

WRITING ASSIGNMENT on Du Bois (worth 15% of final grade)

DUE TUESDAY , February 14 [by class time—.2 points taken off if any time later the same day]

Lateness policy: .3 taken off if turned in by Thursday Feb 16 {if you turn it in that day or the day before, do so electronically—I will be out of town}; 1.0 if Tuesday, February 21; 2.0 off if up to 2 weeks late; 3.0 off if up to 3 weeks; etc. (This is on a 4-point scale, the one used by UMB in its grading system.)

Write a 3-4 page essay (800-1200 words) on the following topic, *answering every question within the topic in the context of an overall coherent essay*. PLEASE READ AND FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS VERY CAREFULLY!!!!

In his essay, "Of Our Spiritual Strivings," chapter 1 of Souls of Black Folk, Du Bois makes the following statement:

"The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife—this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self." In this paragraph and the one before it, Du Bois addresses what he sees as the problem of "double consciousness."

In your essay, I would like you to do *all* of the following ((a), (b), and (c)):

(a) Explain what Du Bois means by *double consciousness*, keeping in mind that he might mean more than one thing by it. Be sure to explain how he sees this double consciousness as a problem for black Americans ("Negroes") specifically.

(b) In chapter 3, "On Booker T. Washington and Others," Du Bois criticizes Booker T. Washington and his program for black people; that program was the most influential view of what was good for black people at the period Du Bois wrote (1903). Briefly explain Du Bois's criticisms of Washington.

I would like you to cite the page and paragraph number of where you are getting the particular point that you are making from chapters 3. If you are using an edition other than the one that most students in the class got from the bookstore, count the paragraph number from the beginning of the chapter and omit the page number (since I will not have that edition to check the pages). It is important for you to give these citations so I can check the accuracy of the point you are attributing to Du Bois.

(c) Discuss how you think Du Bois saw his criticisms of Washington as connected to the problem of double consciousness, and to what Du Bois saw as a "solution" to it.

In answering these questions, you may also draw on the discussion in chapter 14: "On the Sorrow Songs;" but this is not necessary.

In your essay, I would very much like you to *use your own words* and to avoid quoting directly from Du Bois. You may feel that Du Bois can express these ideas better than you can, but it is your learning that I am interested in. Unless you can explain his thoughts in your own words, you have not really or fully understood them. One thing you *may* do, however (although I am not encouraging this), is that if you feel you really want to include a particular quote, give the quote (with its page number) but then *explain what this quote is saying*, and how what it is saying fits in with the overall point or explanation you are giving.

I am assuming you will *not* be using other, external sources for this paper besides Du Bois. But if you do, you will need to follow a standard system of reference and bibliography, which I can give you if you let me know you are doing this.