AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

The African American Studies major and minor offer a substantial interdisciplinary, comparative, and cross-cultural approach to the study of the experiences of people of African descent in the black Atlantic world, especially in the United States and the Caribbean. The major and minor, which feature courses in the humanities, social sciences, and the arts, enables students to apply, critique, and reimagine the methodologies and insights of many disciplines to their understanding of the cultural, historical, political, and social development of people of African descent. The curriculum enables students to better understand the social structures and cultural traditions created by Africans in the diaspora and to better understand Western conceptualizations of race, the relationship between issues of race and identity, and the histories and influences of people of African descent.

Students who graduate with a major in African American Studies go on to pursue advanced degrees and careers in fields such as law, medicine, literature, education, business, public policy, African American studies, and the sciences.

The intellectual work of the African American Studies Department is enriched further by the programming of the Center for African American Studies. The center’s offerings deepen classroom and campus wide conversations about contemporary and historic matters relating to African American Studies and to the African diaspora.

FACULTY

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Assistant Professor of African American Studies

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BA, University of Georgia Athens; MPHIL, Yale University; PHD, Yale University
Assistant Professor of African American Studies

Ashraf H.A. Rushdy
BA, University of Alberta; MA, University of Alberta; PHD, Cambridge University
Benjamin Waite Professor of the English Language; Professor of English; Professor of African American Studies; Professor, Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

AFFILIATED FACULTY

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Professor of English; Professor, African American Studies
From the point of view of the U.S. nation-state, education has always been a hegemonic means to control knowledge, to calibrate unequal forms of citizenship, and to promote the social reproduction of power. Yet as W.E.B. Du Bois wrote in 1903, ‘education among all kinds of men [sic] always has had, and always will have, an element of danger and revolution, of dissatisfaction and discontent. Nevertheless, men [sic] strive to know.’ Drawing inspiration from the 1964 Freedom School Curriculum and spanning from enslavement to emancipation to the long civil rights movement, this course explores how people of African descent in the United States, and black women in particular, have used education to empower themselves, produce social change, and redefine the terms under which change may occur.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM116F The Black Radical Tradition (or Black Radicalism) (FYS)
In a nation that was founded on the liberty of white men and women, and the enslavement of people of African descent, black radical action and movements have steered the history of struggles for freedom, citizenship, equal treatment, social and economic justice, and protection from the state. Figures such as Maria Stewart, Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Paul Robeson, and Angela Davis constitute part of a long tradition of black radicals. Even as the meaning of ‘radical’ has shifted historically, black radicals are joined by their visions of dismantling existing systems and institutions for a freer and more equitable society. Spanning the periods of black radical abolitionism, black nationalism, Black Power, and the Black Lives Matter movement, this course explores key radical thinkers, activists, and texts in historical perspective.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM114F What is Religion? Rastafari, Santeria, and other Afrocosmologies
This class will introduce you to the ways in which we study religion by reading critical case studies drawn from Africana religions in the Americas and beyond. How do Jamaican Rastafarians rely on a Christian Bible they see as oppressive, and yet also use it for liberation? Why has Oprah been called a ‘religion’? How is Haitian Vodou practiced in the United States? We will learn about the Black Church theology of Exodus and its ancient Israelite source, the biblical interpretations of Jamaican Rastafarians, the victory of Afro-Cuban Santeria to practice animal sacrifice as a freedom of religion in the Supreme Court, about Jim Jones and the multiracial Peoples Temple, and other case studies. This is not a survey of world religions, but a way of asking how the stuff we call religion has been shaped through colonial intervention, anti-blackness, scholarly collaboration, and legal expediency--and how it functions in relation to contemporary politics and popular culture.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: RELI151, AMST261
Prereq: None

AFAM111F Freedom School (FYS)
From the point of view of the U.S. nation-state, education has always been a hegemonic means to control knowledge, to calibrate unequal forms of
the multiracial Peoples Temple, and other case studies. This is not a survey of world religions, but a way of asking how the stuff we call religion has been shaped through colonial intervention, anti-blackness, scholarly collaboration, and legal expediency—and how it functions in relation to contemporary politics and popular culture.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: RELI151F
Prereq: None

AFAM152F Staging America: Modern American Drama (FYS)
Can modern American drama—as cultural analysis—teach us to reread how America ticks? Together we will explore this question as we read and discuss some of the most provocative classic and uncanonized plays written between the 1910s and the present. Plays by Susan Glaspell, Eugene O’Neill, Mike Gold, workers theater troupes, Clifford Odets, Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, Amiri Baraka, Arthur Kopit, Ntozake Shange, Luis Valdez, David Mamet, Tony Kushner, Ayad Akhtar, and others will help us think about what’s at stake in staging America and equip us as cultural analysts, critical thinkers, close readers of literature, and imaginative historians of culture and theater. This seminar will introduce first-year students to the kind of critical thinking developed in majors such as English; American Studies; African American Studies; Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; College of Letters; Theater Studies; and the Social and Cultural Theory Certificate.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL175F, AMST125F, COL125F, FGSS175F, THEA172F
Prereq: None

AFAM171F The Prison State: Race, Law, and Mass Incarceration in U.S. History (FYS)
This first-year seminar course explores the history and effects of the United States’ mass incarceration crisis. The U.S. incarcerates more people than any other country in the world. And people of color make up a highly disproportionate number of the over 2 million individuals incarcerated in the U.S. today. Beginning with slavery and continuing through the rise of prisons, debt peonage, Jim Crow, and the Black Lives Matter movement, the course will explore how efforts to police, detain, and control black bodies have been at the center of U.S. law and legal practice since the nation’s founding. At the same time, we will compare and contrast how race, gender, and sexual orientation have been policed, controlled, and shaped through incarceration practices throughout U.S. history.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM177F August Wilson
During his lifetime, the world-renowned African American playwright August Wilson graced stages with award-winning and -nominated plays from his ‘Pittsburgh Cycle.’ This course examines the 10 plays of this cycle in the order that the playwright wrote them, from JITNEY (1982) to RADIO GOLF (2005). We will pay special attention to the playwright’s use of language, history, memory, art, and music within his oeuvre.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL176F, THEA175F
Prereq: None

AFAM200 Introduction to Africana Studies
The aim of this course is to provide an interdisciplinary examination of the complex array of social practices that have shaped the role of Africa and the African diaspora in world history. The class will focus on both classic and modern texts that provide an introduction to the dynamics of African American and African diaspora thought and practice. Topics include What is Africana studies?, black studies to Africana studies, Africa and the origin of civilization, creating the African diaspora, transatlantic slave trade, Islamic slave trade, the Haitian revolution, African independence, the intersections of racism, black nationalism, black feminism, the case for reparations, and the future of Africana studies.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM201 Haiti: Between Anthropology and Journalism
This course will examine how anthropology and journalism make their subjects vis-à-vis the broader significance of the knowledge they create and their publics. Using the works of anthropologists and journalists, we will consider how and why Haiti has long been regarded as something of an oddity within the Caribbean and the world. Branded the ‘nightmare republic’ since it gained independence in 1804, in the public sphere Haiti remains conceptually incarcerated with clichés and stereotypes that obscure understanding of its complex role in global history. Attention will be paid to the 2010 earthquake, current conditions, and possible futures. Our ultimate aim is to explore the myriad possibilities of anthropo-journalism.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ANTH
Identical With: ANTH210
Prereq: None

AFAM202 Introduction to African American Literature
This course is a survey of the history and traditions of African American literature from its earliest origins to its most modern manifestations. We will examine, in particular, the poetry, essays, and fiction produced by people of African descent from the 18th to the 21st centuries. The courses will focus on the ways African Americans used literature to document their New World experiences, bear witness to enduring traditions, and shape American society. We will work with poetry, drama, short fiction, essays, and novels, alongside music and visual culture, as we explore African American literary and cultural aesthetics, African American literary history, and issues of class, gender, and place.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-AFAM
Identical With: ENGL240, AMST275
Prereq: None

AFAM203 African American History, 1444-1877
This course examines the historical interactions between peoples on three continents—Africa, Europe, and the Americas—and the consequences of European colonization, trans-Atlantic slavery, and racial capitalism. Focusing on a period from the Antiquity to the late 19th centuries, we will explore how European notions concerning Africa its peoples evolved over millennia in response to shifting political, economic, and demographic circumstances. We will chart how Africans and their descendants in the Americas experienced and responded to colonialism. And we will analyze how debates concerning enslavement and freedom, indigeneity and civilization, and pan-Africanism and...
AFAM204 Introduction to Modern African American History
This course explores the African American struggle for equality, liberation, and justice from Reconstruction through to the present. We will examine how gender, class, sexuality, and ideology, among other factors, have shaped the history of black protest and community. We will visit key periods and themes including Jim Crow/segregation, The Great Migration, World War II, Civil Rights, Black Power, and Black Lives Matter, to understand the intersection of the African American lives and American history. Central to this course are the ways that African Americans have exposed American hypocrisy; have shown their historical patriotism, and have challenged American institutions to live up to their professed ideals.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: AMST213
Prereq: None

AFAM206 Introduction to African American Women's History
This course offers a solid foundation in the history of black women in the United States, from the 17th-century beginnings of North American slavery to the present. Using a broad range of primary and secondary sources, from writings by and about enslaved women to films and documentaries, we will examine the experiences, voices, and contributions of everyday black women as well as famous figures in African American women's history. Major questions of the course will include how black women forged political and social movements that transformed the United States, even as they faced the constraints of slavery, segregation, and gender-based exclusion. Students will practice reading, thinking, speaking, and writing critically about a range of historical sources and questions, with an aim of understanding how race, gender, class, legal status, and sexuality have intersected to shape the lives of African American women throughout U.S. history.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: FGSS206
Prereq: None

