The Department of African and Black Diaspora Studies
Course Descriptions
Fall 2019

ABD 100: Introduction to African and Black Diaspora Studies
TuTh 11:20AM- 12:50PM (LPC)
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. Amor Kohli

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?

ABD 211: Africa to 1800: Age of Empires
MoWe 11:20AM– 12:50PM (LPC)
Instructor: Dr. 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.

ABD 215: The African American Religious Experience
TuTh 2:40 PM– 4:10PM (LPC)
Instructor: Dr. Chernoh Sesay, Jr.
Crosslisted with REL 115.

This course will help students think deeply about the relationship of African-American religious traditions to American culture, black culture and black political thought. We will both discuss religion as a lived experience and examine it as an object of historical study. To these ends, we will chart the origins and history of black churches through several historical junctures, including the colonial era, the American Revolutionary and antebellum periods, Reconstruction, the Great Migration, and the Civil Rights movement. We will investigate how African-American religious expressions have mediated between culture and power.

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.

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communities and black leadership; between race, gender, and church formation; between evangelicalism and theology; and between politics and ideas about a cov- enanted people.

Not only will we follow the develop- ment of black Christianity, we will also pay attention to other Af- rican-American religious forms like black Judaism, black Catholi- cism, black Buddhism, and the Nation of Islam. At quarter’s end the student will have examined the incredible diversity of African-American religion, acquired an understanding of how black reli- gion has influenced American his- tory, and gained an understanding of the questions which underlie African-American religious stud- ies.

ABD 229: Race, Science and White Supremacy
TuTh 1:00PM - 2:30PM (LPC)
Instructor: Dr. Lori Pierce

This class explores the ways in which scientific thinking has shaped race and how racial think- ing has shaped science. We will discuss how Black bodies in par- ticular have been scrutinized by scientists and the ethical implica- tions of, for example, using Afri- can Americans as medical test subjects.

Topics include the scientific ori- gins of the concept of race, the historical application of that concept in various “pseudo-sciences” such as Phrenology and Eugenics, and contemporary examples of these ideas in, for example, commercial DNA testing.

ABD 234: Black Aesthetic Thought
MoWe 1:00PM - 2:30PM (LPC)
Instructor: Dr. Evan Johnson

How have black artists, thinkers, filmmakers, and writers used the artistic and performative traditions of various expressive disciplines as a means to create for other black people and the world a more cohesive and “genuine” represen- tation of black people?

This course examines the histori- cal and interdisciplinary idea of the black aesthetic by investigat- ing some of the various political, philosophical, and ideological de- bates surrounding the roles of art in black life and blackness in artis- tic production. This course will focus on the development of and disagreements within sources of prominent black artistic and intel- lectual production such as: The Harlem Renaissance, The Black Arts Movement, Blacknpopulation, Hip Hop, and Black Digital Cul- ture. We will explore the themes of authenticity, respectability, and migration as they relate to black artistic objects and the ideas sur- rounding those objects. Figures of inquiry might include: Du Bois, Locke, Hurston, Larsen, Wright, Baldwin, Dash, hooks, Boyce, and McQueen.

ABD 251: World Refugee Crisis
Tu 6:00 PM - 9:15 PM (LPC)
Instructor: Dr. 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 analyze 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; interna- tional bill of human rights; causes of forced migration; regional and international human rights law and international refugee law; im- migration, asylum and refugee policies; and internal displace- ments; among others.

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 Atlan- tic, the emergence of African di- asporic cultures in the Americas, slavery, black political thought, resistance, and the Revolutionary War.

ABD 290: Special Topics: African American Literature
MoWe 11:20AM-12:50PM
Instructor: Dr. Francesca Royster

Crosslisted with ENG 271. This course will introduce students to some major works of African American Literature through the lens of the imperfect quest for freedom of the body, spirit and im- agination. We’ll be reading novels, poetry, essays and memoir, from the slavery narratives of Harriet Jacobs to literature of the Harlem Renaissance to Octavia Butler’s Afrofuturism to Patrice Khan Cul- lors’ When They Call You a Ter- rorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir. Assignments will include two short essays, weekly reflections and a final exam.

ABD 380: Advanced Topics in American Politics : The Politics of Urban Education
Mo 6:00PM - 9:15PM (LPC)
Instructor: Dr. Valerie Johnson

Crosslisted with PSC 328. This course explores the role of public school education in the reproduc- tion of urban problems. It examines the historical dynamics influencing inequality and inequities in educa- tional resources and opportunities in metropolitan America. Students will explore some of the critical issues affecting the delivery of educa- tion (school segregation, funding disparities, school discipline poli- cies, and privatization). They will have an opportunity to volunteer at an under-resources inner-city pub- lic school in lieu of the research paper assignment.

ABD 382: Topics in African Diaspora Studies : Cairo: Mother of the World
TuTh 1:00PM - 2:30PM (LPC)
Instructor: Dr. Mark DeLancey

Crosslisted with HAA 372. This course will examine the urban de- velopment and architectural herit- age 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, Eu- rope, 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 centu- ry, 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.

Only 6 courses to minor in ABD! Only 13 courses to major!

Email abd@depaul.edu to contact an ABD advisor.

Questions? Email abd@depaul.edu