



TELLURIDE ASSOCIATION

# TASS

TELLURIDE ASSOCIATION SOPHOMORE SEMINARS

Preparing students for a life of service through an education in critical Black and ethnic studies, self-governance, and community living.

**JUNE 24-AUGUST 4, 2018**

**CORNELL UNIVERSITY**

Ithaca, New York

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**

Ann Arbor, Michigan



[tass.tellurideassociation.org](http://tass.tellurideassociation.org)

A FREE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORES





## TELLURIDE ASSOCIATION

Since 1911, Telluride Association has been committed to fostering the ideals of self-government, public service, and intellectual development by providing scholarships to young people to attend its innovative programs.

The Telluride Association Sophomore Seminar (TASS) has been a project of Telluride Association since 1993. Other programs include the Telluride Association Summer Programs (TASP), a six-week summer program for high school juniors, and a residential scholarship program for full-time students at Cornell University and the University of Michigan.

Funding support for the Telluride Association's Sophomore Seminar is provided by the **Jack Kent Cooke Foundation ([www.jkcf.org](http://www.jkcf.org))**.

The 2018 programs are made possible in part by the bequest of Frank Monaghan in honor of Elmer M. "Johnny" Johnson and George Lincoln Burr. Johnny Johnson joined Telluride Association in 1915 and later served as chancellor of Telluride Association from 1930 to 1960. George Burr was a Cornell librarian from 1890 to 1922 and variously a Cornell professor of ancient, medieval, and modern history. He lived at Telluride House as a faculty fellow from 1915 to 1938.

For more information, write to [telluride@tellurideassociation.org](mailto:telluride@tellurideassociation.org) or visit:

[tellurideassociation.org](http://tellurideassociation.org)

## WHAT IS TASS?

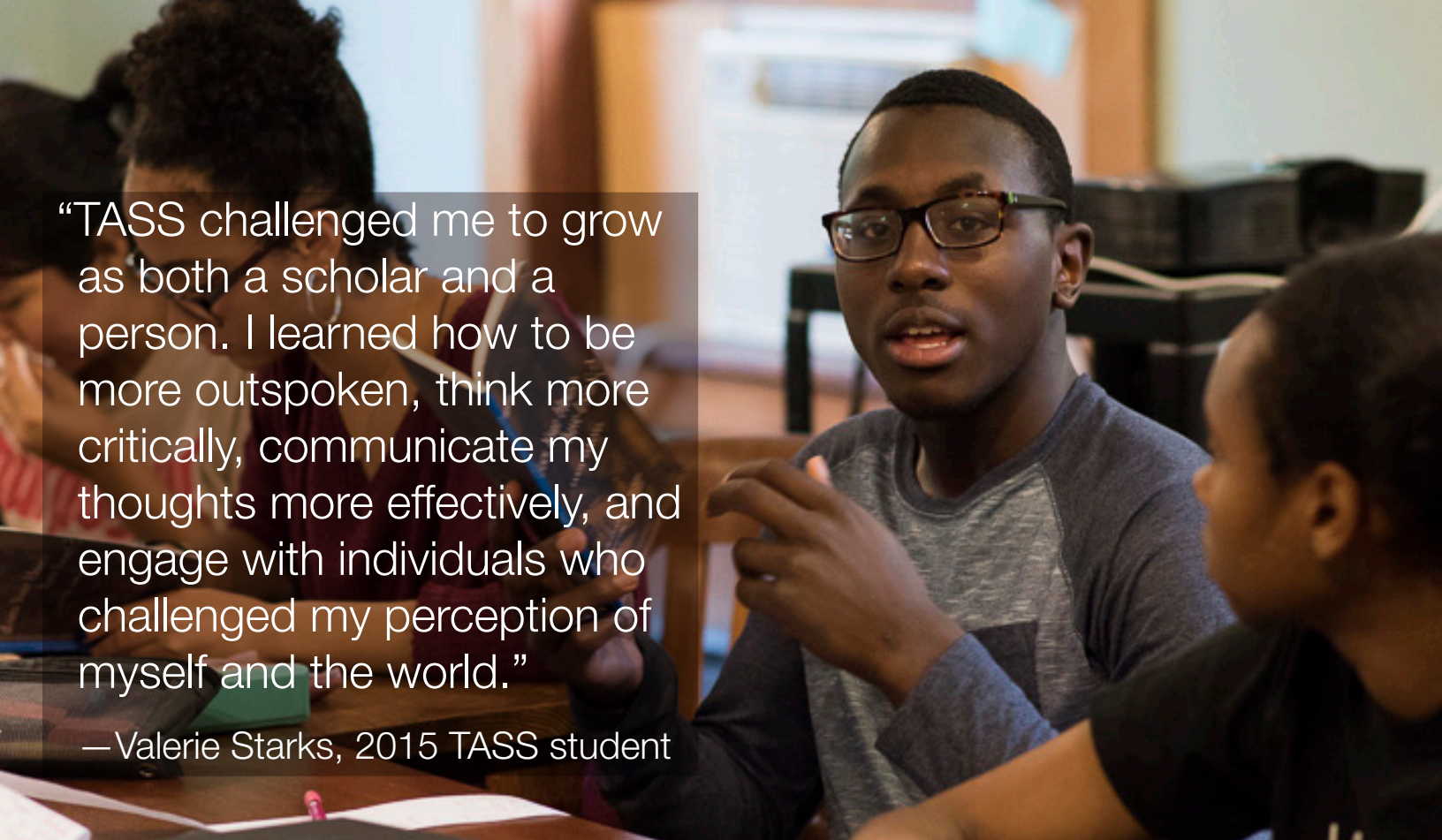
The Telluride Association Sophomore Seminar is a challenging six-week summer program organized around self-governance and a college-level seminar on critical Black and ethnic studies. Throughout the summer, students attend seminar every weekday led by two university professors and critically study the histories and cultural experiences of people of African descent and other topics that address diversity in society. TASS seminars emphasize group discussion rather than lectures. Seminar discussion and essay writing allow the faculty and students to engage the material in detail and to form a close community of scholars that helps inform community self-governance. Throughout the program, students receive written and oral feedback from faculty to help them develop their writing and critical-thinking skills. Students emerge from the academic experience of TASS understanding the demands of collegiate writing and having received one-on-one direction from experienced scholars.