AFAM211 Critical Philosophy of Race
This course will examine contemporary figures in the emerging field of critical philosophy of race. We will attempt to examine what contributions (if any) the critical philosophy of race has provided not only to philosophy as a discipline, but also to more traditional and established modes of thinking race and racism. We will do so by exploring issues such as the differences between critical philosophy of race and critical race theory, as well as the historical role of race and racism in philosophical thinking, and by attending to the major debates currently held in this emerging tradition.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL211
Prereq: None

AFAM212 Modern Africa
What is African Modernity? We will examine this question as we survey the major historical transformations in Africa since approximately 1800. Important themes include: African political innovations, the abolition of the slave trade and its effects, European colonialism, African adaptation and resistance, nationalism and decolonization, and Africa's role in shaping major global events. We will also study the impacts of religious and social transformations amid rapid economic and political change. Finally, we will examine African visions for post-colonial development and how to shape the future of the continent.
During the semester we will also cover some of the issues surrounding African history as a discipline. No single course can cover more than a sliver of the complexity and variety in the continent. For this reason, we approach the study of Modern Africa as comparative history. However, students satisfactorily completing this course will be able to write knowledgeably about African history and will have the foundation necessary to undertake further study about Africa with sensitivity to the complexity of its recent past.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST212
Prereq: None

AFAM217 Empires, Slavery, and Revolution: Africa to 1800
In this course we will examine the dynamic political and social histories of precolonial Africa. We will study the rise of kingdoms and empires such as Mali and Kongo, as well as revolutions in society from the technological development of iron production, to the emergence of trade networks, the development of ancient cities, the spread of religious healing and reform movements such as Cwezi spirit possession, and the role of gender in early African societies. Over the course of the semester we will also consider the impact of slavery and the first African encounters with Europeans. The methods for studying the early African past are interdisciplinary. You will have the opportunity to explore how ancient Africa has been imagined in the past by Africans and early Arabic and European observers, and how contemporary scholars write these histories. As we trace a history of early Africa in the world, we will consider several methods: the study of myths and oral traditions, linguistic and archaeological data, as well as ecological and archival records.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST217
Prereq: None

AFAM219 African American Urban Politics, Economy, and Policy
This course provides an introduction to the political experience and public policies that have significantly shaped, and continue to shape, the social and political life of African Americans and the urban environment. Although the course will explore historical themes, it will be mostly contemporary in its temporal focus. Topics will include African American political thought, leadership, and black political economy as well as voting, participation, party politics, and elected office (i.e., legislative and executive). Additional topics include housing and labor markets, healthcare reform, and issues of gender, class, age, and sexual identity at the intersections of black politics. Finally, the class will explore the role of race and police relations.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: AMST288
Prereq: None

national citizenship played out across the African Diaspora and in the United States.
AFAM222 Slavery and the Literary Imagination

Enslavement in America and the New World was inextricably linked to the written word. What, then, does it mean to write the story of enslavement, loss, forced migration, liberation, and restoration? How does one tell the story of enslavement when that effort depends on articulating the unspeakable?

The works and writers examined in this course will prompt students to consider how one revisits history and what is required to imagine, write, and rewrite the stories and histories of people, places, and nations. We will discuss the ways in which specific literary forms enable, contain, and transform unwieldy, complicated, and stunning stories of enslavement, liberation, self-determination, activism, racialization, and nationhood.

Our readings will include an array of well-known, understudied, and newly recovered primary works and materials by and about individuals such as William Wells Brown, Charles Chesnutt, Frederick Douglass, Briton Hammon, Jupiter Hammon, James Mars, Pauline Hopkins, Mattie Jackson, Mary Prince, Chloe Spear, and Phillips Wheatley. Additional primary materials will include writings published in 18th- and 19th-century newspapers such as the “Boston Weekly Newsletter,” “The Connecticut Journal,” “The Liberator,” and “North Star.”

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-AFAM
Identical With: ENGL222, FG55221
Prereq: None

AFAM223 20th-Century Franco-Caribbean Literature and the Search for Identity

This course investigates how 20th-century Francophone literature from the Caribbean defines Caribbean identity. Through a study of literary texts, films, and paintings from Guadeloupe, Martinique, Haiti, Guyana, and Louisiana, we will explore the evolution of Caribbean self-definition, focusing on the major concepts of Negritude, Antillanite, Creolite, and Louisianaite.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: COL225, AMST226, FREN225, LAST220
Prereq: None

AFAM224 Afrofuturism (FYS)

Mainstream readings of the African American literary and cultural canon have tended to emphasize texts with a social realist bent, those that present their audience with a supposedly ‘authentic’ version of the African American experience. However, as cultural critic Greg Tate observes, 20th-century African American literary history includes ‘huge dollops of fantasy, horror, and science fiction’ because, in his view, ‘Black people live the estrangement that science fiction writers imagine.’ While Tate’s statement perhaps overly generalizes the black experience, there seems to be something to his notion that, in part because of the fact that they were forced to live an often ‘alienated’ experience in America, there has always been a strong element of the speculative in black literary and cultural expression. This course traces this under-examined speculative strain in 20th and 21st-century African American literature, music, film, and visual art, as black artists explore, or speculate, on the possibilities that imagining alternative realities and modes of living open up. The course will focus especially on speculative and Afrotufurist aesthetics as they manifest in hip hop music and culture. We will examine the ways that black artists have employed elements of the speculative genres in order to re-envision the African American past, present, and future—rendering versions of historical African American experience and subjectivity that exceed traditional notions of ‘authenticity,’ complicating contemporary regimes of identification, and presenting alternative visions of the futures of blackness.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM225 The African Novel II: After Achebe

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s 2003 novel, PURPLE HIBISCUS, summons Chinua Achebe, the ‘grandfather of African literature,’ in its opening line: ‘Things started to fall apart at home when my brother, Jaja, did not go to communion.’ While Achebe is a formative influence on Adichie and on many other contemporary African writers, the central preoccupations of African literature have shifted considerably in recent years. This class will consider recent topics animating the field. These include debates about Afropopulism, the role of publication houses and prize committees in the canonization and circulation of texts, queer African literature, African-language literature, and the position of African literature vis-à-vis world literature. Readings will be chosen from among the newest novels and short stories in publication.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL223
Prereq: None

AFAM226 Afro-Surrealism

Amiri Baraka coined the term ‘Afro-Surreal’ to describe the writer Henry Dumas’s ‘skill at creating an entirely different world organically connected to this one.’ In his 2009 ‘Afro-Surrealist Manifesto,’ D. Scott Miller builds on Baraka’s observations and distinguishes Afro-Surrealism from Afrofuturism in the former’s concern with the ‘RIGHT NOW.’ Indeed, in the ‘right now’ of 2018, Afro-Surrealism seems to be having a moment, with the success of films like ‘Sorry to Bother You’ and ‘Get Out,’ the musical and filmic work of Donald Glover/Childish Gambino, the visual art of Kara Walker and Kehinde Wiley, and the literature of Paul Beatty and Colson Whitehead, among others. This course will examine this contemporary resurgence of the Afro-Surreal, and trace its echoes in black popular music, in the work of African American literary figures like Dumas, Toni Morrison, Bob Kaufman, Ralph Ellison, Jean Toomer, and Zora Neale Hurston, and through its African and Afrodiasporic foundations in the work of artists inspired by Léopold Senghor’s Négritude movement. All of these artists’ ‘distort reality for emotional impact,’ as Miller puts it, and we will aim to connect these distortions of the ‘right now’ to the material reality of life under regimes of antiblackness and racial oppression that these Afro-Surreal works lays bare.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: ENGL229
Prereq: None
distortions of the ‘right now’ to the material reality of life under regimes of anti-blackness and racial oppression that these Afro-Surreal works lays bare.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM229 Reading Toni Morrison: Blackness and the Literary Imagination
This course will introduce students to the major works of the late Nobel laureate Toni Morrison (1931-2019). In addition to the trilogy—‘Beloved’ (1987), ‘Jazz’ (1992), and ‘Paradise’ (1997)—and ‘Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination’ (1992; originally delivered as the William E. Massey, Sr. Lectures in the History of American Civilization at Harvard University in 1990), readings may also include the following novels (in chronological order): ‘The Bluest Eye’ (1970); ‘Sula’ (1973); ‘Song of Solomon’ (1977); ‘Tar Baby’ (1981); ‘Love’ (2003); ‘A Mercy’ (2008); ‘Home’ (2012); and ‘God Help the Child’ (2015).
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: ENGL241
Prereq: None

AFAM230F Marxism and Abolitionism (FYS)
This course explores the historical encounter of Marxist revolutionary theory, with its roots in German idealism (Kant, Schiller, Fichte, Hegel), and abolitionist causes. How have abolitionist movements historically informed, expanded, and challenged Marxist theory and its tactical playbook? What made Marx a touchstone for so many black revolutionary thinkers, including W.E.B. du Bois, Franz Fanon, C.L.R. James, and Angela Davis? How have anticommunist, racist, security-statist ideologies been mobilized to undermine and defeat transformative social movements? We will begin with the Haitian Revolution and work our way through the abolition of slavery in the US and the anticolonial and civil rights struggles of the mid-20th century to the prison abolition movement today. In addition to the above mentioned authors, readings will include Toussaint L’Ouverture, Frederick Douglass, Ottolie Assing, V.I. Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Georg Lukács, Max Weber, Martin Luther King, Jr., Herbert Marcuse, and the Combahee River Collective.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-GRST
Identical With: GRST232F, AMST132F
Prereq: None

