African American Studies

The African American studies major offers 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, which features 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 program is enriched further by the programming of the Center for African American Studies. The center’s offerings deepen classroom and campuswide conversations about contemporary and historic matters relating to African American studies and to the African diaspora.

Faculty

Lois Brown
BA, Duke University; PHD, Boston College
Class of 1958 Distinguished Professor; Professor of African American Studies; Professor of English; Professor, Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

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

Elizabeth McAllister
BA, Vassar College; MA, Yale University; MA, Yale University; MPHIL, Yale University; PHD, Yale University
Professor of Religion; Chair, African American Studies; Director, Center for African American Studies; Professor, African American Studies; Professor, American Studies; Professor, Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Professor, Latin 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

Nicole Lynn Stanton
BA, Antioch College; MFA, Ohio State University
Associate Professor of Dance; Associate Professor, African American Studies; Associate Professor, Environmental Studies

Affiliated Faculty

Katherine Brewer Ball
BA, Occidental College; MA, New York University; PHD, New York University
Assistant Professor of Theater; Visiting Assistant Professor, African American Studies

Anthony Ryan Hatch
AB, Dartmouth College; MA, University of Maryland College Park; PHD, University of Maryland College Park
Associate Professor of Science in Society; Associate Professor, African American Studies; Associate Professor, Sociology

Jay Clinton Hoggard
BA, Wesleyan University; MA, Wesleyan University
Professor of Music; Professor, African American Studies

Renee Johnson Thornton
BA, SUNY at Binghamton; MALS, Wesleyan University; PHD, University of Rhode Island
Dean for the Class of 2018; Research Affiliate, African American Studies

Axelle Karera
BA, York University; PHD, Pennsylvania State University
Assistant Professor of Philosophy; Visiting Assistant Professor, African American Studies; Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Center for the Humanities

Rashida Z. Shaw McMahon
BA, Wesleyan University; MA, Northwestern University; PHD, Northwestern University
Assistant Professor of English; Assistant Professor, African American Studies

H. Shellae Versey
BS, Tuskegee University; MPH, Columbia University; MS, University of Michigan; PHD, University of Michigan
Assistant Professor of Psychology; Faculty Fellow, College of the Environment; Assistant Professor, African American Studies

Tiphanie Yanique
BA, Tufts University; MFA, University Houston Univ Pk
Associate Professor of English; Director, Creative Writing; Associate Professor, African American Studies

Visiting Faculty

Casey Hayman
BA, University of Massachusetts Amherst; MA, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Visiting Assistant Professor of African American Studies

Jesse Nasta
BA, Wesleyan University; MA, Northwestern University; PHD, Northwestern University
Visiting Assistant Professor of African American Studies

Emeriti

Gayle Pemberton
BA, University of Michigan; MA, Harvard University; MAA, Wesleyan University; PHD, Harvard University
Professor of English, Emerita; Professor of African American Studies, Emerita
AFAM111 Introduction to Critical Philosophy of Race
This first-year seminar (FYS) 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: PHIL111
Prereq: None

AFAM115F Freedom School
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: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM118 Ebony Tower: The Rise of Black Studies
This course will examine the emergence and development of black studies as a field of academic study. We will consider the historical origins and political implications of black studies and the appearance of courses, programs, and departments on college campuses around the country starting in 1968, paying attention to the involvement of black student protest and the engagement of black community organizations off campus; the impact of social movements for black power, Third World solidarity, and education reform; and the role of white overseers in the form of philanthropic organizations and college administrations. In addition, we will explore the relationship between institutionalized black studies units (courses, programs, and departments) and traditional academic fields and disciplines with respect to theory, methodology, pedagogy, and purpose to understand how and why black studies scholarship advances interpretations of American (or Western) history and culture that challenge and disrupt conventional narratives about those topics. Finally, we will consider the relationship between black studies and black communities, as well as off-campus efforts to research, teach, and learn about the black experience that coincided with the formalization of black studies in the academy.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
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: AMST275, ENGL240
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 national citizenship played out across the African Diaspora and in the United States.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: AMST213
Prereq: None
AFAM204 Introduction to Modern African American History
This class will examine African American history from 1877 to the present. Central themes will include the post-Reconstruction period, Jim Crow, urbanization, migration, persistent institutionalized discrimination in education and the legal system, and key social justice movements such as the civil rights movement and black power.
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-PHI
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 I Strike the Empire Back: Black Youth Culture in the Neoliberal Age
Using hip-hop as a lens to explore the development of diasporic black youth culture in the neoliberal age, this course considers the African American experience during the close of the 20th century and dawning of the 21st. Our investigation will be concerned with at least two things that we will examine in parallel throughout the semester. On one hand, we will dig deeply into the origins and evolution of hip-hop artistry—including visual art, dance, music, lyrics, and performance—and the impact of commercial forces on those forms. On the other hand, we will pay serious attention to the ascendance of neoliberal political ideology in the United States to understand the impact of those global
economic and political realignments on the generation of black people who gave
birth to or, later, inherited hip-hop.

