

*****Deadline Extended*****

****December 1, 2019****

**THE DEPARTMENT OF PAN-AFRICAN STUDIES
KENT STATE UNIVERSITY
FIFTH BIENNIAL
AFRICA AND THE GLOBAL ATLANTIC WORLD CONFERENCE
*“Leadership, Student Activism, and the Struggle for Democracy:
National and International Contexts”*
APRIL 9-10, 2020**

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Akinyele Umoja

The Department of Pan-African Studies at Kent State University will hold its fifth biennial Africa and the Global Atlantic World Conference (AGAWC) on April 9 and 10, 2020. The conference will focus on the leadership and activism of university/college students and the militarized violent responses they faced. The conference will occur at a time when the City of Kent and Kent State University will recognize and honor the lives of four students who were killed, and 9 students who were wounded, on Kent State’s campus during a student protest held on May 4, 1970. Situating the May 4th massacre within national and international contexts, we aim to capture the leadership and collective action of students during the late 1960s and early 1970s and how their increased activism have historically and currently pushed their nations toward change. Prior to the May 4th killings at Kent State, hundreds of students in Mexico City (1968) were gunned down at the hands of the military. Similarly, students were killed on other university campuses including Orangeburg (1968, now South Carolina State) and Jackson State (1970, Mississippi). In Quebec, Canada, students were jailed after the Sir George Williams uprising (1969); in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (1970) and the University of the West Indies, students formed the National Joint Action Committee (1969) and began a radical movement towards social change. Students were massacred in 1976, in Soweto, South Africa and in Gwang-ju, South Korea in 1980. Further student uprisings occurred in China’s Tiananmen Square in 1989, and, more recently, across Africa and the Middle East, in the "Arab" Spring of 2010/11.

Since the major gains of a global Civil Rights Movement have been increasingly challenged, weakened, or eroded by various political administrations and inefficient or ill-intended public policies, it is imperative to revisit the history and legacies of activism that led Peoples of African descent and other marginalized communities worldwide to stand against exploitation and state violence. Re-examining and safeguarding this history through the prism of student protests from the 1960s to the present will enable us to center the resistance of Peoples of African descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other Peoples of Color in national and international debates on civil rights, individual and communal liberties, freedom, equality, upward mobility, and other measurements of democracy.

The Keynote Speaker, **Dr. Akinyele Umoja**, is an educator, scholar-activist and author. Currently, he is a Professor of the Department of African-American Studies at Georgia State University (GSU). Dr. Umoja’s writing has been featured in scholarly publications including *The Journal of Black Studies*,

New Political Science, The International Journal of Africana Studies, Black Scholar, Radical History Review and Socialism and Democracy. He is the author of *We Will Shoot Back: Armed Resistance in The Mississippi Freedom Movement* (New York University Press, 2013).

The AGAWC is particularly interested in highlighting the lives of Peoples of African descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other Peoples of Color. Topics and themes of papers/artistic works include:

- National and international histories of Black activism
- Leadership and Black activism
- Past and current forms of militarized violence
- Activism and Black Lives Matter
- #webelonghere
- #sayhername
- Revisiting the May 4th Massacre
- Legacies of Black activism of university/college students
- Educators as activists
- Public policy and Black communities
- Police brutality
- The prison industrial complex
- Immigration policy
- Black bodies
- Black sexualities and gender identities
- Activism in Black communities
- Race, class, and gender
- Critical race theory and marginalized communities
- Activism in Black art, music, performance, and theatre
- 1960s and 1970s nationalist movements/activisms across Africa
- Political/social mobilization as strategies against state violence
- State violence and democratic decay
- Witness as testifying
- Peace and healing

We invite abstracts for papers, workshops, panels, roundtables, video and poetry performances, and other artistic forms that address any of the above goals and themes. Abstracts should not exceed 250 words. Abstracts should explain the topic, the content, and highlight key discussion points that advance the conference theme of increased activism from the 1960s to the present. *****Deadline extended: All abstracts are due by December 1, 2019. Please submit a 50-word biography with your abstract.**

For more information about the conference, please contact the Conference Committee electronically at pasconference@kent.edu.

Africa and the Global Atlantic World Conference Pre and Post Events

April 9: Ellipsis Institute for Women of Color in the Academy Conference

April 11: Pan-African Festival (12-7pm) ~ *Peace and Healing* Workshops and Vendors Marketplace