AFAM232 Black and Indigenous Foundations of U.S. Society
The United States of America rests upon the historic dispossession of indigenous lands and the enslavement of bodies. Our course will chart how these two forces created enduring logics—elimination and alienation—that continue to structure U.S. society. Discussion topics will include whiteness, indigenous slavery, structural racism, settler colonialism, strategies of resistance, and alternative models of belonging and kinship.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM233 All Ah We: Contemporary Afro-Caribbean Drama & Performance
What are the dramatic utterances of Afro-Caribbean artists? How do Afro-Caribbean playwrights and other narrative-based performance artists present ‘Caribbean’ and/or ‘West Indian’ subjectivities in ways that are shared, yet critically different? In what ways are Afro-Caribbean dramas and performance pieces repositories for the practical, the theoretical, the sociological, the political, the imagined, and the lost? In answering these questions and more, we examine these textual and embodied expressions from the complicated crossroads of class, creolization, diaspora, ethnicity, folklore, gender, history, indentured servitude, isolation, language, race, religion, and slavery. At all times, this course reveals in the polyphony that is Afro-Caribbean drama and performance.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL233, THEA233
Prereq: None

AFAM235 Activism and Theories of Change
In this course we will explore strategies and theories of change that shape social justice movements, with particular reference to recent movements in the United States. We will discuss the benefits and risks of the many available strategies including direct action, grassroots mobilization, impact litigation, legislative campaigns, electoral campaigns, artistic protest, and public education. When do they strengthen one another, and when do they collide? What ethical or moral questions are raised by various types of protest and communications? The instructor will draw on her own experiences as an activist for women’s rights, queer rights, and economic justice. We will also consider the strategies of other recent movements such as Occupy, Black Lives Matter and gun safety activism, and we will allow time to discuss events that may occur in real time over the course of the semester. In recognition of the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage in the U.S., we will discuss the American women’s suffrage movement with respect to its tactics, conflicts, failures and successes. This course will be relevant to students interested in public policy, feminism, gender and sexuality studies, and other social sciences, and will provide useful insight for future organizers and activists, lawyers, and public policy makers.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ALLB
Identical With: CSPL235, FGSS236
Prereq: None

AFAM237 Technologies of the Self
Where does the idea of an authentic self come from? This desire to represent the authentic self informs the narrative genre of the confession and memoir and the visual one of the selfie alike. Yet both the memoir and the selfie ‘self’ are mediated, first, via the technologies of print and screen, and second, via the conventions of particular genres that make these legible as a memoir and selfie, as opposed to, for example, an interview or a portrait. In this course, we will examine how different technologies not only represent but produce the self. These technologies include ‘writing’ technologies: print and digital; genre and medium (autobiography, the slave narrative, memoir, self-portraits, and selfies); and technologies of the state, which produce citizens, subjects, and humans.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL250, AMST223
Prereq: None

AFAM240 From the Banjo to Dembow: Afro-Caribbean Music in Motion
This course analyzes the global circulation of Afro-Caribbean musicians, dancers, audiences, musical styles, and even musical instruments from the beginning of European colonialism to the present day. We will seek to understand the political interconnections between the Caribbean and the wider world by focusing our attention on specific ‘musical itineraries.’ These will include, among others, the creation of the banjo by enslaved people in the Caribbean and the
AFAM244 Women Behaving Badly - Policing Race, Gender, and Deviance in History
This course focuses on ‘women behaving badly’ in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in America. Students will explore the histories of female murderers and criminals as well as examine the experiences of women who transgressed racial, gendered, and sexual mores. Ultimately, we will investigate the tension between accepted social norms and the struggle for female autonomy.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: FGSS246
Prereq: None

AFAM245 Major Themes in Black Feminism
This course will explore critical issues and debates in black feminism from early feminist works to more contemporary writers and theorists. Fundamentally, the course will help students critically analyze feminist texts, paying attention to the ways that black feminism challenges and reflects mainstream social and political hierarchies. This course will also draw upon a range of texts including art, literature, poetry, film and music.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: FGSS247
Prereq: None

AFAM246 Black Feminisms in the Americas: Politics, Representation, and Queer Ruminations of Elsewhere
This course will explore Black feminist intellectual productions, highlighting the many theoretical, political, and critically imaginative elements found throughout early and contemporary works. Our discussions will reflect on power, the production of knowledge, identity, inequality, and the politics and perils of Black feminist struggle. Relying on a variety of texts and media—such as writings, visual & performance arts, poetry, music, and film—students should expect to engage with key issues and debates, along with the epistemological challenges offered by queer of color critique, trans/national perspectives, and social alternatives emerging from across the Black (feminist) diaspora.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: FGSS264
Prereq: None

AFAM247 Contemporary African American Poetry and Its Past
In this course, students will engage African American poetry after 1960. Alongside gaining a thorough understanding of the currents of literary history from the civil rights movement through the age of Obama, students will gain an appreciation of what traditions contemporary poets engage. Using ANGLES OF ASCENT: A NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN AMERICAN POETRY as the primary text for the course, students will be able to gain a comprehensive overview of the rich literary moment of which they are a part. At the same time, students will explore the meaning of the anthology itself as a mechanism of canon-making. How does being part of a canon affect the possibilities in one’s literary production?

By engaging the traditions upon which contemporary African American poets build their own poetics, students will gain a deeper understanding of the poetry itself. In addition, students will read critical works by the poets as part of their course-work gaining insight into the poets’ creative processes. In addition to developing their critical voices through analytical papers, students will have a
AFAM248 Race, Ethnicity, and Popular Music
This course explores race and ethnicity in the United States through sound and song. By studying diverse topics—from the Boston Tea Party, blackface minstrelsy, and the rise of Jim Crow, to Native Hawaiian influences on the Mississippi Delta blues, to the unexpected connection between elevator music and the Spanish American War—we will learn about the history of settler colonialism, anti-black racism, U.S. imperialism, global capitalism, and hetero-patriarchy. We will also remain attentive to music as a transgressive and revolutionary force, one that facilitates hybrid identities and movements that celebrate difference, offering alternate visions for what it means to be and sound free. Investigating primary sources will demonstrate how musical genres may act as reservoirs of shared history and collective identity. As Ronald Radano has argued, discussions about music can have tangible influences because debates about music are a proxy for larger social issues with real-life consequences. Can music make (or unmake) race? Can a song change the world?
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM249 Sacred and Secular African American Musics
A fluid, multiconceptual approach to musicology will be introduced to view African American sacred and secular music traditions.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC269
Prereq: None

AFAM250 Integrative Learning Project 1: Reflecting About the Liberal Arts
The Integrative Learning Project is a .50 credit course that allows students to learn to describe in a coherent and engaging narrative the various academic and non-academic activities, projects, and experiences that have been important for them while in college and to practice doing so for a variety of audiences (e.g., employers, graduate schools, etc.). Participants should be students who are interested in crafting a narrative about their personal and intellectual development, and who want to be able to talk about what skills they have cultivated during their time at Wesleyan and what they still want to learn.

All sophomores, juniors and seniors are welcome in this course. This course requires a willingness to discuss one’s strengths, achievements, weaknesses, and failures. Students will not only engage in reflection about their skills and experiences, but will also have the opportunity to design an online portfolio in WordPress, the world’s most popular content management software, and test the portfolio with different audiences by employing user experience design (UX) principles and research methodologies. Students can take this course more than once, but only once per academic year.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 0.50
Gen Ed Area: None
Identical With: WRCT200, RL&L250
Prereq: None

AFAM252 Writing on the Land of Freedom: The Pastoral in African American Literature
Landscape figures prominently and powerfully in the African American literary imagination. Writers have crafted evocative meditations on the natural world as they grapple with sobering realities of life, dramatic assertions of self, and transformative historical moments. This course will consider African American literary invocations of idealized, mythological, sacred, and knowable land and move toward a delineation of the African American pastoral aesthetic and tradition. We will read novels, poems, short stories, essays, letters, and journal entries by writers such as David Bradley, Charles Chesnutt, Lucille Clifton, Rita Dove, Charlotte Forten Grimké, Zora Neale Hurston, Randall Kenan, Victoria Earle Matthews, Gloria Naylor, and Marilyn Nelson.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-AFAM
Identical With: ENGL255
Prereq: None

AFAM254 The History of Race and Sex in America
Everything in our contemporary moment has a historical precedent. This course explores the ways that race, class, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation have intersected to shape American lives and group identities. Focusing on the concept of intersectionality, this course looks at the relationship between power, rights, and citizenship; namely who is included and who is excluded at a given time and why. Thinking about how sex has factored into these dynamics, we’ll be covering topics such as sexual coercion and consent, interracial marriage, and civil rights in historical perspective. Spanning the early American period through to the present, we will focus specifically on how the understanding of blackness and whiteness, manhood and womanhood, and heterosexuality and homosexuality changed over time.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM257 System Mapping for Social and Environmental Impact
In recent years, growing interest in social entrepreneurship has pushed students to ‘solve’ complex social and environmental problems with new ventures of their own design. Unfortunately, this approach often overlooks a critical foundation of social change: understanding the root causes of problems and the contexts that surround them before seeking solutions.
In this six-week, half-credit class, students will study a problem and the systems that surround it. By the end of the course, students will create a ‘systems map’ that documents the economic, political, and cultural factors behind their problem, as well as the current ‘solutions landscape.’
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 0.50
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ALLB
Identical With: CSPL257, ENVS208
Prereq: None

