

African American Studies Course Descriptions

AAS 170: Topics in African American Studies (occasionally) Current or specialized topics will differ with the instructor. Open to and appropriate for first-year students. The class may be taken for credit more than once if content differs, but may be taken only once for the AAS minor.

AAS 179/HIS 179 (formerly AAS 205): African American History to 1865

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Fisher

An examination of the history of African Americans from their ancestral home in Africa to the end of the United States Civil War. The course encompasses introducing the cultures and civilizations of the African people prior to the opening up of the New World and exploring Black contributions to America up to 1865.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity Social Change in Historical Perspectives

AAS 180/HIS 180 (formerly AAS 206): African American History 1865 to the Present

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Fisher

An examination of the history of African Americans from the end of legal slavery in the United States to the civil rights revolution of the 1950s and 1960s. The course is designed to explore the history of African Americans since the Reconstruction and their contributions to the civil rights revolution of the present era.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity Social Change in Historical Perspectives

AAS 201/HON 220: African and Diaspora Religious Traditions

Instructor: Faculty

This course chronicles the artistic expressions of African, Caribbean, Latin American, and African American people by exploring the links among indigenous African religious values, rituals and worldview, and the visual arts, musical, literary, and dramatic practices created throughout the African Diaspora. The ways in which African religions have informed global artistic preservations of an African worldview and the worldview's fusion with European and American cultures will be emphasized.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity and Gender World Views and Ways of Knowing

AAS 207/HIS 251 (formerly AAS 351/HIS 351): Ancient and Medieval Africa

Instructor: Dr. Matthew Bender

This introductory course surveys ancient and medieval African history through the eyes of male and female royalty, archaeologists, peasants, religious leaders and storytellers. While the course reconstructs the great civilizations of ancient Africa including Egypt, Zimbabwe, Mali, and others, it is not primarily focused on kings and leaders. Rather, the course explores how ordinary Africans ate, relaxed, worshiped, and organized their personal and political lives.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity and Global Social Change in Historical Perspectives

AAS 208/HIS 252 (formerly AAS 352/HIS 352): Colonial and Modern Africa

Instructor: Dr. Matthew Bender

This course explores African history from 1800 up to the present. Using case studies, it will examine how wide-ranging social, political, and economic processes, the slave trade, colonial rule, African nationalism, independence, and new understandings of women's rights changed local people's lives.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity and Global Social Change in Historical Perspectives

AAS 210: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in the English-Speaking Caribbean

Instructor: Dr. Winnifred Brown-Glaude

A sociological examination of race, ethnicity, class and gender in the English-speaking Caribbean. The course seeks to understand social inequalities in the English-speaking Caribbean and the consequences of those inequities on human experiences.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity, Gender, Behavioral, Social, and Cultural Perspectives

AAS 211: The Caribbean: A Socio-Historical Overview

Instructor: Dr. Winnifred Brown-Glaude

A sociological approach to the Caribbean that uses history to explore the evolution of family, community, politics, faith, and the economy.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity, Global Behavioral, Social, and Cultural Perspectives

AAS 235/COM 235: African American Film

Instructor: Dr. Lorna Johnson

A survey of the images of African Americans as presented in American film. Emphasizes the viewing of a selected number of works which depict various types of movie-myth African Americans.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts

AAS 240/MUS 245: History of Jazz

Instructor(s): Dr. Gary Fienberg and Dr. M. Conklin

An introduction to jazz music through an examination of its content, history and cultural legacy. The course begins with the emergence of jazz out of early African American musical forms, and considers the profound connection between the African American experience and the development of jazz. It is an examination of how jazz evolved through artistic and technological innovations as well as through cultural, commercial and political forces. The course engages students in critical listening and research-based writing skills.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts

AAS 251: Harlem Renaissance When in Vogue Instructor: Dr. Piper Kendrix Williams

A survey of the philosophical, political, literary, and artistic activities and celebrated figures from the Harlem Renaissance era, 1920 to 1935.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity

AAS 252: Gendering the Harlem Renaissance: Black Paris

Instructor: Dr. Moussa Sow

An international exploration of the Harlem Renaissance era, 1920 to 1935.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity

AAS 280/WGS 260: Women of African Descent in Global Perspective

Instructor: Dr. Winnifred Brown-Glaude

Women of African Descent in Global Perspective, (formerly "Africana Women in Historical Perspective") is a global, cross-cultural survey of the lives and contributions of women of African ancestry. Emphasis will be placed upon shared elements of African culture that, when impacted by colonialism and/or the Atlantic slave trade, resulted in similar types of resistance to oppression, and analogous cultural expression among the women of four locales: Africa, South

America and the Caribbean, North America and Europe. Theoretical methodologies, historical narrative, literature, demographic data, material culture, representations of self, and representations by others will be explored to illuminate/explain the: History, Cultural artifacts, Cultural retentions and Self-concept.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Gender and Global Behavioral, Social, and Cultural Perspectives

AAS 281/SOC 281: The Sociology of Race in the U.S.