Of central importance will be the Nixon administration's adoption of a policy of
benign neglect toward black communities living in the nation's crumbling cities;
the replacement of the War on Poverty with the War on Drugs; the enactment of
free trade policies that accelerated the deindustrialization of the American
economy and deepened the structural unemployment of black people in the
United States; the militarization of municipal police forces; and the explosive
growth of the carceral state.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM, HA-AFAM
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: AMST228
Prereq: None

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,
avtivism, 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

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-AFAM
Identical With: FGSS221, ENGL222
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 Louisianitude.

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

AFAM224 Afrofuturism
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 Afrofuturist 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: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: ENGL284
Prereq: None

AFAM228 Health Inequities: African American Community
This course provides an overview of political, social, cultural, economic, and
environmental barriers facing African American communities in the United States
and their health effects. Topics include case studies of the impact of historical
medical practices that have contributed to the mistrust between the American
medical establishment and African American communities; a critical analysis
of the larger structure's role in creating, sustaining, and maintaining current
health inequities in communities of color; and an exploration of the link between
healthy communities, distributive justice, and social justice.

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

AFAM231 African American Social Thought
African Americans have preserved a rich chronicle of the experiences and views
of people of African descent in the United States in writings of scholars, activists,
and creative artists. These writings focus on racism and how it has structured
identity, opportunities, and conflict. Contrary to images of a monolithic African
American community, these writings reveal diversity, tension, and conflict. The
course will focus on and explore the recurring and dominant themes in this
rich corpus of African American social thought. Students will gain expertise in
using specific resources and databases for African American-related research
and also begin to assess some of the ethical implications of arguments and
positions regarding the history and status of African Americans. Finally, the course will address a range of key African American social thought concepts and interpretations with some consideration of formal frameworks, paradigms, and methods used to generate and assess credibility, veracity, and reasonableness of these ideas.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
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

AFAM241 Ebony Singers: Gospel Music
This course will be a study of African American religious music through the medium of performance. The areas of study will consist of traditional gospel, contemporary gospel, spirituals, and hymns in the African American tradition. The members of the group will be chosen through a rigorous audition (with certain voice qualities and characteristics).

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 0.50
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC448
Prereq: None

AFAM243 Caribbean Writers in the U.S. Diaspora
The Caribbean cloaks a complex history in a Club Med exterior. While white sands and palm trees proclaim it the “antidote to civilization,” Caribbean writers undertake to represent a fuller picture of the individual in a world shaped by colonialism, slavery, nationalism, and cultural striving. This course will examine selected literary texts as part of an ongoing dialogue among the region’s history, mythology, and aesthetics.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL243, AMST247, LAST247
Prereq: None

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

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 chance to develop their own poetics through a semester-long poetry collection assignment.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-AFAM
Identical With: ENGL238
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

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
### AFAM260 Blues People: Race, Ethnicity and Popular Music

This course explores African American history in the United States through song and story. 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 magazines 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 Hip Hop/Black Vernacular Dance

This course is an introductory practice overview of Hip Hop dance drawing from the early 1970s to the present. Through the use of movement practice and visual aids, this course will critically examine the Hip Hop dance vernacular historically, anatomically and emotionally. Styles covered in the class will include traditional styles such as Locking, Popping and House fundamentals, as well as more current ‘party dances’ and their connection to African dance. This course will also look at Hip Hop dance forms from an evolutionary perspective with a focus on changes over time and space.