During TASS, students (TASSers) are responsible for organizing most of their out-of-classroom time through weekly community meetings and smaller student committees. Self-governance is an essential part of the TASS experience that gives students practical experience planning and cooperating with their peers in a self-defined community. Students plan a variety of activities including group-wide discussions, field trips, community service projects, music and theatre events, reading groups, and excursions to state parks and art museums. TASSers are encouraged to take advantage of the events and resources of the campus community at our partner institutions. In the past, TASSers have attended university events including a Trayvon Martin vigil and community talk back, a Cornell summer concert series, a poetry slam, and a salsa dance class. Participants also share responsibility for keeping their social and living environments clean and safe.

All TASSers also practice delivering speeches (PubSpeaks) during the program. Each student will have a chance to present on a topic of personal interest and the factotums (two college students who supervise and support each TASS seminar) provide direction and feedback to students to help them discover new strategies for organizing speeches and developing their public speaking style. PubSpeaks encourages community discussion and introduces students to the process of independent research. Throughout the program, students also attend a series of guest lectures. These events allow students to learn about a range of ideas and academic disciplines, encouraging them to develop broad interests.







“TASS challenged me to grow as both a scholar and a person. I learned how to be more outspoken, think more critically, communicate my thoughts more effectively, and engage with individuals who challenged my perception of myself and the world.”

—Valerie Starks, 2015 TASS student

## WHO TEACHES TASS?

Each TASS seminar is led by a team of two university scholars who are selected for the distinction of their scholarship and the excellence of their teaching. TASS faculty are enthusiastic about the program and the opportunity it gives them to work with talented young scholars, and many past faculty rank TASS as one of the most rewarding teaching experiences of their careers.

## WHAT DO TASSERS DO AFTER THE SUMMER?

Some TASSers attend TASP, the Telluride program for high school juniors, in the summer following their TASS experience. Many also apply for the full room-and-board scholarships at our residential houses at Cornell and the University of Michigan, where they explore the unique educational opportunities Telluride offers while pursuing studies on campus.

Other TASSers go on to attend fine schools like Indiana, Syracuse, Stanford, Spelman, Purdue, and Harvard. Many TASS alumni remember the summer they spent at TASS as a transformational time, with a lasting impact through their college and professional lives.

