemporary processes of racial formation in contexts such as Latin America, South Africa, Europe, Palestine/Israel, Canada, Australia, and the Caribbean. In doing so, we discuss topics such as colonization and empire, slavery and genocide, settler colonialism and racial capitalism, gender and sexuality, national liberation and post-colonialism, and war and policing.



Instructor:
Andy Clarno
Assistant Professor of
African American Studies
& Sociology

**WANT TO SEE ALL OF OUR COURSE LISTINGS?
CLICK HERE**

DEPARTMENT LIFE



Fall Mixer

Our Fall Mixer on October 12th brought numerous students to the department! They even got to enjoy some pizza with us!



Roderick Ferguson's ASA Reception



Roderick Ferguson, Jennie Brier, and Jane Rhodes attended Ferguson's American Studies Association reception on Saturday November 11th

Departmental Events

This past month our department sponsored three events. On October 18th there was a panel discussion on Police Violence Against Women, on the 24th a faculty conversation between Beth Richie and Andrea Ritchie (pictured left), and on November 9th a presentation by Stephen Ward.