**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:** AMST267, MUSC275  
**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 Weheilye, Brandon Jacobs-Jenkins, Suzan Lori-Parks, Danai Gurira, Shane Vogel, Adrienne Kennedy, Sarah Jane Cervenak, Dee Rees, Celiné 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:** ENGL263, THEA266, FGSS276  
**Prereq:** None

### AFAM268 Contemporary Art in Africa and Diaspora

The main focus of this course is contemporary African art and art of the African diaspora. We begin with a brief survey of painting by African-American artists of the late nineteenth and twentieth century—an artistic flowering accompanied the independence of African nations after 1957. Contemporary African artists must address overriding issues of social and political importance. Their work speaks
eloquently to such issues as the desire for peace, the struggle against pollution and climate change. As art becomes increasingly trans-cultural, the art of the African diaspora takes on a new cultural meaning.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA267
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 recidivism, mental health issues in the criminal justice system, treatment engagement, and the creation of valued roles in the community. Students will have the opportunity to participate in federal research studies.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: ANTH269, CSPL269, AMST268
Prereq: None

AFAM271 The Prison State: Race, Law, and Mass Incarceration in U.S. History
The United States 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. For example, Black people are incarcerated at more than five times the rate of whites. This course will explore the historical causes and origins of the United States’ mass incarceration crisis. Beginning with slavery and continuing through the rise of prisons, debt peonage, Jim Crow, and beyond, 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.

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

AFAM273 Vodou in Haiti–Vodou in Hollywood
The Afro-Creole religion of the Haitian majority is a complex system of inherited roles and rituals that Afro-Creole people remembered and created during and after plantation slavery. Called "serving the spirits," or "Vodou," this religion and cultural system continues as a spiritual method and family obligation in Haiti and its diaspora and draws constantly on new symbols and ideas. Vodou has also captured the imagination of Hollywood and television, and the entertainment industry has produced numerous films and television episodes, and now computer games, with "Voodoo" themes. This course explores the anthropology of Vodou as a religious practice and relates it to the cultural studies of North American representations of Voodoo. We will ask, What constitutes the thought and practice of Haitian Vodou? How is Vodou represented in American media? How can we analyze the patterns and tropes that operate in images of Voodoo? We will explore questions of religious ritual, political resistance and orality, secrecy and spectacle, authenticity and commodification, racism, media studies, and the ethics of representation.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: AMST283, RELI273
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 adaptations 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
As the age of the Middle Passage took shape and the rendition of Africans to the New World intensified, memory became one of the most invaluable and provocative tools with which enslaved and forcibly relocated people could achieve self-preservation, maintain their humanity, and negotiate the unpredictable and disorienting world of North America. The writings of early America that attend to matters of race and place shed light on the power of genre, the influence of piety and religiosity. We will think together about the evocative connections between memory and place as we work with primary documents generated by and about people of African descent in 18th-century America. We will also attend to African American literary production from the 18th century through the 1850s that insistently links narratives of race and place to the deployments of literary forms. Finally, we will consider the rich intertextuality in these works that locates African American writing in the larger American, African, and Western literary traditions.

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 Signifying(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 imageries 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 “signifying(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
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 Africans 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. Combatting 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
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

AFAM278 When Europe Met Africa: Portugal, Spain, West Africa, 1440—1650
This course looks at Iberian overseas expansion, from the early 15th to the late 17th century. The Portuguese and Spanish sea-borne empires may be termed the first globalization. This course, which focuses on West Africa, is interdisciplinary. It combines art history and history to integrate images and written documents. African artists depicted Europeans, just as European painters and sculptors represented Africans. These images tell us much about how members of one culture viewed the distant peoples with whom they were just coming into contact. The earliest European Renaissance paintings of Africans show them as dignitaries and often as rulers (e.g., “The Adoration of the Magi”). This reflects the presence in Europe of African dignitaries, both secular and religious. At the same time, African sculptors represented Portuguese soldiers and missionaries in ivory carvings, so it is possible for us, 500 years later, to compare these representations.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Prereq: None

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

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

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, created 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