Instructor: Dr. Winnifred Brown-Glaude

A broad sociological study of race in the dynamics of American power, privilege, and oppression. The course argues race, as a concept and social phenomenon, is fluid, malleable, and socially constructed and those characteristics have made it a persistent and useful feature in US historical development.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity Behavioral, Social, and Cultural Perspectives

AAS 282/HIS 290: History of Race Relations in the U.S.

Instructor(s): Dr. Christopher Fisher and Dr. David McAllister

A socio-historical examination of race as a category in the United States. The course approaches the United States as a multiracial society and discusses how the various racial groups negotiate their differences politically, economically, intellectually, socially, and culturally.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity Social Change in Historical Perspectives

AAS 310: Great Lives African American History I

A biographical study of notable African American contributions to, and participation in, the struggles for justice and freedom from colonial times to the present.

AAS 321/JPW 321: Topics: Race, Gender, and the News

Instructor: Professor Kim Pearson

Through interactive discussion, case study analysis, ongoing research, and old-fashioned reporting, this class explores the role and influence of the news media as it covers stories related to race, gender and religion.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity

AAS 335/LIT 335: Caribbean Women Writers

Instructor: Dr. Piper Kendrix Williams

Anglophone and English translations of Hispanophone and Lusophone writings by Caribbean women writers of African descent will be examined. Post-Colonial and Africana feminist literary criticism will be used to explore the intersectionalities of race, gender, class, and sexuality of this literature as well as its connection to the writings African and other Diaspora women.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity and Gender Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts

AAS 348: African American Music

Instructor: Staff

A survey of African American music as a social document. The types of music discussed in the course include Negro spirituals, the work song, blues and jazz, various forms of religious music, and popular music. Field trips may be required at student expense.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity

AAS 353/CRI 352: Advanced Criminology: Race and Crime

Prerequisite: CRI 205 or permission of instructor

A critical examination of the correlation between race and crime in America. The course will focus on four major areas: race and the law, race and criminological theory, race and violent crime, and myths and facts about race and crime. Through critical examination of readings and official statistics, students will come to understand the complexity of the relationship between race and crime within the American criminal justice system and broader social context.

AAS 365/INT 365: African Cinema: Francophone African Experience Through Film

Instructor: Dr. Moussa Sow

An in-depth exploration of Francophone African cinema by Africans in front of and behind the camera. Cinema, as an ideological tool, has played a major role in Africa during colonial times and after the independence of African nations. It extends the spectrum of choices for students as well as laying the foundations of African history and culture from a filmic perspective. Does not count toward a French minor, but can be taken for LAC.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity and Global Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts

AAS 370: Topics in African American Studies

Cross-list: Varies

Instructor: Faculty

Focuses on different topics of significance to Africa and its diaspora.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity

AAS 375/WGS 365: Womanist Thought

Prerequisites: AAS 280, WGS 280/Africana Women in Historical Perspective, or WGS 375/Global Feminisms, or by permission of the instructor

Instructor: Faculty

This course traces the evolution of feminist consciousness among Africana women. Students will trace the thoughts, social and political activism and ideologies generate by women of African ancestry from the early 19th century free black “feminist abolitionists” to contemporary times. “Womanist,” “Feminist,” “Critical Race Feminist,” and “Black Feminist” ideologies will be emphasized through course readings and assignments that explore the emergence and perpetuation of an Africana women’s feminist consciousness.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity and Gender *World Views and Ways of Knowing*

AAS 376/HIS365/WGS 361: Topics: African American Women's History

Instructor: Dr. Ann Marie Nicolosi

This course is a study of the experience of African American women in the US, from both historical and contemporary perspectives. Through a survey of critical time periods, key social institutions, and crystallizing experiences the course will explicate the role of African American women in shaping present American society. Readings, lectures, discussions, recordings and movies will be used to present a comprehensive and cohesive understanding of African American women.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity and Gender *Social Change in Historical Perspectives*