AFAM258 Beyond the Vote: Race and American Democracy
The ideals of civic equality enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and the Fourteenth Amendment have rarely applied to African Americans. Yet African Americans continue to challenge the United States to live up to its own ideals of civic equality. This course will explore the ways in which African Americans and the issue of race have shaped the twin concepts of American democracy and American citizenship from the U.S. Constitution to the present.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
AFAM260 Blues People: Race, Ethnicity and Popular Music
This course explores African American history in the United States through sound and song. As Ronald Radano, one of the scholars we will read this semester, has argued, the ways we discuss music can have a tangible influence on the social and political world, because debates about music stand in for larger social issues with real-life consequences. We will read texts that demonstrate how music has facilitated the creation of identities in the United States that recognize and celebrate difference, while offering alternate visions for what it means to be (and sound) African American. We will read music as primary sources in order to investigate how musical genres may act as reservoirs of shared history and collective identity. And through diverse topics--from blues music and the rise of Jim Crow to 19th century tribal dancers draped in American flags on the Pine Ridge reservation to connections between elevator music and the Spanish American war--we will learn about how music and race have intersected with broader themes in U.S. history such as segregation, assimilation, interment, imperialism, and global capitalism.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM261 Beyond the Talking Book: Reading African American Literature in the Newspapers
The majority of late-nineteenth and early twentieth century African American writers, such as Frances Harper, Martin Delany, Pauline Hopkins, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Cyril Briggs, published their work in African American periodicals. In this course, we will examine the works of these canonical authors (as well as some lesser known ones) in their original publication context, the magazine archives of The Christian Recorder; The Anglo-African Magazine; The Colored American Magazine; The Crisis; The Crusader; Opportunity; and Fire!! The guiding question in our readings is this: how does our understanding of these canonical texts change when we read them in their original context—as either serial novels, or as components of a larger composite magazine, consisting of multiple different texts and images? In addition to honing students’ literary close-readings skills, this course aims to teach students how to do original research and critically engage with multi-genre, mixed forms like the magazine.
Authors we will read include: Frederick Douglass, Charles Chesnutt, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, W.E.B. Du Bois. In order to get a better understanding of the literary conventions of the serial form, students will read one of the assigned serialized novels (Pauline Hopkins’ Of One Blood) in its original installment-format, week-by-week. Reading these works serially will also enable them to play closer attention to each installment’s relationship to its surrounding texts and images.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL262, AMST262
Prereq: None

AFAM262 Jazz Technique
This course is an introduction to the African American jazz dance vernacular through the embodied practice of Simonson jazz. It will cover basic principles of alignment, centering, and technique through the context of jazz’s African roots. Class sessions will principally consist of movement exploration including a comprehensive warm-up and will be supplemented by online discussions and media to better understand the place of jazz dance in society and culture at large.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 0.50
Gen Ed Area: HA-DANC
Identical With: DANC213
Prereq: None

AFAM265 Music and Downtown New York
This course will explore the history and simultaneous flourishing of four distinct music communities that inhabited and shaped downtown New York City during two especially rich decades (the 1950s and 60s): urban blues and folk revivalists; an African American jazz-based avant-garde; Euro-American experimentalists; and Lower East Side rock groups. These four vanguard musical movements—at the heart of dramatic cultural shifts at the time, with reverberations and legacies that remain relevant up to the present day—are an essential part of American history. Much of the course will be devoted to discovering their points of convergence and divergence, especially in conversation with broader contemporaneous currents, including the Civil Rights Movement and related notions of freedom, shifting youth cultures, music and politics, and avant-garde aesthetics.
Drawing from primary sources, we will read about and listen to recordings of a wide variety of musicians, view a broad cross-section of film from the era, identify aesthetic and cultural trends, and study the local industry that supported them, including record labels, coffee houses, clubs, and concert spaces. Projects throughout the semester include written papers, individual and group presentations, and adding content to an interactive collaborative Google map of the neighborhood.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC275, AMST267
Prereq: None

AFAM266 Black Performance Theory
What does it mean to perform identity, to perform race, to perform blackness? How is blackness defined as both a radical aesthetic and an identity? In this course, we will focus on theater and performance as a resource for thinking about black history, identity, and radical politics in excess of the written word. Following recent work in Black Studies and Performance Studies, this class will pay particular attention to the doing of blackness, the visible, sonic, and haptic performances that give over to a radical way of seeing, feeling, and being in an anti-black world. Plays, films, and texts might include works by Fred Moten, Alexander Weheliye, Brandon Jacobs-Jenkins, Suzan Lori-Parks, Danai Gurira, Shane Vogel, Adrienne Kennedy, Sarah Jane Cervenak, Dee Rees, Céline Sciamma, Saidiya Hartman, Huey P. Copeland, Darby English, Lorraine Hansberry, Hilton Als, Spike Lee, Isaac Julien, Martine Syms, Tavia Nyong'o, and Daphne Brooks.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-THEA
Identical With: THEA266, ENGL263, FGSS276
Prereq: None

AFAM269 Race, Incarceration, and Citizenship: The New Haven Model
This course will explore the elements of local responses to contemporary criminal justice issues, drawing on current research projects in New Haven, Connecticut. The course will explore a variety of promising practices, which emphasize community engagement and individual citizenship over incarceration and punishment. Topics will include evidence-based practices to reduce criminal
AFAM272 History of Jazz in American Culture
This course will provide students with a broad-based literacy in the history of jazz while examining its significance and impact within American culture. As a musical style, jazz has been a staging ground for working out some of the most defining issues and aspects of American culture, including the dynamics of race relations, the articulation of gender roles and class distinctions, artistic expressions of freedom and democracy, the creative possibilities of the encounter of European- and African-based cultures on American soil, assimilation versus appropriation, and an extraordinarily influential aesthetic of cool. Jazz was the dance and listening music of choice for most Americans from the 1920s through the ’50s, until it was displaced and pushed to the margins by rock and soul in the 1960s. But it has remained an inspiration for diverse artists in rock and rap up to the present day, including Kendrick Lamar’s jazz-drenched ‘To Pimp A Butterfly’ and Janelle Monae’s 21st-century Afrofuturism deeply indebted to Sun Ra.
We will explore the early 20th-century origins of jazz in New Orleans, its rise as America’s popular dance music in the 1920s and ‘30s, a shift to a more concert art-oriented form in the 1940s and ’50s (representing the epitome of cool and hipness), avant-garde expressions of the 1960s (representing a new kind of universal spirituality), its move into rock and the growth of artist-based collectives of the 1970s, and its emergence in hip-hop samples in the 1990s. We will learn about major artists and their classic recordings, including Billie Holiday, Thelonious Monk, John Coltrane, and Miles Davis, among many others, as well as new directions from recent generations (bringing in guest music department faculty). We will immerse ourselves in a combination of listening to recordings, viewing videos, reading, discussion, and in-class performances. Throughout the semester we will pursue the parallel goals of using jazz history to understand American history and vice versa. This is a jazz history course with a difference, able to accommodate curious newcomers as well as aficionados and those interested in social and cultural dynamics as well as the musical materials.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC272, AMST283
Prereq: None

AFAM274 Reel Black: African American Life in Film
This course will focus on African Americans and film and explore the emergence and influence of African American actors and filmmakers. We will consider the political and aesthetic agendas that have shaped the tradition and discuss the ways in which film adaptions of African American literature reveals the possibilities and the limitations of the filmic enterprise. Our screenings and discussions of well-known and understudied film figures will complement our explication of films that have grappled with understudied African American histories, civil rights, identity, and class. Possible screenings include works by Oscar Micheaux, Julie Dash, Charles Burnett, Steven Spielberg, Steve McQueen, Ava DuVernay, and Spike Lee.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM275 Race and Place in Early American Writing
This semester, we will examine early American texts that are preoccupied with the intersection between the unsettled (and often unsettling) categories of race and place. In the wake of colonial contact and in the midst of chattel slavery, people in varying positions of power and subjection took to the pen in order to reify or resist white supremacy and its attendant discursive and physical violence and violation. With an eye toward the strategic uses of memory and witnessing by those who were displaced and/or enslaved, we will read primary texts from the 17th to the mid-19th century that were written by people of color. To conceptualize race and nation is to think relationally, so we will also take up texts about people of color, which are often animated by the seductive effects of nostalgia and sentimentality.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL275
Prereq: None

AFAM276 Intertextual Aesthetics in African American Culture: From Signifyin(g) to Sampling
Intertextuality, the integration of references to multiple texts into a single artistic work, has long been considered a hallmark of postmodern aesthetics. This course will begin from the premise that this intertextual approach was a foundational aesthetic technique for African American cultural producers long before any discourse around postmodernism entered the lexicon. From David Walker’s ‘sampling’ of the Declaration of Independence in making his 1830 anti-slavery Appeal, to Kara Walker’s incorporations of imagery and artistic techniques of the antebellum South to comment on contemporary realities of blackness, African American artists have long made use of intertextual aesthetics not merely in the service of postmodern indirection, but in order to represent the realities of black lived experience in America. This course will investigate the transmedial history of this intertextual black aesthetic, examining African American literature, music, film, and visual art, and will consider various ways in which black intertextual aesthetics have been theorized, from Henry Louis Gates’ notion of ‘signifyin(g),’ to discussions of hip hop sampling and Black Twitter. As mass-mediated technologies have proliferated in the 20th and 21st centuries and representations of ‘Blackness’ writ large have exponentially multiplied in the popular imagery, contemporary artists increasingly sample and signify on these representations themselves. So a significant piece of our work in the course will be in analyzing the ways that the intertextual aesthetic is mobilized in the contemporary moment to speak to material realities of postmodern blackness, and to articulate nuanced black subjectivities in the face of subjection.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
AFAM277 New England Bound: Slavery and Emancipation in the North
This course examines struggles over Black slavery, freedom, and community formation in New England, with a primary focus on Middletown and Connecticut. We will explore the lived experiences and freedom struggles of Black individuals and communities, from revolutionary Black sailors to Middletown’s first free Black abolitionists. The course, which satisfies the Early AFAM History requirement for the major, will particularly invite students to grapple with Wesleyan’s and Middletown’s complex relationships to slavery and emancipation. As we will learn, slavery and the slave trade played central roles in New England’s culture and economy, especially here in Middletown. Like in other New England ports, Middletown merchants made a fortune from the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the plantation economy that supported it, even selling enslaved people of African and Native American descent on Middletown’s Main Street. And southern slaveholders were among the first Wesleyan students in the 1830s. At the same time, free African Americans and their allies made Middletown a stop on the Underground Railroad and a center of the antislavery movement, laying the groundwork for Connecticut’s eventual abolition of slavery and for high-profile court cases like the Amistad trial. Combating popular images of the ‘free North,’ this course will show slavery’s central role in Middletown’s local and state history, while also exploring how the Connecticut River tied Connecticut to regional and even global currents of slavery and antislavery.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM278 Race & Slavery in New England
This course examines struggles over black and Native American slavery, freedom, and community formation in New England. We will explore the lived experiences and freedom struggles of people of color from the beginning of European colonization through the national abolition of slavery in 1865. The course, which satisfies the Early AFAM History requirement for the major, will particularly grapple with Wesleyan’s and Middletown’s complex relationships to slavery and emancipation. As we will learn, slavery and the slave trade played central roles in New England’s culture and economy, especially here in Middletown. Like in other New England ports, Middletown merchants made a fortune from the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the plantation economy that supported it, even selling enslaved people of African and Native American descent on Middletown’s Main Street. And southern slaveholders were among the first Wesleyan students in the 1830s. At the same time, free African Americans and their allies made Middletown a stop on the Underground Railroad and a center of the antislavery movement, laying the groundwork for Connecticut’s eventual abolition of slavery and for high-profile court cases like the Amistad trial. Complicating popular images of the ‘free North,’ this course will examine the central roles of slavery and settler colonialism in New England history, while also exploring how the Connecticut River tied Connecticut to regional and even global currents of slavery and antislavery movements.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Credits: 1.00