## WHO FACILITATES TASS?

The students at each TASS are supervised and supported by two student factotums. The factotums live with the students and attend seminar and other TASS activities. They serve as counselors, administrators, and teaching assistants. They are available to help students in every way possible. The factotums also present and enforce the rules and Telluride Association program policies throughout the summer. For more information:

[tellurideassociation.org/tass\\_faq](http://tellurideassociation.org/tass_faq)

## WHAT WILL I GET OUT OF TASS?

At TASS, you will develop skills that will help you thrive in a college-level environment and live a life of service. You will improve your reading, writing, speaking, and critical thinking as you explore your interests in and out of the seminar. Living in a small community, you will learn to negotiate with others and develop leadership skills. TASSers do not receive grades or college credit. Instead, they attend TASS because it is a unique opportunity to live in a small self-governing community dedicated to exploring in-depth topics in critical Black and ethnic studies.

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## TASS IS COMPLETELY FREE!

We believe so strongly in the value of the TASS experience that we cover all the program costs—tuition, books, room and board, and field trips—in order to eliminate all financial barriers for you to participate. If needed, we can also help pay for all of your travel costs to and from the program. We recognize that you may be expected to work a job, take care of younger siblings, and shoulder all sorts of other responsibilities over the summer to help your family. We can cover up to \$1,500 of these expenses, too! Thanks to the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, we have more funding than ever before to make attending TASS financially possible for everyone. We want the brightest minds at TASS and we won't let finances be a barrier for you this summer.

# THE 2018 SEMINARS

## Cornell I TASS

### Mediated Lives: Performing Identity in Contemporary Media

**Karen Jaime**

Cornell University

**Samantha Sheppard**

Cornell University

In this course we will critically examine the performance and production of race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, and gender in, by, and through media broadly defined. Examining different forms of mediated representation including but not limited to: television shows (scripted and reality programming), digital media (web series, games, gifs, and memes), staged recordings (spoken word and music videos), film (fiction and nonfiction), and social media (Facebook, Instagram, and SnapChat amongst others), we seek to provide students with the tools necessary to critically unpack what it means to perform the self in contemporary U.S. popular culture. Among the questions we will consider to theorize identity with, by, and through representation: What are the racial, social, and class politics in self-fashioning one's online presence? How do film and television construct and deconstruct persons and personas? How do the ways in which we see the world around us often challenge and contradict the myriad of images that we are constantly presented with?



Cornell University is located in Ithaca, a small city in upstate New York. Cornell combines a strong liberal arts tradition with a commitment to research in the sciences, enabling it to sponsor an unusually broad range of academic endeavors. Set on a hillside overlooking Cayuga Lake and surrounded by breathtaking gorges, Cornell and the Ithaca area provide a stimulating setting for both intellectual life and outdoor recreation.

For more information and to apply online:  
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## Cornell II TASS

### Shades of Blackness: Exploring Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the African Diaspora through Performance, Film, Music, and Art

**Marlon M. Bailey**

Arizona State University

**John Thabiti Willis**

Carleton College

What does it mean to be Black in Brazil? Iran? How is blackness lived in Ghana or in Ferguson, MO or Detroit, MI? How can we think about the complexities and diversity among black communities throughout the globe, particularly in the age of both Barack Obama, the first Black U.S. president, and Donald Trump's presidency, which has given prominence and power to white Christian nationalist, hetero-patriarchal perspectives? Thus, in this class we will study the complexities of black embodiment, experience, discourse, politics, and culture. This course is designed to introduce students to global blackness (what it means to live a black identity and experience throughout the world) primarily through forms of cultural production such as history, literature, material culture (adornment, artifacts, body art), theatre/performance, music, and film. The materials and our discussions will engage fields of inquiry such as politics, history, literature, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, and performance. We will examine global blackness while attending to histories of migration among communities in Africa, North and South America, Europe, the Middle East, and the Caribbean. Some of the categories of social life that we will explore/examine include the politics of culture, race, class, gender, sexuality, and religion. Throughout this course we will read, analyze, and discuss both fiction and non-fictional text; screen films/videos, take field trips/excursions to museums and to theatre productions, and host guest lectures. In general, we hope this course will inspire and prepare students to think about blackness in a global context and gain a greater understanding of how interconnected the world is and how they can act to foster a more equitable and just world for all of humanity.



