

The Department of African and Black Diaspora Studies

Course Descriptions

Fall 2022



ABD 100: Introduction to African and Black Diaspora Studies

Online Asynchronous
Instructor: Dr. Julie Moody-Freeman

This interdisciplinary introductory course to the field of African and Black Diaspora Studies investigates the many ways in which African and diasporic peoples have created robust lives for themselves and contributed to the creation of the modern world. Our investigation will pay special attention to how social, economic, and political institutions, geographical factors, and the cultural forces of modernity have influenced African contributions to the modern world.

The course begins with an examination of the central concepts of the field: diaspora (pre-modern and modern) and Pan-Africanism. The investigation of the diaspora will enable the class to engage questions of geography, history, identity, migration, pedagogy, politics, gender, and power.

ABD 208: African America: Ideas, Peoples, Cultures, Movements

MoWe 11:20AM – 12:50PM (LPC)
Instructor: Dr. Symone Johnson

Crosslisted with AMS 297. In what ways have African Americans tried to negotiate the demands of being part of American culture while maintaining a sense of the distinctiveness of their own culture? How have African American intellectual and cultural figures dealt with the paradox of a belief in American democracy

while recognizing that the mass enslavement of their ancestors was a constitutive part of it?

This course is intended to acquaint the student with a range of texts and concepts central to African American studies while emphasizing the development of students' critical reading, writing, and analytical skills. The course will act as an introduction to African American historical, literary, political, and cultural study. It is not meant to be the final word, but is meant to introduce the student to some of the complexities, debates, and questions that have shaped the study and development of Black America.

ABD 211: Africa to 1800: Age of Empires

Online Asynchronous
Instructor: Dr. Ogenga Otunnu

Crosslisted with HST 131. This class will focus on continental Africa with particular emphasis on the Age of Conquest, the origins of Afro-European relations and the political, economic and military causes of the European partition and occupation of the continent.

Founded in 2003, African and Black Diaspora Studies is committed to a rigorous, interdisciplinary and socially-conscious approach to the study of the ideas, peoples, and cultures of African descent around the world.

di'as'po'ra [dī-as-per-uh]: referring to a group that has been dispersed outside of its traditional homeland, especially involuntarily.

ABD 244: African Diaspora Women Writers

TuTh 11:20AM - 12:50PM

Instructor: Dr. Rita Mookerjee

Crosslisted with INT 388 and ENG 268.

This course reflects the contributions of contemporary women writers living and writing from the African diaspora. Though a mix of literary theory, fiction, and poetry, we will dismantle misconceptions and stereotypes while inspecting shared themes and textual properties from these authors. Citizenship, colonialism, tokenism, fetishization, and hybridity are key topics that we will study in the context of our readings. Through historical analyses, literary scholarship, and considerations of feminist theory, we will disrupt white narratives of feminism to arrive at complex ideas of intersectionality, feminism, and representation. Authors studied will include Audre Lorde, Jamaica Kincaid, Edwidge Danticat, Ijeoma Oluo, among others.

ABD 251: World Refugee Crisis

Online Asynchronous
Instructor: Dr. Ogenga Otunnu

Crosslisted with HST 241.

This course will raise questions and highlight debates about forced migration and the challenges of contemporary displacements. It will also ana-

lyze the causes and consequences of forced migration since 1500. With these objectives in mind, the course will examine some of the following themes and topics: refugee studies versus forced migration studies; international bill of human rights; causes of forced migration; regional and international human rights law and international refugee law; immigration, asylum and refugee policies; and internal displacements; among others.

ABD 252: Contemporary African Art: Independence to the Present

TuTh 9:40 AM - 11:10AM (LPC)
Instructor: Dr. Mark DeLancey

Crosslisted with HAA 203.

This course is a survey of contemporary African art and architecture, defined as extending from approximately 1960 until the present. 1960 is the year in which seventeen African countries gained their independence, a process that began in 1957 with Ghana becoming the first African country to do so. In general the first decades after independence represent a period of introspection in the arts as newly independent countries sought to define themselves. Much of the art of these first decades looks to the past as a source for the present. In the last several decades, African artists have engaged with the contemporary art world in increasingly diverse ways, yet have often complained of lack of access or being held to separate standards.

The course will alternate between considering the art of countries which have gained prominence in the field and examining particular concepts which are of great importance across the continent. The material is arranged largely in a geographical manner: North Africa and the western Sahara, West Africa, Central Africa, East Africa, and finally southern Africa.

ABD 256: African American History to 1800

TuTh 2:40PM - 4:10PM (LPC)
Instructor: Dr. Authens Oppong Wadie

Crosslisted with HST 246.

This course focuses primarily on the colonial era with an emphasis on topics such as the construction of race and gender, the Black Atlantic, the emergence of African diasporic cultures in the Americas,

slavery, black political thought, resistance, and the Revolutionary War.

ABD 290: Special Topics: Introduction to Slave Narrative

Flex (LPC)
MoWe 2:40PM-4:10PM
Instructor: Dr. Marcy J. Dinius

Crosslisted with ENG 271.

This course focuses on life writing by self-liberated formerly enslaved people in the nineteenth century United States, taking a close look at the defining characteristics of the popular and influential literary genre that came to be known as the "slave narrative." Writers to be considered include Frederick Douglass, Solomon Northup, Harriet Jacobs, William Wells Brown, and Harriet Wilson. To do these writers and their work justice, students should be prepared to read these works sensitively and thoroughly, knowing that they will address painful topics, including the full spectrum of physical, psychological, and linguistic abuse that were central to the practices of slavery and racial discrimination and activism against them in the nineteenth century.

ABD 379: Black Feminist Theory

TuTh 1:00PM - 2:30PM (LPC)
Instructor: Dr. Symone Johnson

Crosslisted with CES 410.

This course engages with the multiple versions of woman-centered theory and practice developed in the writings; activism, and other creative work of Black, particularly African American women, from the mid-nineteenth century to the twenty-first. While not all of these theorists would use the word feminist; all have in common the aim of empowering women's lives, advocating for women for equal economic, political, and cultural access.

ABD 380: Topics in African-American Studies : Toni Morrison

TuTh 1:00PM - 2:30PM (LPC)
Instructor: Dr. Francesca Royster

Crosslisted with ENG 371.

This course will examine the urban development and architectural heritage of Greater Cairo, Egypt since the reconstruction of the fortress of Babylon in the Roman period, through the establishment of Cairo itself in 969, and until the present. Cairo has always been a crossroads of cultures, set between Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. It has been home to significant Jewish, Christian and Muslim populations who have been impacted by the various ruling dynasties who have held sway there. In the 20th century, rapid expansion has produced extreme pressures on transportation networks and housing. The solution to such problems of intense urbanization has been to build satellite cities including a projected new capital to the east that will connect the Nile to the Red Sea shipping industry, following in the footsteps of the past.

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