AFAM279 Award-Winning Playwrights
With textual analysis and intellectual criticism at its core, this course examines the dramatic work of award-winning playwrights through theoretical, performative, and aesthetic frames. The first half of our investigation explores companion texts written by premier playwrights. In the latter end of the course, we examine singular texts written by acclaimed newcomers. A select range of reviews and popular press publications help to supplement our discussions. In all cases, we are interested in surveying the ways in which these playwrights work within varying modes of dramatic expression and focus their plays on such topics as class, ethnicity, era, disability, gender, locale, nationality, race, and/or sexuality.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Credits: 1.00

AFAM280 Religion and the Social Construction of Race
In this course we examine aspects of the intersections between race and religion in a number of historical and social contexts. We place at the center of our discussions the question of how race and religion are co-constructed categories that function as a prism through which people come to understand and experience their own identities and those of others. We will privilege interpretations that emphasize (1) the intersectionality of race and religion as a process in which power plays a pivotal role; and (2) the means through which communities form collective identities. We will read a range of historical analysis and primary source materials from the U.S. and the Caribbean. After a theory module, we will examine a colonial-era captivity narrative, antebellum pro-slavery document, missionary works, analyses of anti-Semitism, works on Rastafari, Haitian Vodou, Jonestown, the Christian White Supremacy movement, as well as the contemporary U.S. relationship to the Middle East.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Credits: 1.00

AFAM282 Mixed in America: Race, Religion, and Memoir
This course examines the history of mixed-race and interfaith identities in America. Using the genre of the memoir as a focusing lens, we will look at the various ways that Americans of mixed heritage have found a place, crafted an
identity, and made meaning out of being considered 'mixed.' How has being multiracial or bi-religious changed in the course of history in this country? What has occasioned these changes, and what patterns can we observe? We will explore questions of racial construction; religious boundary-making; rites of passage; gender, sexuality, and marriage; and some literary and media representations of mixed-heritage people.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: RELI280, AMST242
Prereq: None

AFAM282F Mixed in America: Race, Religion, and Memoir (FYS)
This first-year seminar course examines the history of mixed-race and interfaith identities in America. Using the genre of the memoir as a focusing lens, we will look at the various ways that Americans of mixed heritage have found a place, crafted an identity, and made meaning out of being considered 'mixed.' How has being multiracial or bi-religious changed in the course of history in this country? What has occasioned these changes, and what patterns can we observe? We will explore questions of racial construction; religious boundary-making; rites of passage; gender, sexuality, and marriage; and some literary and media representations of mixed-heritage people.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: RELI280F
Prereq: None

AFAM284 African American Philosophy
This course will examine the philosophical questions that have been of particular interest to African American philosophers. We will explore the domains of knowledge in which African American philosophers and thinkers have felt compelled to intervene. We will approach these questions by engaging with canonical historical figures such as DuBois, Douglass, and Cooper, and then we will assess the extent to which contemporary African American philosophers have remained (and continue to be) concerned with the same questions, albeit with different discursive methodologies. The purpose of this course is to trace the philosophical articulation of race, racism, identity, politics of freedom, and subject formation in the history of African American philosophical thought.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHI
Identical With: PHIL284
Prereq: None

AFAM285 Gender and Slavery in the Atlantic World
For most of the 20th century, historians of slavery in the Atlantic world overlooked the critical role of gender in shaping the marketplace, culture, and experience of the institution. Slaveholding and its attendant violence were presumed to be the domain of men. With a tragically limited archive, the popularity of slave narratives such as Frederick Douglass’s ‘Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave’ (1845) reveals how the voices and perspectives of men have dominated our understanding of the enslaved experience. Since the 1980s, the work of black feminist historians such as Deborah Gray White’s, ‘Ar’n’t I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South’ (1985) have unpacked the profoundly gendered nature of slavery in colonial America, the United States, and the Caribbean. This course embarks on an exploration of this important intervention. We will engage primary sources to illuminate the voices of enslaved women and debunk some of the historical myths of slavery and slaveholding. We will also visit classic and fresh secondary literature to understand the evolution of the field. Major themes include but are not limited to the Middle Passage experience, gendered violence, fertility, reproduction and motherhood, the Southern Belle archetype and slaveholding mistresses, notions of beauty and purity in black and white, and fugitivity.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: FGSS285
Prereq: None

AFAM286 Literature of the Harlem Renaissance
During this course, students will read canonical and popular literary works by early-20th-century African American authors in tandem with the vibrant body of literary criticism that emerged from this cultural moment in order to arrive at a richer understanding of how the early 20th-century African American canon was curated and proliferated. To this end, we will pay special attention to the role of anthologies and literary magazines (such as ‘The Crisis,’ ‘Opportunity,’ and ‘Fire!!’) in collating an emergent modern African American literary tradition. At the end of this course, students will be familiar with not only the key authors and works of the Harlem Renaissance, but also with the central debates about the direction and uses of African American literature in the early 20th century. These discussions of the uses and selection criteria of the book-form anthology on the one hand, and the serial literary magazine on the other will prepare students for one of the main assignments: curating a new syllabus entry for future versions of this course. The aim of this assignment is to alert students to the politics of knowledge production that determine which texts get taught,anthologized, and studied. Finally, the differing lengths and types of course assignments will require students to learn how to present their ideas across a variety of genres (syllabus proposal, annotated bibliography, research paper, short close-reading paper).

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL286
Prereq: None

AFAM287 Psychology and the law
This course will offer an introduction to the range of topics that are of concern both to psychologists and to members of the legal profession. We will investigate how psychologists may enter the legal arena as social scientists, consultants, and expert witnesses, as well as how the theory, data, and methods of the social sciences can enhance and contribute to our understanding of the judicial system. We will focus on what social psychology can offer the legal system in terms of its research and expertise with an examination of the state of the social science research on topics such as juries and decision making, eyewitness testimony, mental illness, the nature of voluntary confession, competency/insanity, child testimony, repressed memory, and sentencing guidelines. In addition, this course will look at the new and exciting ways legal scholars and psychologists/social scientists are now collaborating on research that looks at topics such as the role of education in prison, cultural definitions of responsibility, media accounts and social representations of crime and criminals, death penalty mitigation, and gender/race discrimination within the criminal justice system. This course will introduce students to this field, especially to the growing body of applied and theoretical work and resources available for study and review. Students will be encouraged to explore the connections between issues of social science and the law, translating legal issues into social scientific research questions that can then be examined more closely in the literature.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PSYC
Identical With: PSYC277
Prereq: PSYC105
AFAM289 Necropolitics and Black Fugitive Life
In his important essay interrogating the (im)possibility of black sociality, Fred Moten attempts to find an order of black social life that would unfold in the very confrontation between black (social) death and the law. However, as he argues, this form of black life would be 'reducible neither to simple interdiction nor bare transgression.' The form of black life that interests Moten is essentially one of ‘fugitivity.’ In a recent response to Moten’s text, David Marriott worries that ‘by writing blackness as ceaseless fugitivity,’ Moten advances ‘a position in which blackness is only black when it exceeds its racial disavowal’ and therefore blackness ‘can only be recognized as black in so far as it escapes the racism of its history.’ In this course, we will trace and follow the implications of Moten’s intervention. More specifically, we will explore what forms and figures of sovereignty an aesthetics and politics of fugitive subjectivity could yield given that 'black life' remains arguably the most precarious form of living under various contemporary ‘neopolitical’ apparatuses of racial exclusion, control, persecution and—in worse cases—genocide. Key figures will include Frantz Fanon, Hortense Spillers, Achille Mbembe, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, David Marriott, Fred Moten, Christina Sharpe, Saidiya Hartman, and Elizabeth Povinelli. Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL279
Prereq: None

AFAM291 Afro-Asian Intersections in the Americas
This course explores a range of historical, cultural, and political intersections between African and Asian diasporic people in the Americas from the late 19th century to the present. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, we will examine key moments in the history of Afro-Asian encounters in the Americas, including the importation of slave and coolie labor in the 19th century, the formation of anticolonial and antiracist ‘Third World’ movements in the United States and abroad, and the 1992 Los Angeles uprising. We will also study forms of cultural interracialism, from African Americans’ mania for kung fu in the 1970s, to interracial buddy films like Rush Hour (1998), to the contemporary fiction of writers such as Patricia Powell and Charles Johnson. Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AMST
Identical With: AMST291
Prereq: None

