The seminar will critically survey James Baldwin’s literary work and political essays, as well as review selected biographies that explore Baldwin’s life in the United States, France, and Turkey. Baldwin was engaged in the socio-political world that surrounded and sometimes consumed his artistic and moral energies that brought him to become active in the U.S. Civil Rights movement and international concern the construction of nation, race, and sexuality. One critic wrote of Baldwin in these words: “Following publication of Notes of a Native Son and The Fire Next Time, James Baldwin's literary star approached its peak during the turbulent 1960s. His burgeoning role as celebrity, prophet, and leader heaped an unsustainable amount of pressure and responsibility onto his slight frame in an American landscape that doubly punished Baldwin for being both black and gay, and he often turned to Turkey for sanctuary.” This seminar reveals the artistry, compassion, and moral commitment of one of America’s greatest writers.

I. REQUIRED TEXTS:


Note: Assigned and recommended texts and readings are held at the Reserve Desk on the second floor of Library West. Check the Reserve List for this course to see if any assigned essays or plays are available as PDF files on ARES (ELECTRONIC RESERVE) section on the Smathers Library Website. Look under Reid and this course’s section number.

II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1) Pop Quizzes on weekly readings as well as film(s) screened in the previous class 30 points
   (lpt - 3pts each)
2) Individual 5-minute oral presentation and 5-min Q&A. Instructor assigns each student their oral presentation of a required reading Due Weeks 3-11 20 points

The assigned reading will be graded on the following criteria:

A. The importance of the material presented to the class. Students must make brief references to primary scenes in a particular literary work (or film) to illustrate important issues as well as to support their argument.

B. The clarity of the written and oral work. Here, "clarity" refers to smooth oral delivery, correct use of descriptive terminology and grammar.

C. The student’s ability to pose important questions to the class during their oral presentation. Students must introduce the argument/thesis of their oral presentation based on their assigned section.

3) 1-page outline Each Student is responsible for a typed outline of their 5-minute discussion. Due on the day when the student presents her/his 5-minute discussion 10 points

4) MIDTERM EXAM 60MINS WEDNESDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 20 points
5) Individual Groups 1 - 8 PAPER & PRESENTATIONS 20 points

The 4-5-page INDIVIDUAL STUDENT PAPERS cover each student’s assigned presentation. Each group member is responsible to submit a 4-5 page critical paper (lOpts) and an additional 2-page endnotes and annotated bibliography (lOpts) for their paper. This will be compiled into one group paper. **THERE IS NO GROUP GRADE.** You will have several opportunities to pose questions when I meet with each group on Week 12 in my 4318 Turlington Hall office.

III. ATTENDANCE

The only excusable absence is one that results from an illness that is documented by a written and signed physician report. Two non-excused absences lower the student’s cumulative grade by minus 10 points, Three non-excused absences give the student an E, a failing grade for the course.

IV. LATE WORK

All written work and oral presentations are due during the class period. Students receive minus 2 points for EACH DAY (INCLUDING WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS) when any assignment is late. **NOTE:** A medical excuse will not be accepted to explain the late delivery of any written assignment or film/video project.

V. GRADING SCALE

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100.00-90.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>89.99-87.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>86.99-84.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83.99-80.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>79.99-77.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>76.99-74.00</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>49.99-40.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
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The grading scale reflects the percentage range for each letter grade. This scale is used to determine the final grade for the course.
REID AML4685: THE WORLD OF JAMES BALDWIN

C 73.99-70.00 29.59-28.00 14.79-14.00 07.39-07.00 1.47-1.40
C- 69.99-67.00 29.59-26.80 13.99-13.40 06.99-06.70 1.39-1.34
D+ 66.99-64.00 27.99-25.60 13.39-12.80 06.69-06.40 1.28-1.27
D 63.99-60.00 25.59-24.00 12.79-12.00 06.39-06.00 1.20-1.19
E 56.00 22.79-00.00 11.39-00.00 05.69-00.00 1.00-0.00

Cumulative student paper, presentation, ten-plus journal entries/quizzes

VI. Course Outline and Readings:

READINGS LISTED ON A PARTICULAR DAY SHOULD BE READ BEFORE THAT CLASS MEETS. POP QUIZZES WILL COVER THESE ASSIGNED READINGS AS WELL AS ANY FILMS SCREENED IN THE LAST CLASS.*

Readings are held on RESERVE IN LIBRARY WEST AT CHECK OUT DESK OR ON ARES E-RESERVE

WK1 COURSE INTRODUCTION
JAN 06 W — SCREEN:

WK2 Early Writings From Paris I

WK3 Early Writings From Paris II

WK4 PURSUIT OF HETERONORMATIVE MIDDLE-CLASS RESPECTABILITY
JAN 27 W— READ: Baldwin, Giovanni’s Room (1956).

WK5 THE NORTHERN GHETTO: HARLEM

WK6 RACE, SEGREGATION AND THE SOUTH I: HANDS UP: DON’T SHOOT

WK7 RACE, SEGREGATION AND THE SOUTH II

WK8 MIDTERM EXAM 60MINS (20PTS) RACE, SEGREGATION AND THE SOUTH III

WK9 02 FEBRUARY - 06 MARCH SPRING BREAK

WK10 SCREENING: RACE, SEGREGATION AND THE SOUTH IV
MAR 09 W — READ: Baldwin, Collected Essays, No Name in the Street. p.353-“Take Me to the Water”, p.204-“To Be Baptized”, p.475-“Epilogue: Who Has Believed Our Report?”
VIEW: Stanley Nelson dir. FREEDOM RIDERS (120m)

WK11 BALDWIN ON FLUIDITY, CHANGE, AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL SEXUALITY

WK12 IN SEARCH OF BALDWIN: FLUIDITY, CHANGE, AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL SEXUALITY
MAR 23 W — READ: Shay Youngblood, Black Girl in Paris
Instructor-student-group meetings by appointment in 1318 TUR (12pm-3:50pm)

WK13 GROUPS MEET WITH MEMBERS TO ORGANIZE THEIR PAPERS,
MAR 30 W-
APR 6 W-
WK 14 27 NOVEMBER - THANKSGIVING BREAK
WK 15 APR 13 W— PAPER DISCUSSION & PRESENTATIONS

FINAL CLASS