## Michigan I TASS

### The Cultural Politics of Race in Media and Literature

**Shazia Iftkhar**

University of Michigan

**Aliyah Khan**

University of Michigan

This interdisciplinary course explores narrative representations of marginalized groups in mass media and literature. We consider questions of race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, focusing on themes of identity, cultural politics, and social justice. The course examines the ways in which stories about differences are told and how racial issues are debated in and across U.S. society. We study the role of self-representation in the changing conventions of representations of marginalized groups and in interventions into sociopolitical national debates. The course incorporates a framework of identity, difference, migration, and diaspora to study racialized experiences within U.S. borders as well as across them, articulating the local to the global. We combine cultural studies and critical literary approaches to examine a range of textual forms, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, film, television, and music, focusing mainly on U.S. texts while including narratives of immigration and transnationalism.

Learning goals for students include a vocabulary for discussing racial politics and for addressing racism and prejudice; an understanding of the ways in which media and literature influence cultural and racial politics; a study of the lived experiences of members of marginalized groups and of narratives around citizenship and identity, through both media and literary texts; and an understanding of the roles that the form and style of a text play in transmitting and questioning ideas and ideologies.

## Michigan II TASS

### African American Mobility and Travel Abroad: From Paul Cuffee to Ta-Nehisi Coates

**Sharika Crawford**

United States Naval Academy

**Derek Handley**

Carnegie Mellon University

This course is an interdisciplinary approach in studying the history and rhetorical strategies employed by African American travelers abroad from the nineteenth to twentieth-first centuries. By examining a plethora of original sources—essays, letters, memoirs, novels, and poems—TASS students develop the answers to the following interrelated questions: What has travel and, specifically, travel abroad meant to African Americans at different historic moments? What has American identity meant to these travelers? To what degree has international travel served as a strategy to attain freedom, upward mobility, and human dignity?



The University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, a college town an hour's drive from Detroit, is home to the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies, one of the most renowned departments of its kind in the country. With a rich history of promoting diversity, and as many as 700 active student groups, Ann Arbor provides a vibrant setting enriched with cultural events and activities.



## HOW TO APPLY

We accept applications at [tass.tellurideassociation.org](http://tass.tellurideassociation.org).

You can also request an application by mail or download it from our website and mail it to:

### Administrative Director

Telluride Association  
217 West Avenue  
Ithaca, NY 14850

High school sophomores are invited to apply to TASS. African American high school sophomores, high school sophomores from other historical minorities, as well as high school sophomores with an interest in critical Black and ethnic studies and related fields are especially encouraged to apply. You need not have prior academic experience in this field.

The application requires essay responses because we want to learn more about your personal and academic interests and abilities. With a large sample of your best work, we will be able to make our decision based upon who you really are, not on just your grades. Applications must be submitted online or postmarked by **January 9, 2018**.

Students who are selected for interviews will be notified in early March. These students will be asked to submit a transcript, a recommendation form filled out by a teacher or counselor, and a paper written for class. Further instructions will be given with the notification. Applicants selected as finalists are interviewed in March and April. Final admissions decisions are made in late April. Please contact our office if you or your parents have any questions.

**For answers to common questions about the application and program:**  
[tellurideassociation.org/tass\\_faq](http://tellurideassociation.org/tass_faq)

**Further inquiries should be directed to:**  
[tass-queries@tellurideassociation.org](mailto:tass-queries@tellurideassociation.org) or 607.273.5011.



## TELLURIDE ASSOCIATION

Telluride Association does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or physical disability.

Telluride Association occasionally shares applicants' names and addresses with our partner institutions for the purpose of informing them of scholarship and other opportunities.

Applicants who plagiarize all or part of their application will have their application returned to them and will not be considered for admission into the program. Telluride Association and its officers may also, at its own discretion, contact the staff of these students' respective schools in order to notify them of any instance of plagiarism.

It is the policy of Telluride Association not to grant any special consideration, positive or negative, to students who apply to summer programs when those students have a parent or sibling who has participated in or been employed by a Telluride program. Immediate family members of TASS faculty are ineligible for the program.