AAS 377/LIT 377 (formerly AAS 221/LIT 281): Early African American Literature to 1920

Instructor: Dr. Piper Kendrix Williams

A study of selected African American Literature from the colonial period to the Harlem Renaissance, this course will build your knowledge and confidence as readers and critics of African American culture and society in the US. We will focus on the oral folk productions

of the colonial period, slave narratives, poetry, speeches, autobiography, essays of the 19th century and the poetry and prose of the Harlem Renaissance.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts

AAS 378/LIT 378 (formerly AAS 222/LIT 282): African American Literature 1920-1980

Instructor: Dr. Piper Kendrix Williams

A study of literature in the African American tradition, focusing on the realist, naturalist and modernist writings of the 1940s, the prose, poetry, essays and speeches of the Black Arts Movement and contemporary African American literature. The course will also explore the canon of African American Literature, its literary tradition, and the intersections with and diversions from the canon of American Letters.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts

AAS 390: Advanced Research in African Studies

Seminar or lecture based format specific to interdisciplinary research in African and Diaspora studies.

AAS 391: Independent Study

Individual pursuit of topics in African and/or Diaspora studies that transcends the regularly available curriculum. Faculty direction and evaluation required but not intensive mentoring.

AAS 392: Guided Study in Africana Studies

A faculty member leading a small group of students or assisting the students in leading themselves through a shared topic.

AAS 393: Independent Research

Intensively mentored undergraduate research in Africana studies.

AAS 477: Honors in Africana Studies *Prerequisites:* HON 220, HON 243, or by invitation
Special projects for those in the Honors Program and for other highly qualified students. For more information, see the department chair.

AAS 495, 496: Senior Thesis

Culminating project or thesis in Africana studies.

First-Year Seminar Courses:

FSP 102: Literature of the Harlem Renaissance: "When the Negro Was in Vogue"

Instructor: Dr. Piper Kendrix Williams

A study of literature in the African American tradition during the Harlem Renaissance 1919-1940, focusing on the prose, poetry, and essays of the period. We explore relationships between literature and social politics, community and representation. We also follow a number of debates, including those about issues of identity (being American; being Negro; being Black; racial and social passing); claims to culture through literature; social change through literature; gender roles in literature and social contexts. This seminar helps you see the depth and breadth of these debates as well as to illuminate your own understanding of ways race operates in your life.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts

FSP 132: Brown v. Board of Education

Instructor: Dr. Christopher T. Fisher

This seminar views Brown v. Board of Education as a pivotal event that unmade and reshaped American society. Students explore how the court case helped define new relationships in the domestic social order, the terms of America's foreign relations, a shift in party politics, and a transformation in the way Americans viewed themselves. The seminar takes a thematic approach that situates the social, political, and cultural antecedents of the 1954 decision in a historical context reaching back to the nineteenth century. While we utilize film, literature, legal documents, sociological studies, and historical circumstance to explain the origins and consequences of the Brown decision, the foundational elements of the seminar rely on historical scholarship and research. Taking a broad approach incorporating interdisciplinary texts fosters an exciting and comprehensive study of the event.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:

Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity Social Change in Historical Perspectives

FSP 122 Brown v. Board of Education: From Brown to Black Feminism

Instructor: Faculty

This seminar undertakes an in-depth study of the tenets of Black Feminism while focusing on the women whose advocacy before, during and after the 1954 Supreme Court decision is central to a more complete understanding of the history of American and African American education and the civil rights and women's rights movements in the USA.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:
Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity

FSP 102: Harlem Renaissance: Black Paris

Instructor: Dr. Moussa Sow

This seminar explores intersections between the 1920's era English-Speaking Black consciousness/arts/intellectual movement in France. The relationship of both movements to one another, and to subsequent civil rights, human rights, and independence movements are studied in depth.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:
Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts

FSP 122: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in Anglophone Caribbean

Instructor: Dr. Winnifred Brown-Glaude

This course examines race, ethnicity, class and gender as significant variables affecting people's lives in the Anglophone Caribbean. In this course, we seek to understand social inequalities in the Anglophone Caribbean and the consequences of those inequities on human experiences.

Meets Liberal Learning Categories:
Civic Responsibility: Race/Ethnicity Social Change in Historical Perspectives