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-RELI
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 interracialisms, from African Americans' mania for kung fu in the 1970s, to interracially buddy films like Rush Hour (1998), to the contemporary fiction of writers such as Patricia Poweli and Charles Johnson.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AMST
Identical With: AMST291
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, proteges, and enemies. By placing Wright amid the network of supporters, admirers, and detractors who surrounded him, we will gain a deepened 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

AFAM299 African History and Art
This course traces the art and cultural history of selected West African societies from the 12th century to the early 20th century. Each week we will focus on a single work of art, as that work illuminates social and cultural history. The objects will include royal bronze sculpture from the Kingdom of Benin (16th century); a carved ivory vessel from Guinée or Sierra Leone (16th century); a horned initiation mask made of woven fiber from Senegal (19th century); and a map of the Sahara made in Spain by a Jewish artist in 1375. Each object sheds light on the history, religion, and culture of the region from which it comes.

The trans-Saharan trade was crucial to both North and West Africa. From Morocco came the Muslim religion, as well as Islamic architecture. In 1445 Portuguese mariners arrived on the Atlantic coast of West Africa. From that moment on, West Africa has been part of a global economy. Already by 1500, the growth of Creole Euro-African communities is reflected in artwork.

"Art" is best understood in the specific historical context and the culture in which it develops. To us, removed in space and in time from these African societies, architecture, sculpture, and ritual performance help to illuminate the lives of the people we are studying. Ultimately, we will consider such questions as, Does African art exist? What is "African art"? Who defines art--Africans or Westerners?
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA299, FIST299
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: Defining African American Studies
Between 1896 and 1914, W.E.B. Du Bois organized an annual conference at Atlanta University devoted to documenting and analyzing the oppressive structural conditions shaping black life in the United States. Though arguably the genesis of African American studies as a systematic academic endeavor, these sociological conferences also joined a long intellectual tradition that has always exceeded and often resisted the Western academy. This colloquium examines how the African diaspora has generated knowledge both within and beyond the ivory tower—from cargo holds to quilombos, prisons to abortion clinics, newsrooms to classrooms, from music studios to dancehalls and soundstages. Students will engage closely with several defining texts, methods, movements, and moments concerning black life in the Americas. Ultimately, we seek to possibilities toward defining an African American studies program and praxis that addresses the political, social, intellectual, and epistemic needs of the 21st century.
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 unheard 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 unheard language will play out.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: AMST302, ENGL304
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

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

AFAM308 Faulkner and Morrison
This course will delve deeply into the works of two Nobel Prize-winning authors—William Faulkner and Toni Morrison—whose fiction interrogates and challenges what it means to be an American, what it means to be an African American, and, much more broadly, what it means to be human. Through close study of their novels, the seminar will consider questions of narrative (form, function, and scope), history (national and personal, real and imagined), and identity (racial, gender, geographical).
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL383
Prereq: None

AFAM310 Iberian Expansion and the “Discovery” of Africa in Travel Narratives and Art, 1420–1640
This seminar is broadly centered on Atlantic history from the early 15th to the middle of the 17th centuries. The course addresses the origins of culture contact between Europe and Africa and the subsequent creation of mixed cultures. We will trace European expansion from the earliest Portuguese sea voyages along the African coast, shortly after 1420, to the opening of maritime commerce to West Africa and the origins of the transatlantic slave trade. We will examine evolving attitudes on the part of both Europeans and African peoples toward each other as documented in travel literature and in artistic representations of Africans by European artists and of African sculptures by Portuguese explorations of Africa began around 1420, the expansion of commerce and the settlement of Europeans, mostly Portuguese, on the West African coast led to a period of extensive métissage (mixture), both cultural and physical, and of remarkable fluidity in attitudes toward Africans. However, by the early 17th century, the Atlantic slave trade had begun to take on important dimensions, setting the stage for the increasingly racialist attitudes that would characterize European relations with Africa during the colonial period.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM, HA-AFAM
Identical With: ARHA300
Prereq: None

AFAM313 The Black South
This course will examine the enduring and often unanticipated connections between African American and southern literature. We will consider the ways in
which the American South remains a space that simultaneously represents and repels an African American ethos.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-AFAM
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

AFAM316 Middletown Materials: Archaeological Analysis
Buried beneath you as you walk the streets of Middletown is the residue of former residents. Mostly consisting of fragments of ceramics, glass, and other objects, these hold the potential to unlock the day-to-day history of their past owners and users. In this class students will take part in excavation and analysis of a 19th-century free African American community, tied to the AME Zion Church. This site, known as the Beman Triangle, today sits on the Wesleyan campus. We will explore the history of the site through artifacts and will investigate the ties between the Beman Triangle and Wesleyan University. This is a community archaeology project; students will work with community members on the project as equal partners and will explore ways in which archaeological heritage can be shared with local residents. This will include touring visitors around the site and weekend excavations. Students will learn the basics of archaeological fieldwork through hands-on training.

The first two weeks of class will be spent in introducing the site. The next four weeks will be spent undertaking excavation, including three Saturday excavation days. We will then spend the remainder of the semester cataloging and interpreting this material, while also learning more about similar archaeological sites. The class may include a trip to the UMass Boston Fiske Center for Archaeological Research.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ARCP
Identical With: ANTH326, ARCPC325
Prereq: None

AFAM322 Advanced Themes in 20th-Century Afro-American Art
This seminar is intended for students who have already taken introductory Afro-American art or ARHA 267 (Art in Africa and Diaspora). The purpose of the seminar is to organize an exhibition and to write an accompanying, online catalog of works by African American artists from the collection of the Davison Art Center.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: FIST325, CHUM324, SISP324
Prereq: None
AFAM327 Field Methods in Archaeology
Buried beneath you as you walk the streets of Middletown is the residue of former residents. Mostly consisting of fragments of ceramics, glass, and other objects, these hold the potential to begin to unlock the day-to-day history of their past owners and users. On the triangle of land between Vine Street, Cross Street, and Knowles Avenue (known as the Beman Triangle), a community of African Americans began to build houses from the mid-19th century on land owned by one of their community, Leveret Beman. Although few above-ground traces now suggest the presence of this community, material about their lives survives in the record of their trash and other archaeological features that remain beneath the backyards of the houses on this land. In this class we will study the archaeology of this site, in partnership with members of the wider Middletown community, particularly from the AME Zion Church.

This class will provide general training in historical archaeological field methods. Students will spend time each day participating in excavations on the Beman Triangle site or working on materials analysis in the Cross Street Archaeology Laboratory. Through practical work, students will learn excavation techniques, field recording, artifact analysis, and how to integrate relevant documentary and oral historical sources into archaeological interpretations. Academic material in the class will cover the archaeology of 19th-century African American communities, archaeological field methods, and studies of how community archaeology projects can be formulated as an equal partnership between community stakeholders and archaeologists.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ARCP
Identical With: AMST258, ANTH373, ARCP373
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, Latina/o/x, and Caribbean arts. We will consider the diasporas and collectives grouped together in the terms “minoritarian,” “brown,” and “black” as abnormals 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: AMST327, ENGL328, FGSS308
Prereq: None

AFAM342 Knowledge, Race, and Justice: A Transhistorical Perspective
This course examines the relation between the production of knowledge and discourses of race/alterity in three significant historical moments: during the 16th-century expansion of Spain into the Americas, during the 18th-century Enlightenment in Europe, and in the late 19th- and early 20th-century postbellum United States. In each period, a school of thought will be under investigation. The course begins with the Spanish School of Salamanca’s discussion of the “affairs of the Indies,” undertaken in the context of the then-emergent juridical/natural law perspective that was articulated as the primary basis of ethical judgments and that served as the conceptual framework within which the question of the status of the indigenous peoples and the expropriations of their lands was to be considered. Then the course moves to the European Enlightenment (Scottish, French, and German), where one of the central preoccupations remained a new taxonomy classifying human groups, this as part of an increasing scientific perspective. Finally, the Dunning School of historiography, located primarily at Johns Hopkins and Columbia universities, is examined. The formulations of this school of thought emerged in the aftermath of the Civil War and provided intellectual justification for the reconfiguration of racial hierarchy during the era of Reconstruction and beyond. Moreover, several of the prominent historians associated with the school played an important role in the founding and in the early development of the professionalization of the discipline of history in the United States.

