

# BASIC PROGRAM of LIBERAL EDUCATION for ADULTS

## Summer Quarter 2024

### James Baldwin

INSTRUCTOR	DATES AND TIMES	LOCATION
Paul Cato	COURSE LENGTH: 8 Weeks DATES: June 11-July 30	Remote Course
EMAIL: <a href="mailto:pcato@uchicago.edu">pcato@uchicago.edu</a>  Instructor can be contacted through Canvas message	DAY OF THE WEEK: Tuesday  TIMES: 6:00-9:15 PM CST	COURSE CODE and SECTION: BASC70239 24U1  PREREQUISITES: None

Remote courses require you to login to Canvas to access the Zoom Classroom. **You will receive an invitation to join Canvas about a week before your course begins.** Please visit <https://grahamschool.uchicago.edu/academic-programs/online/learning-resources/liberal-arts> to find Canvas login instructions, Zoom instructions, and student training sessions.

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this survey of American author James Baldwin, we will look critically at the relationship between Baldwin's corpus and the various roles Baldwin adopted, was assigned, or was posthumously given. We will pay special attention to his work as a novelist, a "prophet," and a social "witness." Throughout the course, we will explore Baldwin's lifelong conflict as to whether he was a "Negro writer," an "American writer," or a category-less artist. After beginning with Baldwin's 1950s fiction, we will move on to his 1960s and 1970s social commentary and nonfiction essays and finish with his various filmed interviews and conversations. Potential interviewers and conversation partners include William F. Buckley Jr., Maya Angelou, and Paul Weiss. The last week of the class will consist of a discussion of a contemporary reinterpretation of Baldwin's work to be selected by the class. Potential artists include authors Jesmyn Ward and Ta Nehisi Coates and filmmakers Barry Jenkins and Raoul Peck.

#### REQUIRED TEXTS

- **Baldwin**, James. *Collected Essays*. Library Of America, 1998. 978-1-88301152-9
- **Baldwin**, James. *Early Novels & Stories*. Library Of America, 1998. 978-1-88301151-2

Students can purchase books at the Gleacher Center Bookstore online at <https://chicagobooth.bncollege.com/shop/chicagobooth/page/find-textbooks> using the Textbook order form, or by using the ISBN number to order the correct edition elsewhere.

# WEEKLY READING SCHEDULE

DAY	READING ASSIGNMENT
WEEK 1 June 11	<p><b>Introduction: James Baldwin – American Witness</b></p> <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• READ: <b>Baldwin</b>, Assorted Essays &amp; Interviews*               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “The Price of the Ticket” (1985)</li> <li>○ “Conversation: Ida Lewis and James Baldwin” (1970)</li> <li>○ “James Baldwin – Reflections of a Maverick” – Julius Lester (1984)</li> <li>○ “An Interview with James Baldwin” – David C. Estes (1986)</li> <li>○ “Last Testament: An Interview with James Baldwin” / “James Baldwin, 1924-1987: A Tribute – The Last Interview” – Quincy Troupe (1986; 1988)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• WATCH: <b>Thorsen</b>, Karen. <i>James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket</i> *</li> </ul>
WEEK 2 June 18	<p><b>“Your entire frame of reference will have to change” – Prophecy as Social Critique</b></p> <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• READ: <b>Baldwin</b>, James. <i>Collected Essays – The Fire Next Time</i></li> <li>• READ: <b>Shulman</b>, George. <i>American Prophecy</i>, Ch. 4*</li> </ul>
WEEK 3 June 25	<p><b>“More like a fire, like the wind” – Baldwin’s Religion of Love</b></p> <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• READ: <b>Baldwin</b>, James. <i>Early Novels &amp; Stories – Go Tell It on the Mountain</i></li> <li>• READ: <b>Baldwin</b>, James. “Interview with James Mossman” *</li> </ul>
WEEK 4 July 2	<p><b>“The Cage of Reality Bequeathed to Us at Birth” – Baldwinian Testimony</b></p> <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• READ: <b>Baldwin</b>, James. <i>Collected Essays – Notes of a Native Son</i></li> </ul>
WEEK 5 July 9	<p><b>“Perhaps home is not a place but simply an irrevocable condition.” – Love as a Search for Home</b></p> <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• READ: <b>Baldwin</b>, James. <i>Early Novels &amp; Stories – Giovanni’s Room</i></li> </ul>
WEEK 6 July 16	<p><b>“The Speediest Demolition of This History” – History as Social Critique</b></p> <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• READ: <b>Baldwin</b>, James. <i>Collected Essays – No Name in the Street</i></li> </ul>
WEEK 7 July 23	<p><b>“I cannot live without you, and you cannot live without me” – Dialogues with the Sisters.</b></p> <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WATCH: <b>Giovanni</b>, Nikki &amp; James <b>Baldwin</b>, <i>A Dialogue</i> [Video] *</li> <li>• READ: <b>Lorde</b>, Audre &amp; James <b>Baldwin</b>, “Revolutionary Hope”</li> <li>• WATCH: <b>Angelou</b>, Maya &amp; James <b>Baldwin</b>, <i>Conversation with a Native Son</i> [Video] *</li> </ul>
WEEK 8 July 30	<p><b>Jimmy’s Progeny</b></p> <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLASS CHOICE:</li> </ul>

# WEEKLY READING SCHEDULE

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ READ: <b>Ward</b>, Jesmyn, ed. <i>The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks About Race</i> [Excerpts]*</li><li>○ READ: <b>Coates</b>, Ta Nehisi. <i>Between the World and Me</i> [Excerpts]*</li><li>○ WATCH: <b>Jenkins</b>, Barry. <i>Moonlight</i> [In-Class Viewing]</li><li>○ WATCH: <b>Peck</b>, Raoul. <i>I Am Not Your Negro</i> [In-Class Viewing]</li></ul>
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Students will receive an invitation to join the Graham School Student Community Canvas Site, a place to read announcements, have discussions, ask questions, and find resources.

## DISABILITY INFORMATION

Student Disability Services (SDS) works to provide resources, support and accommodations for all students with disabilities and works to remove physical and attitudinal barriers, which may prevent their full participation in the University community. Students that would like to request accommodations should contact SDS in advance of the first class meeting at 773.702.6000 or [disabilities@uchicago.edu](mailto:disabilities@uchicago.edu).