

# Diversity and Inclusion Report

## History Program

The field of History offers a rich palette for Northeastern's efforts in support of racial and social justice. These themes and content areas are strongly woven throughout the curriculum. Professor Gretchen Heefner's *Introduction to US History*, for example, explicitly emphasizes the inequalities and racial divisions at the center of the American project. A module on "Slavery & Freedom" explores the system of racialized slavery that led to Civil War, the violent white responses to Reconstruction, and the long tentacles of discrimination that have continued to course through federal and state policies. At the end of the module students use the work of Ta-Nahesi Coates in order to explore recent debates around reparations.

A number of History courses deal with race in the context of histories of empire, colonialism, and their legacies. Professor Robert Cross's course *Europe—Empires, Revolutions* covers Caribbean and Indian Ocean slavery, the antislavery movement in Britain, settler colonialism and structural racism in French Algeria, among many other topics related to race and anti-racism. Professor Heather Streets-Salter's *Origins of Today*, a course that focuses on four contemporary issues and traces their deep historical roots, has a module on race as one its modules, meaning that students focus on the specific history of race for a quarter of the semester. Decolonization and the history of racial repression with which it was intimately connected, similarly, take up about a third of Professor Katherine Luongo's *The World since 1945*.

Race and racial justice are increasingly integrated into the department's initiatives in the areas of digital and public history. In teaching students to use cutting edge technologies like virtual reality to reconstruct historical spaces related to themes of gender, women, and science, Dr. Jessica Linker emphasizes the previously-neglected history of non-white actors. Her History 1200 Seminar course examines competing European and Native American notions of nature and gender/racial constructions of the Linnaean system. Readings also expose students to Sarah Mapps Douglass, a 19th century African-American educator; to multiracial spaces at female academies, colleges, and medical schools in the 19th Century such as the New England Medical College, and the Pennsylvania Female Medical College; and to the history of some of the earliest black women doctors. Students in her courses explore what it was like to navigate both race and gender, and the privilege of middle-class whiteness. Students learn not only about how non-white, female actors could practice science, but also about how race and gender shaped science as well. Angel Nieves, Northeastern's Director of Public Humanities and Director of Public History in the History Department, uses virtual technology to reconstruct racialized spaces in Apartheid South Africa, bringing new light to the history of racial injustice in South Africa and the fight against it.

Strongly committed to diversity and inclusion in its hiring, History is closely involved this year in Northeastern's faculty searches in race and racial justice and Africana Studies. The department is also engaged in a reform to its curriculum that will see non-Western regions of the world more strongly integrated into majors' course of study. This change will be accompanied by a re-molding of the department's 2000-level seminar into a course employing public and digital history approaches around themes of race and racial justice. Moving forward, the department of History is committed to working to strengthen racial and social justice at all levels of its research, teaching, and hiring.