AFAM291Z Afro-Asian Intersections in the Americas
This course explores a range of historical, cultural, and political intersections between African and Asian diasporic people in the Americas from the late 19th century to the present. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, we will examine key moments in the history of Afro-Asian encounters in the Americas, including the importation of slave and coolie labor in the 19th century, the formation of anticolonial and antiracist ‘Third World’ movements in the United States and abroad, and the 1992 Los Angeles uprising. We will also study forms of cultural interracialism, from African Americans’ mania for kung fu in the 1970s, to interracial buddy films like Rush Hour (1998), to the contemporary fiction of writers such as Patricia Powell and Charles Johnson. Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AMST
Identical With: AMST291Z
Prereq: None

AFAM292 Doing Blackness: Performance Studies and Theorizing Black Identity
The idea of blackness is one that is ever shifting, sometimes in conflict with itself, and constantly accommodating new contexts. This course addresses the concept of blackness through performance, through the various methods of doing, being, and feeling that mark bodies, gestures, and places as black. It should be noted that performance, in this context, not only encompasses the framed/staged productions that have come to evoke blackness symbolically in the public imagination, but also performative approaches to evoking blackness in scholarship and the mundane negotiations of black identity in everyday life. This course centers on performance studies, but also pulls from African American studies, gender/women’s studies, musicology, and literary theory in order to address both performance and blackness from an interdisciplinary perspective. Ultimately, this is a course that reveals in the gray areas that exist between various competing constructions of authentic blackness and offers performance as a useful frame for understanding the simultaneous fixity and fluidity of blackness as a concept. Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM298 Richard Wright and Company
This course offers an in-depth consideration of the work and career of Richard Wright, a defining figure in 20th-century African American literature, and seeks to understand Wright’s interactions with a wide array of mentors, protégés, and enemies. By placing Wright amid the network of supporters, admirers, and detractors who surrounded him, we will gain a deeper understanding of Wright’s development and a useful map of 20th-century African American literary expression and American literary history more broadly. Writers to be covered in the course may include, along with Wright, Hannah Arendt, James Baldwin, Gwendolyn Brooks, Horace Cayton, Ralph Ellison, James T. Farrell, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Chester Himes, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Alain Locke, Gertrude Stein, Margaret Walker, John Williams, and Frank Yerby. Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL298
Prereq: None

AFAM300 Black Phoenix Rising: Death and Resurrection of Black Lives
The Black Lives Matter Movement has renewed our collective need to theorize the value of black lives within a deluge of death and disappearance in black communities. This movement is part of a deep transnational tradition in black radical praxis that aims to transform scholarly, activist, and public discourse and public policies concerning the systemic and epistemic effects of institutional racisms and the prospects for antiracist futures. How might we envision a black radical praxis that simultaneously recognizes the vitality of black lives and challenges the cultural ideas and social practices that generate and justify black people’s death and suffering? This seminar traces a genealogy of black radical praxis that interrogates the necropolitics of race and positions this system of power against the prospect of thriving black people. In doing so, the course erects an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that features scholarship in critical race science studies, intersectionality, and transnational cultural studies as they inform how a black radical praxis can contribute to the uprising and raising up of black communities. Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM300, SISP300
Prereq: None

AFAM301 Junior Colloquium: The Possibilities of Diaspora
In this course, we will explore the concept of ‘diaspora’ as a way of conceptualizing and understanding the contours of African American cultural
and political history. We will read a series of studies of diaspora as a concept for apprehending the historical experience of people of African descent dispersed from an original homeland. We will see in what ways these books are in dialogue with each other, whatPrior conceptualizations they are contesting, and what creative possibilities they offer for those of us engaged in African American studies. We will also read autobiographies, memoirs, travelogues, and novels that deal with the issues of diaspora. It is our hope, then, to understand how ‘diaspora’ as a concept, metaphor, or condition can be applied to the historical knowledge we need to bring to contemporary political issues.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM302 Seeing in the Dark: Research Methodologies in African American Studies
This reading seminar provides an introduction to research methodologies that have shaped the field of African American studies, from archival research and ethnography to geography and statistical analysis. In particular, we will focus on works that have expanded temporal, spatial, and methodological borders of the field, opening up new pathways toward investigating the richness of Afro-diasporic life in the Americas and beyond.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM304 Philosophy of Memory in African American Literature
This course will consider the importance of memory in African American literature and will explore the many ways in which authors of African descent engage, transform, and build on long-established intellectual traditions of the mind. Students will explore the importance of the idea of ‘memory’ to these intellectual traditions of the mind and will trace the praxis of remembering as a literary act through African American literature of the long 19th century. Finally, students will explore how persons of African descent are dehumanized through a systematic reduction of their mental capacities in these same philosophical traditions of the mind. We will discuss the ways in which memory specifically figures into this dehumanization and how authors of African descent used these very theories to resist the reification and overdetermination of both their literary works and their selves.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-AFAM
Identical With: ENGL301
Prereq: None

AFAM305 Lyric Poetry and Music: The Color and Politics of Cry, Sound, and Voice
Lyric poetry may be the most musical of literary forms. In one of its basic definitions, the lyric poem begins after the overhearing of a sound. This sound may be familiar and pleasant, like the timbre and cadence of a lover’s voice. Or it may be unrecognizable and terrifying. It may be imbricated with other senses and feelings, provoking a memory that stimulates a sense of touch or smell. Or it may stimulate a sense of horror at the inevitability of death. In any of these cases, sound is thought to reveal an attachment, a memory, and to give rise to composition in the poet’s effort to reshape memory and feeling in lyric form. But such articulations do not always come out as evenly as this description may imply. Indeed, moans, screams, stutters, cries, and the madness of possession by the Muses are part of lyric’s history and practice. In this course, we will read from African American, African diasporic, Caribbean, Latina/o/x, and Indigenous poetics, and we will consider their relation to myth and musical forms, such as the blues, son, bomba, biguine, jazz, reggae, hip-hop, salsa, among others. The dynamics between lyric speakers and musicians, sound and story, seen and voiced language will play out.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL304, AMST302
Prereq: None

AFAM306 Visual Storytelling: Race, (In)Visibility, and the American Landscape
What is visual storytelling, and how does this medium enable or frustrate our efforts to behold the landscape and the individuals who occupy it? What histories, tools, and perspectives enable rigorous and inspiring creative processes that culminate in inclusive, restorative narratives? Students will develop their own visual storytelling concepts and projects and together will consider realities and mythologies of place, inclusion and exclusion, human-land relationships, visibility and invisibility, built and threatened environments, and the work of the visual storyteller in 20th- and 21st-century America.

Assignments and student projects will be informed by the semester-long study of visual artists such as Edward Mitchell Bannister, Carole Bayard, Romare Bearden, Robert Duncanson, Gordon Parks, Henry Ossawa Tanner, and Carrie Mae Weems and the works of writers such as Kimberly Ruffin, Nikky Finney, and Jamaica Kincaid.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM307 Black Middletown Lives: The Future of Middletown’s African American Past
In this service learning course, students will do hands-on history by uncovering, preserving, and sharing Middletown’s rich African American past. We will focus on the history of the Beman Triangle. This African American neighborhood, now part of Wesleyan’s campus, served as a regional and national antislavery and Underground Railroad center and home to one of the nation’s first handful of independent Black churches. Students will partner with local archives, libraries, and museums to help preserve and share this neighborhood’s remarkable history. Our projects will include building a website and an exhibit to share this history with the Wesleyan and Middletown communities.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM312 Black Speculative Fictions and the Anthropocene
The genre of black speculative fiction—in the form of literature, art, music, and theory—provides a generative framework through which to re(think) understandings of race, gender, sexuality, class, the body, disability, citizenship, and the human. Often couched as taking place in the ‘future,’ black speculative fictions also engage the past and critique the present. This makes the genre a critical resource for addressing the Anthropocene. The term ‘Anthropocene’ first emerged from the discipline of geology in 2000. Scientists proposed that Earth had entered a new epoch (following the Holocene) in which ‘humans’ had become geological forces, impacting the planet itself. However, the term Anthropocene raises numerous questions. What does it mean to think about the human at the level of a ‘species’? What constitutes evidence of the Anthropocene and when did it begin? Who is responsible for the Anthropocene’s attendant catastrophes, which include earthquakes, altered ocean waters, and massive storms? Does the Anthropocene overemphasize the human and thus downplay other interspecies and human-nonhuman, animate-inanimate
relations? Or does it demand a (potentially fruitful) reconceptualization of the human? Further, how does artificial intelligence complicate definitions of the human and, by extension, of the Anthropocene? Centering the work of black speculative thinkers and placing it in conversation with scientific studies ranging from marine biology and geology to cybernetics, this course takes an interdisciplinary approach to the Anthropocene that endeavors to (re)conceptualize the human, ecological relations, and Earth itself. Texts engaged will include: novels, art, music, theory, and scientific studies.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM302, E&ES125, FGSS301
Prereq: None

AFAM314 Storied Places: Revival, Renewal, and African American Landscapes
Conceptions and histories of place figure prominently and powerfully in African American literary, social, and cultural histories. Writers and artists have used the written word, images, and film to explore issues of presence and absence, claim and trespass, ownership and dispossession, as well as safety and vulnerability. We will use this course to think about how African American writers and artists in particular have used word, image, sound, and movement to highlight the histories of iconic places and terrains and to reclaim erased histories and disappeared bodies. We also will consider how revival and renewal function both as essential tropes and necessary efforts in the work to make African American life and history visible. Readings may include works by Gwendolyn Brooks, Octavia Butler, Langston Hughes, Randall Kenan, Gloria Naylor, Marilyn Nelson, Natasha Trethewey, Alice Walker, Dorothy West, and Richard Wright.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-AFAM
Identical With: ENGL242
Prereq: None

AFAM320 Integrative Learning Project 2: Senior Capstone
The Integrative Learning Project is a .50 credit course that allows students to learn to describe in a coherent and engaging narrative the various academic and non-academic activities, projects, and experiences that have been important for them while in college and to practice doing so for a variety of audiences (e.g. employers, graduate schools, etc.). Participants should be students who are interested in crafting a narrative about their personal and intellectual development, and who want to be able to talk about what skills they have cultivated during their time at Wesleyan and what they still want to learn.

