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 English; Professor of African American Studies; 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 McAlister
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 African American Studies; Professor of English; Professor, Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

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

AFFILIATED FACULTY

Katherine Brewer Ball
BA, Occidental College; MA, New York University; PHD, New York University

Visiting Assistant Professor, African American Studies; Visiting Assistant Professor of Theater

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; affiliated faculty

Renee Johnson Thornton
BA, SUNY at Binghamton
Dean for the Class of 2018; Research Affiliate, African American Studies

Axelle Karera
BA, York University; PHD, Pennsylvania State University
Visiting Assistant Professor, African American Studies; Visiting Assistant Professor, Philosophy; 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
BA, 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 Evan 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

AFAM115 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 race, 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 anthropology.

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
In 1619 Dutch traders arrived in Jamestown, Virginia with 19 captured Africans, the first slaves in what became the United States. By 1860, the eve of the Civil War, one in eight Americans was a enslaved person of African descent. This course introduces students to the first two and a half centuries of African American history, from the beginning of North American slavery to slavery's destruction and the resulting battles over African American freedom. We will explore how people of African descent have experienced and responded to slavery, colonialism, and cultural constructions of race, as well as analyzing African American-led struggles over freedom and citizenship in the context of the American Revolution, the Haitian Revolution, and the Civil War. Through a comparative framework, we will also consider the U.S. within international, even global, histories of race, slavery, and freedom.

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-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 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: AMST288
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,
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 Phyllis 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: ENGL222, FGSS221
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: COL225, AMST226, FREN225, LAST220
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 literature 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
AFAM247 Contemporary African American Poetry and Its Pasts
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: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: FGSS247
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: FGSS246
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: FGSS245
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: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC448
Prereq: None

AFAM242 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

AFAM227 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

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-AFAM
Identical With: ENGL255
Prereq: None

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) 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, internment, imperialism, and global capitalism.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
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 explores 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 Weheileyi, 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: THEA266, ENGL263, 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
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-MATH
Identical With: RELI273, 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 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
Identical With: ENGL289
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 also will 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 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 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 “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
Gen Ed Area: HA-AFAM
Identical With: ENGL276
Prereq: None

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 anti-slavery.
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-RELI
Identical With: ARHA268
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-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL281, THEA280
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 intersections 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
Identical With: RELI391, AMST391
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, 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: A-F
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-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL284
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 Guinea 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: SBS-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: Envisioning Enslavement, Documenting Freedom
Accounts of enslavement, self-emancipation, and abolition in America have long been hailed for their gripping portraits of the unspeakable, the intensity of first hand accounts, and their unwavering calls to action. What is required to create these sophisticated testimonies and exhortations? What tools do novelists, journalists, activists, scholars and filmmakers deploy as they bear witness to a troublesome, sometimes elusive, and always stirring history? We will pair written and visual materials as we discuss the politics of historiography, memory, presence, and absence. We will use well-known and understudied primary sources; work in local, regional, and state archives and historic sites; and study classic and contemporary film as we think about core and essential scholarly imperatives of African American studies.

Authors will include a range of unknown individuals as well as influential writers and activists such as Phillis Wheatley, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Pauline Hopkins, Lawrence Hill, Shelley Ann Williams, Colson Whitehead, and Octavia Butler. Films may include Amazing Grace, Belle, The Journey of August King, The North Star, The Retrieval, and Uncle Tom’s Cabin.

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

AFAM303 Race Discourse in the Americas
This course investigates the belief system of race from its emergence in the early modern era to its contemporary relevance in various social and political issues. To examine the formation of the modern world, the course begins with the 15th-century expansion of Western Judeo-Christian Europe into Africa and the Americas. Then, we will examine the significance of race in several meaningful contexts, including the expropriation of indigenous in the Americas, the enslavement of Africans, 18th-century Enlightenment thinking, and the 19th-century shift to a “scientific” explanatory model. In addition, we will analyze the phenomenon of race in the U.S. civil rights movement and its rearticulation in relation to discourses of diversity and multiculturalism after the 1960s. Rather than employing the liberal humanist emphasis on “race relations” or a materialist analysis that views it as an epiphenomenon of an ostensibly more fundamental class dynamic, the course adopts a perspective of race as an organizing principle that institutes our present hegemonically-Western global order. To this end, the class will illustrate that race is but a secular variant of how human societies have organized and reproduced their cultural models.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST329
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 poetries, 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 heard, 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 anti-slavery 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

AFAM309 Black Political Thought

This course examines the emergence and development of various strains of black political thought in 20th-century America. Within this seminar, we will explore the roots, ideologies, and constructions of various forms of black political thought and action in relation to notions of black freedom and citizenship. Students will cover topics such as black nationalism, pan-Africanism, black radicalism, black conservatism, black liberalism, black feminism, black theology, critical race theory, and legal studies.

How and why did these various ideologies and ideas emerge? What did it mean to engage in black protest thought in the post-Reconstruction era? How has black political ideology shifted, transformed, clashed, competed, and evolved over the course of American social and political history? What is the significance and influence of 20th-century black political thought to modern African American and U.S. history?

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST309, AMST309
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 Europeans by African sculptors. After 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 racist 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
Identical With: ENGL346
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: ARCP325, ANTH326
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: HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA368
Prereq: [ARHA267 or AFAM268] OR [ARHA268 or AFAM278]

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 of 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/Modest Proposals” theme and speakers series during the Spring 2018 semester.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: SISP324, CHUM324, FIST325
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: ARCP373, ANTH373, AMST258
African American Studies

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: ENGL328, AMST327, FGSS308
Prereq: None

AFAM330 Topics in African American Literature: Charles Chesnutt and Pauline Hopkins
This course is meant to introduce students to an understudied period in African American literary history—the 1890s—and to two relatively understudied writers from that period—Charles Chesnutt and Pauline Hopkins. It is meant to broaden the reach of African American literary studies at Wesleyan.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL331, AMST332
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 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 of the discipline of history in the United States.

reaffirmation of a postslavery racial hierarchy (in the case of the United States) seems legitimate and just.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM342, HIST346
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 assimilable 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
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL350, AMST350
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 identifyably 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, violatable, 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: CHUM366, ENGL363, THEA366
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 discuss include: Andy Warhol's Factory, Hugo Ball, Emily Johnson, Black Salt Collective, My Barbarian, Harriet's Apothecary, General Sisters, the Critical Indigenous Photographic Exchange, Betalocal and more.

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

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: ENGL371, FGSS371, THEA371
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.; Candomble 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: RELI268, LAST268, ANTH267
Prereq: None

AFAM388 Real-Time Autoschediasms for Electroacoustic Creative Orchestra

This course offers an opportunity to consider real-time composition in a trans/non-idiomatic environment within the context of contemporary musical modeling. Through weekly intensive rehearsals culminating in a performance (or multiple performances), the creative orchestra participant will develop their listening, performance, and imaginative skills in this setting. All instruments (including the human voice) are welcome to participate. We very highly encourage participation in the course for those who perform on non-Western traditional instruments, laptops, or electronic homemade instruments.

Offering: Crosslisting
AFAM389 Real-Time Autoschediasms for Electroacoustic Creative Orchestra Part II
This course offers an opportunity to consider real-time composition in a trans/non-idiomatic environment within the context of contemporary musical modeling. Through weekly intensive rehearsals culminating in a performance (or multiple performances), the creative orchestra participant will develop their listening, performance, and imaginative skills in this setting. All instruments (including the human voice) are welcome to participate. We very highly encourage participation in the course for those who perform on non-Western traditional instruments, laptops, or electronic homemade instruments.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC459
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: MUSC460
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.
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