Each school of thought will be examined for its respective insights as well as for the limitations that we can perceive from a contemporary standpoint. These intellectual movements will be analyzed for their conceptualization that made the colonization of the Americas (in the case of the Spanish), the hierarchical categorization of human groups (in the case of the Enlightenment), or the reaffirmation of a postslavery racial hierarchy (in the case of the United States) seem legitimate and just.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-CHUM
Identical With: HIST346, CHUM342
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
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-LAST
Identical With: LAST344
Prereq: None

AFAM350 The Law, the Citizen, and the Literary and Cinematic Imaginations
In this course, we will study several major legal events that highlight the contradictions and injustices in the history of U.S. citizenship and the ways this history has been reimagined in literature and cinema. Among the topics discussed will be the slave codes, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the Fugitive Slave Act, the Jim Crow order, the Bracero program, sodomy laws, and SB 1070. We will consider theories of citizen, state, race, and sexuality implicit in these legal structures, with an eye for who may be incorporated into the body politic and who is unassimilable by design, and on what terms. In addition, we will consider the way literary and cinematic texts engage the rhetoric and psychic effects of the law and the way they present different imaginaries of human bodies, communities, and temporalities. Our focus will be on African American, African diasporic, Latina/o/x and Indigenous literatures and cinemas, as they reveal the rifts and conjunctions among the categories citizen, “savage,” “gente sin razón,” slave, illegal, pervert, and deviant.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
that is to say, the sum of everything through which they can give each other
to "invent, from A to Z, a relationship that is still formless, which is friendship:
How do we conceive of friendship, collaboration, love, and collectivity? In an
AFAM364 Friendship and Collaboration: In Theory, In Practice
Identical With: AMST350, ENGL350
Prereq: None

AFAM353 Race and Spectacle in African American Literature and Film
The visible black body was essential to the business of the antebellum auction
block, the success of the anti slavery movement, the popularity of the Jim Crow
stage, and the escapism provided by the theatre and its unruly secular relation,
the circus. Despite, and also because of, such hypervisibility, black bodies
manipulated and deployed invisibility in order to secure freedom, to achieve
reform, and to survive. Writers such as Henry Box Brown, Ellen and William Craft,
Pauline Hopkins, Nella Larsen, Ernest Gaines, and Octavia Butler demonstrate
the ways in which exaggerated performances of race and raced identities can
reveal the fictions of law and the power of marginality. This term, we will think
together about what African American writers, as well as American and English
filmmakers, render unbelievable in order to facilitate encounters with the real,
the power of raced spectacle, and the consequences for society once spectacular
truths are unleashed.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: None
Identical With: CHUM353
Prereq: None

AFAM361 The Psychology of Prejudice and Discrimination
This seminar offers a social psychological analysis of different forms of prejudice
and discrimination, including racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism, and
less recognized forms of bias, such as the exploitation and control of indigenous
peoples, animals, and the natural environment.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PSYC
Identical With: PSYC361
Prereq: PSYC260

AFAM362 The Sounds of Black and Brown Performance
This course organizes itself as a scene of listening with care to black and brown
sounds, where listening is conceived as a mode of audience engagement of
performances informed by avant-garde, queer, and critical race theories.
Listening, then, is part of the artistic-theoretical practices that students will both
read about and act out in this course. Here, we will engage theater, dance, and
performance with the demand of listening in brown for the distinct sounds made
in different performances, whether by identifiably racialized artist-subjects or
not, and how they compel us to think of embodiment. If to say black is to say
abjection, prison, AIDS, as well as the generative, the contra-rationally beautiful
(Moten), and if to say "gender-y" is to say threatening, off-kilter, violable, as
well playful, and transformative (Sedgwick, Doyle), then what happens when we
listen in brown, that is, with the headphones of melancholia, depression, as well
as wildness, the excessive, the "hot and spicy" as critiques of the violence of the
whitened norm (Muñoz)?
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: ENGL363, THEA366, CHUM366
Prereq: None