This course is intended for seniors who wish to document and reflect about their work in a single ‘capstone’ experience. This course requires a willingness to discuss one’s strengths, achievements, weaknesses, and failures. Students will not only engage in reflection about their skills and experiences, but will also have the opportunity to design an online portfolio in WordPress, the world’s most popular content management software, and test the portfolio with different audiences by employing user experience design (UX) principles and research methodologies. Students can only take this course once.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 0.50
Gen Ed Area: None
Identical With: WRCT300, RL&L350
Prereq: None

AFAM323 Survey of African American Theater
This course surveys the dynamism and scope of African American dramatic and performance traditions. Zora Neale Hurston’s 1925 play COLOR STRUCK and August Wilson’s 2006 play GEM OF THE OCEAN serve as bookends to our exploration of the ways in which African American playwrights interweave various customs, practices, experiences, critiques, and ideologies within their work.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL385, THEA323, FGSS323
Prereq: None

AFAM324 Black Power and the Modern Narrative of Slavery
The historical moment immediately after the civil rights and black power movements saw an explosion of African American writing about slavery. In the past half-century, black writers have written award-winning novels that have given unprecedented attention to the intricacies of the life of people who are enslaved and to slavery as a system that they suggested could help us better understand late-20th-century American culture. We will read some of the most important works written by contemporary African American writers to see how and why they transformed the first autobiographical form for black writers—the slave narrative—into a fictional form that has served them as they dissect their own cultural moment.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL324, AMST334
Prereq: None

AFAM325 Race and the Enlightenment: A Historical and Philosophical Enquiry
It was during the Enlightenment Era (c. 1760-1800) that scientific reasoning, a belief in progress, and new claims on personal and political liberty swept away a tenacious medieval worldview. It was also during this era, however, that the notion of race crystallized in European and North American thought. Today, we still live with implications of this major shift, be it in classification schemes, anatomical prejudices, or ethnographical myths. This is particularly true for Africans or people of African descent. This class will bring some the Enlightenment’s most prominent thinkers into dialogue with the emergency of the concept of race theory. In particular, we will focus on the clash between the Enlightenment era’s belief that ‘all men were created as equals’ and the various ways that the Black African came to be studied within ‘natural history’ and various philosophical models. This historical backdrop will lead us not only to a discussion of the economic imperatives of human slavery but to a series of contemporary reflections on the status of the Enlightenment put forward by postcolonial critics. Note: This class is offered in the context of the Wesleyan’s Center for the Humanities’ ‘Grand Narratives/Moder Proposals’ theme and speakers series.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: SISP324, CHUM324, RL&L325
Prereq: None

AFAM326 Litanies for Survival, Plots for Revolution
This seminar centers black-feminist and queer-of-color theory, literature, and art from the 1970s to the present in order to interrogate and reimagine revolution and revolutionary praxes. We will examine the interrelatedness of art and activism, hope and despair, collaboration and erotics. Key questions include: How does ‘survival’ put pressure on ‘revolution,’ and vice versa, particularly in light of contemporary and imminent catastrophes, local and planetary? How does a joint consideration of survival and revolution affect interpretations of the past, understandings of the present, and imaginings of the future? What political work might intellectual and creative labor perform? Is revolution an event, a practice, or both? A useful term or a ruse?
This seminar is offered in conjunction with the Center for the Humanities’ Fall 2018-Spring 2019 theme, ‘Revolutions: Material Forms, Mobile Futures.’ Assigned readings will include the work of scholars participating in the Center’s Monday night lecture series, and students will be required to attend several lectures over the course of the semester.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: FGSS327
Prereq: None

AFAM328 Brown, Black, and Queer Forms and Feelings
Given how brutally not neutral the world is to black, brown, and queer forms of life and pleasure, this course thinks with ‘otherwise’ spaces, figures, and feelings, like the queer club, the dance floor, abnormality, errancy, illegality, fugitivity, rage, indifference, and love. We will take up José E. Muñoz’s invocation of a ‘minoritarian theory of affect’ that insists that ‘whiteness is a cultural logic which can be understood as an affective code that positions itself as the law.’ We will study affect beyond whiteness through attention to sonic forms and ‘audio-visual shapes’ in African diasporic, Latin/o/a/x, and Caribbean arts. We will consider the diasporic and collectives grouped together in the terms ‘minoritarian,’ ‘brown,’ and ‘black’ as abnormalities that generate alternative modes of moving through and feeling ourselves in the world. We will study for radical potentiality in the beautiful, obscene, and off-kilter affects of brown, black, and queer aesthetic and poetic forms.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL328, FGSS308
Prereq: None

AFAM331 Queer and Trans Aesthetics
The seminar aims to develop intersectional frameworks for analyzing the artistic production of five artists who will be participating in a Trans* Revolutions symposium at the Center for the Humanities this spring: Tourmaline (film); Vick Quezada (photography, sculpture, film, and performance); Elliot Montague (film); Texas Isaiah (photography); and Emma Frankland (performance). We will also contextualize their work in relation to other artists, such as Ana Mendieta; Rotimi Fani-Kayode; Elle Pérez; Sandie Yi; Isaac Julien; Vaginal Davis; Kent Monkman; Martine Gutierrez; Felix Gonzalez-Torres; Juliana Huxtable; Laura Aguilar; Untitled Queen; and Wu Tsang. For the primary assignment, students will have two options: 1) a research paper on one or more of the participating artists or another relevant artist; or, 2) a creative project (e.g., artwork, performance, poetry) in dialogue with the seminar’s topics. Students also will have the opportunity to engage the symposium’s featured artists during their visit.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: FGSS331, THEA311, SOC300, AMST326
Prereq: None

AFAM334 Special Topic: Something in the Air: Mining the Oral/Aural Tradition in African American Poetry
In his book-length manifesto, Poetry as an Insurgent Act, Lawrence Ferlinghetti claims that ‘the printing press killed poetry.’ What he seems to be lamenting—at least, in part—is the privileging of the written word to the detriment of poetry’s musical, or aural, qualities. In this advanced-level workshop, we will focus on the poem as something intended to be read aloud and listened to. This course will also examine the roots and evolution of the African American oral poetic tradition with special attention paid to the rhetorical strategies derived from the black church, adopted by civil rights leaders and speech writers, and used to varying degrees by poets ranging from those of the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and ’70s to practitioners of contemporary hip-hop and spoken word. Some of the poets under consideration include Amiri Baraka, Oscar Brown Jr., Jayne Cortez, Gil-Scott Heron, June Jordan, The Last Poets, Carl Hancock Rux, Sonia Sanchez, Patricia Smith, Jessica Care Moore, Laini Mataka, and Saul Williams.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL334
Prereq: ENGL216 OR ENGL336 OR ENGL337

AFAM335 Fugitives and Freedman: The Politics of Slavery in the Civil War Era
The actions of fugitive slaves and newly-freed people turned the crisis of American union into a war for emancipation. Questions of slavery’s expansion, permanence, and end dominated the political discourse of the United States from 1848 through 1877. This course will examine the ways in which political actors, especially African Americans, kept the twin issues of slavery and emancipation in the public sphere to restructure American society in the middle of the 19th century.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST325
Prereq: None

AFAM343 Empires of Captivity: The Resurgence of Atlantic Slavery in the Age of Emancipations
The dawn of the 19th century was marked by a series of challenges to Atlantic slavery, epitomized first by the unprecedented victories of the Haitian Revolution and then by the implementation of municipal bans and bilateral treaties that sought to limit the international trade in African captives. Yet seemingly paradoxically, this same period saw the rapid expansion of new zones of enslavement stretching from the U.S. South to Cuba, Brazil, and beyond. Proslavery forces mobilized across these jurisdictions in order to reverse the tide of abolition and to participate in (or simply to profit from) a burgeoning illegal trade in captives. Meanwhile, people of African descent who were enslaved or re-enslaved during this period built upon the precedent of emancipation in Haiti and other anti-slavery jurisdictions as they mounted claims to freedom for themselves, their families, and their communities. They continuously pushed forward the halting pace of general emancipation, laying the foundations for struggles for recognition and restitution that continue to the present day.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-LAST, SBS-LAST
Identical With: LAST343
Prereq: None