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, brown study, and indigenous epistemologies inform our own
imaginings of collaborative projects. Beginning with philosophical determinations
of friendship, we will branch out to imagine ways in which artists, lovers, friends,
and/or cohabitators enact togetherness. Artists and projects to be discusses
include: Andy Warhol's Factory, Hugo Ball, Emily Johnson, Black Salt Collective,
My Barbarian, Harriet's Apothecary, General Sisters, the Critical Indigenous
Photographic Exchange, Blackalicious and more.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-THEA
Identical With: ENGL362, THEA366
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

AFAM370 Engaging Audiences: Spectatorship Within Black Popular Culture and
Performance
This course uses recent scholarship on spectatorship and popular culture to
interrogate the production and reception of "popular" black performances and
representations within and beyond the United States. With special attention
to the historical context in which these black cultural products are created,
disseminated, and received, we focus on the social spaces, local contexts,
temporal conditions, and embodied acts within which these case studies
emerge and examine the political implications of their consumption and
sustainability. Central to our investigation will be a consideration of the ways in
which the terrain of "the popular" is inextricably linked to issues of aesthetics,
appropriation, authenticity, circulation, community, globalization, identity,
marginalization, meaning-making, and power. Case studies will include historic
and contemporary examples from theater, dance, film, music, media, and the
visual arts.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM370, THEA370
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: FGSS371, THEA371, ENGL371
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: AMST375, ENGL375
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, and transcription. Theoretical information will be applied to instruments in a workshop setting. Audition and permission of instructor are required at the first class. Intensive practice and listening are required. This course may not be repeated for credit.

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

AFAM387 Anthropology of Black Religions in the Americas
This course examines Afro-Creole religions and cultural expressions in selected communities throughout the Atlantic world. How were religious communities created under colonial domination? Under what conditions were religions shaped, and what shapes did they take? How are African-based religions produced through aesthetics and the ritual arts of spiritual talk and sermons, song, dance, drumming, and medicine-making? How do these religions continue to survive, thrive, and, in some cases, grow in the current historical period? This course will pay special attention to the yearly ritual cycle and its attendant festivals: Christmas, carnivals, Lent, Easter, saints’ days, feasts, and pilgrimages, as well as the emergent spiritual and aesthetic traditions such as Capoeira and Rara. We will study Orisha religions such as La Regla de Ocha, or Lukumi, in Cuba and the Latino U.S.; Candollemb in Brazil; Vodou in Haiti; and Garifuna traditions and spiritism in Puerto Rico.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-RELI
Identical With: LAST268, RELI268, ANTH267
Prereq: None

AFAM388 Wesleyan Ensemble for 20th and 21st Century Classical and Contemporary Music Part I
This ensemble class offers a unique opportunity for graduate and undergraduate performers and composers to explore and perform various acoustic, electronic, and electroacoustic works composed by various composers of experimental and new music in America and Europe after 1950. Additionally, composers who are enrolled in the course may be asked to compose pieces that are specifically designed for any number of the ensemble participants. Through extensive ensemble rehearsals and individually scheduled rehearsal labs that will culminate in a performance (or multiple performances), students will develop a deep understanding and appreciation of contemporary music performance techniques and collaborative processes. It is expected that students will gain skills that pertain to the reading of scores, the execution of complex rhythmic and melodic passages, 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: MUSC459
Prereq: None

AFAM389 Wesleyan Ensemble for 20th and 21st Century Classical and Contemporary Music Part II
This ensemble class offers a unique opportunity for graduate and undergraduate performers and composers to explore and perform various acoustic, electronic, and electroacoustic works composed by various composers of experimental and new music in America and Europe after 1950. Additionally, composers who are enrolled in the course may be asked to compose pieces that are specifically designed for any number of the ensemble participants. Through extensive ensemble rehearsals and individually scheduled rehearsal labs that will culminate in a performance (or multiple performances), students will develop a deep understanding and appreciation of contemporary music performance techniques and collaborative processes. It is expected that students will gain skills that pertain to the reading of scores, the execution of complex rhythmic and melodic passages, 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: MUSC460
Prereq: None

AFAM390 Jazz Improvisation Performance
In this extension of MUSC210, Theory of Jazz Improvisation, all materials previously explored will be applied to instruments in a workshop setting. Intensive practice and listening are required.

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: MUSC457
Prereq: None

AFAM397 Jazz Orchestra II
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: 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

AFAM404 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

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