AFAM344 The Haitian Revolution Beyond Borders
In 1791, enslaved people rose up against their masters in the French colony of Saint-Domingue, at the time the most profitable plantation society in the world. Thirteen years later, their efforts would culminate in the declaration of independence of Haiti, a nation founded on the pillars of antislavery, anticolonialism, and racial equality. This course investigates the regional and global significance of this revolution through its interconnections with Haiti’s neighbors in the Caribbean and across Latin America. First, we will look at the immediate implications of Haiti’s founding for the fate of New World slavery during the Age of Revolutions. Next, we will consider Haiti’s long-term impact on national identities, racial formations, and future revolutionary struggles in the Americas over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Offering: Crosslisting
ways in which we understand expressions of race and queerness? social categories of identification such as gender, ethnicity, and class, shape the complicit in cultural and institutional forms of racial oppression? How do other scholarship both supported antiracist efforts and, also, how have they been of these identity categories? Furthermore, how have queer movement and race interact, and how does this interaction inform the meanings of each understandings of both queer and racial identities? In what ways do sexuality and to study race? How do institutions--religious, legal, and scientific--shape our moment and in relationship to various cultural, social, legal, and political milieus. Throughout the course we will consider, What does it mean to study queerness function alongside critical race theory, ethnic studies, and sociopolitical antiracist efforts. Students will be asked to consider the history of queer studies and queer politics, the contemporary state of queer movements, and future visions of queer life. We will take an interdisciplinary approach, and we will rely upon a diverse range of theoretical, historical, and cultural studies texts. We will explore the normative parameters of both sexual and racial identities, probing the terms of identification to consider their meaning in the contemporary moment and in relationship to various cultural, social, legal, and political milieus. Throughout the course we will consider, What does it mean to study queerness and to study race? How do institutions--religious, legal, and scientific--shape our understandings of both queer and racial identities? In what ways do sexuality and race interact, and how does this interaction inform the meanings of each of these identity categories? Furthermore, how have queer movement and scholarship both supported antiracist efforts and, also, how have they been complicit in cultural and institutional forms of racial oppression? How do other social categories of identification such as gender, ethnicity, and class, shape the ways in which we understand expressions of race and queerness?
This course undertakes to look at the careers of two African American writers--

AFAM364 Friendship and Collaboration: In Theory, In Practice

How do we conceive of friendship, collaboration, love, and collectivity? In an interview, Michel Foucault stated that the relational task of the homosexual was to ‘invent, from A to Z, a relationship that is still formless, which is friendship: that is to say, the sum of everything through which they can give each other pleasure.’ This course considers theories and performances of relationality, queer belonging, and friendship with an emphasis on forms of belonging and recognition that exceed normative protocols. We will ask how queer practices, black thought, and indigenous epistemologies inform our own imaginations of collaborative projects. Beginning with philosophical determinations of friendship, we will branch out to imagine ways in which artists, lovers, friends, and/or co-habitators enact togetherness. This class will focus on theoretical readings and creative exercises and will culminate in a collaborative project.

This counts as an Expanded Field of Theater course for the Theater Major.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-THEA
Identical With: THEA364, ENGL362
Prereq: None

AFAM365 Black Leadership in Historical Perspective

This course uses the lens of history to evaluate why some individuals are considered most effective as civic, elected, bureaucratic, and appointed leaders in African American history. The course will analyze social scientific models of leadership and then go into the historical record to discover meaningful and illuminating patterns. Careful consideration is given to the distinctive challenges posed by race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and institutional settings.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: AMST342
Prereq: None

AFAM371 Sister Acts: Black Feminist/Womanist Theater of the African Diaspora

This course surveys the dynamism and scope of contemporary feminist/womanist drama written by black women playwrights of the African Diaspora. Reading select plays from Africa, Canada, the Caribbean, England, and the United States, alongside theory and criticism, we examine the impact of race, gender, identity, and sexuality politics on black feminist/womanist theater. Throughout our study of these dramatic texts, their performances, and their subsequent critiques, we are equally invested in the bridges and the gaps, the audibles and the silences, and the overlaps and the divides, as they are formed. Significantly, this analytic undertaking involves a simultaneous critique of the role of the playwright, the spectator, and the critic of black feminist/womanist theater. At all times, consideration is given to the ways in which these playwrights collectively use theater as a platform to explore black and female and diasporic subjectivities across regional, national, and, at times, linguistic differences.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL371, FGSS371, THEA371
Prereq: None

AFAM372 Race, Violence, and Resistance: Pauline Hopkins and Charles Chesnutt

This course undertakes to look at the careers of two African American writers who flourished at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries.

Through an exploration of a range of their published writings--novels, short stories, political and historical essays, biographical sketches, and journalism--we will attempt to understand some of the key cultural, social, and political issues of the era in which they wrote. We will also see the ways these two different writers conceived of and entered the literary marketplace, and how the independent venues and established publishing houses with which they were associated affected their artistry. In the end, an examination of two writers of different temperaments, different literary sensibilities, and different political affiliations will help us more profoundly understand the remarkable challenges African American writers faced during the decades from 1890 to 1910.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL372
Prereq: None

AFAM375 Black Global Cities

In this course, we will analyze representations of cities and Black urban modernity in Afro-diasporic literature of the twentieth and twenty-first century. Placing special emphasis on the global hubs of London, Cape Town, Kinshasa, Lagos, New York, Marseilles, and Kingston, we will ask what makes these former imperial sites Black global cities? We will read literary works on and from Black Global Cities alongside sociological texts on urbanization, globalization and discuss the extent to which literary representations either collude with or challenge dominant national and transnational narratives about Black urban modernity. Although each week’s readings will focus on a different location, we will approach these locales as nodes in larger global networks of people, texts, and goods rather than as discreet, bounded places. To this end, we will trace how histories of racial formation move across borders and are transposed onto different spaces, and to what effect. Authors we will read include: Claude McKay, James Baldwin, Gabeba Baderoon, Petina Gappah, Kei Miller, and Teju Cole. We will also watch films such as Girlhood (2014), Black Panther (2018), The Harder They Come (1972), Bad Friday: Rastafari After Coral Gardens (2011), Welcome to Nollywood (2007).

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL375, AMST375
Prereq: None

AFAM379 The Fire Next Time: The Modern Black Freedom Struggle

The Fire Next Time explores the spectrum of African American politics in the mid-20th century United States. It will examine not only the nonviolent social movement against the Jim Crow South but will scrutinize expanding notions of black militancy against racial oppression in modern America. We will complete and discuss readings on the ‘short’ and ‘long’ civil rights movements; the position of women in movements for black equality; the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X; the work of civil rights activists in the urban North; and the movement for Black Power. This course seeks to provide students with an understanding of the major themes and contexts of the most important social movement of the 20th-century United States.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST379
Prereq: None

AFAM386 Theory of Jazz Improvisation

This course concentrates on the vocabulary of improvisation in the African American classical tradition. Rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic knowledge will be approached through the study of scales, chords, modes, ear training,
AFAM387 Black Religions in the Americas
This course will focus on the African-based religious systems that cultivated traditional ways to survive slavery, white supremacy, and state violence. We will focus on Vodou in Haiti, Regla de Ocha (Santeria) and Palo Mayombe in Cuba, Obeah in Jamaica, and aspects of Black religions in the US. We will discuss questions of method and themes of political resistance, orality, secrecy, magic, ‘authenticity,’ commodification, and the ethics of representation. We will also look at the Black church and especially the role of the Pentecostal movement in African and Afro-Caribbean spaces, as well as visionary Black religious thought.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC210
Prereq: MUSC103

AFAM388 Wesleyan New Music Ensemble I
This ensemble class offers a unique opportunity for graduate and undergraduate performers and composers to explore and perform various acoustic and electroacoustic works composed by composers of avant-garde and experimental music in America after 1950. Additionally, composers who are enrolled in the course may be asked to create pieces that are specifically designed for any number of the ensemble participants. Through extensive large ensemble rehearsals and small group rehearsal labs that will culminate in a performance (or a series of performances), students will develop a deep understanding and appreciation of contemporary music performance techniques and collaborative processes. Students will gain skills that pertain to the reading of scores, the execution of complex rhythmic and melodic passages, music composed using graphic and/or textual notation, event scores, and extended instrumental performance techniques. Advanced Western musical literacy is required in order to succeed in this course. All instrumentalists (including the human voice) are encouraged to participate.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC457
Prereq: None

AFAM390 Jazz Improvisation Performance
This course continues the work begun in MUSC457 with intensive study of large-ensemble repertoire composed by Duke Ellington, Charles Mingus, Thad Jones, Fletcher Henderson, and others. A yearlong commitment to rehearsal of the compositions as well as listening and reading assignments will culminate in a second-semester public concert.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC456
Prereq: None

AFAM396 Jazz Orchestra I
This course is an intensive study of large-ensemble repertoire composed by Duke Ellington, Charles Mingus, Thad Jones, Fletcher Henderson, and others. A yearlong commitment to rehearsal of the compositions as well as listening and reading assignments will culminate in a second-semester public concert.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC458
Prereq: None

AFAM401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

AFAM402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

AFAM403 Department/Program Project or Essay
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
AFAM407 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

AFAM408 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

AFAM409 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

AFAM410 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

AFAM411 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

AFAM412 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

AFAM419 Student Forum
Student-run group tutorial, sponsored by a faculty member and approved by the chair of a department or program.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

AFAM420 Student Forum
Student-run group tutorial, sponsored by a faculty member and approved by the chair of a department or program.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

AFAM420A Student Forum
Student-run group tutorial, sponsored by a faculty member and approved by the chair of a department or program.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

AFAM420B Student Forum
Student-run group tutorial, sponsored by a faculty member and approved by the chair of a department or program.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

AFAM450 Steelband
This is an ensemble course in the musical arts of the Trinidadian steelband. Students learn to perform on steelband instruments and study the social, historical, and cultural context of the ensemble. We also address issues of theory, acoustics, arranging, and composing. Readings, recordings, and video viewings supplement in-class instruction. The ensemble will present public performances.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC450

AFAM469 Education in the Field, Undergraduate
Students must consult with the department and class dean in advance of undertaking education in the field for approval of the nature of the responsibilities and method of evaluation.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: None
Prereq: None

AFAM470 Independent Study, Undergraduate
Credit may be earned for an independent study during a summer or authorized leave of absence provided that (1) plans have been approved in advance, and (2) all specified requirements have been satisfied.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 0.50
Gen Ed Area: None
Prereq: None

AFAM491 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
The teaching apprentice program offers undergraduate students the opportunity to assist in teaching a faculty member's course for academic credit.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

AFAM492 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
The teaching apprentice program offers undergraduate students the opportunity to assist in teaching a faculty member's course for academic credit.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT