

African American Studies (AFAM)

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AFAM 1101. Introduction to African American and Africana Studies. (4 Hours)

Explores the broad interdisciplinary spectrum of African American and Africana studies. Provides an introductory overview of the field and offers an opportunity to identify areas for more specific focus.

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity

AFAM 1104. The African-American Experience through Music. (4 Hours)

Explores the various musical traditions of African Americans, with a specific focus on the United States. Examines the impact of African, European, and Native American traditions on African-American music as well as the role of music as an expression of African-American aesthetics, traditions, and life. Considers historical and contemporary forms of African-American music, with selected video presentations. Not open to students who have taken MUSC 1104.

Attribute(s): NUpath Interpreting Culture

AFAM 1113. Black Popular Culture. (4 Hours)

Surveys U.S. and international Black popular culture from the mid-1950s to the present through music, movies, music videos, and other forms of multimedia, paying close attention to social commentary, political critique, economic inference, cultural formation, explications of religious and spiritual beliefs, and the like. Discusses and ponders issues of representation, identity, values, and aesthetics. Offers students an opportunity to rethink and reexamine the intent, impact, and circulation of Black popular culture as a method and means of expression and communication.

Attribute(s): NUpath Creative Express/Innov, NUpath Interpreting Culture

AFAM 1135. John Coltrane and the History of Jazz in the United States. (4 Hours)

Studies the development and history of jazz in the United States through the life of John Coltrane, who was frequently considered one of the greatest musicians of all time. Considers his impact on the genre and mode of jazz music, including his advanced and innovative conceptions (melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic) and other stylistic contributions to African-American creative improvisation that also changed music across the globe. Emphasizes his impact on jazz and other improvisational music and expressive art forms. Also covers his spiritual legacy, which focused on using music for the improvement of humanity.

AFAM 1225. Gender, Race, and Medicine. (4 Hours)

Examines the basic tenets of “scientific objectivity” and foundational scientific ideas about race, sex, and gender and what these have meant for marginalized groups in society, particularly when they seek medical care. Introduces feminist science theories ranging from linguistic metaphors of the immune system, to the medicalization of race, to critiques of the sexual binary. Emphasizes contemporary as well as historical moments to trace the evolution of “scientific truth” and its impact on the U.S. cultural landscape. Offers students an opportunity to develop the skills to critically question what they “know” about science and the scientific process and revisit their disciplinary training as a site for critical analysis. AFAM 1225, HIST 1225, and WMNS 1225 are cross-listed.

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity

AFAM 1990. Elective. (1-4 Hours)

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

AFAM 2296. Early African-American Literature. (4 Hours)

Surveys the development and range of black American writers, emphasizing poetry and prose from early colonial times to the Civil War. ENGL 2296 and AFM 2296 are cross-listed.

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1102 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1102 with a minimum grade of C

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity, NUpath Interpreting Culture

AFAM 2339. Analysis of American Racism. (4 Hours)

Discusses the cycle by which racism in our institutions helps form our attitudes and the manner in which our attitudes, in turn, shape our institutions. Emphasizes the practical, day-to-day aspects of racism, rather than the theoretical and historical.

AFAM 2355. Race, Identity, Social Change, and Empowerment. (4 Hours)

Examines racism, racial identity, and theories of social change and racial empowerment primarily within the U.S. context. Highlights different ways in which racism and racial privilege have been experienced by different racial communities, more specifically at the micro-, meso-, and macro-levels. Offers students an opportunity to learn ways to promote racial empowerment and equity. Using theory from primarily psychology and sociology, the course investigates the impact of social systems and institutions on individual-level and group experiences of racism. Investigates students' own racial identities, a deeper understanding of institutional inequalities and intersectionality, and practical skills in leadership and community building that can promote positive social change and racial equality.

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity

AFAM 2360. Politics of Poverty. (4 Hours)

Explores how and why there is poverty, how it affects people's lives, and how it can be eliminated. Examines the relations between poverty, racial and ethnic factors, and the economic, political, and administrative systems. Evaluates a number of alternatives and provides an opportunity for clarifying individual assumptions and feelings about poverty.

AFAM 2362. Modern and Contemporary African-American Literature. (4 Hours)

Surveys the development and range of black American writers in poetry and prose from the post-Civil War period to the present.

Prerequisite(s): ENGW 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1102 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1102 with a minimum grade of C

AFAM 2399. Black Community and Social Change. (4 Hours)

Explores the dynamic changes experienced by black communities in the United States since the civil rights era in the 1950s and 1960s. Includes discussions and applications of key concepts and methods in several fields of the social sciences, and seeks to understand the relationship of race, class, gender, and social change in addressing the current search for policies and programs for community development.

AFAM 2455. American Women Writers. (4 Hours)

Surveys the diversity of American women's writing to ask what it means to describe writers as disparate as Phillis Wheatley, Edith Wharton, Toni Morrison, and Alison Bechdel as part of the same 'tradition.' With attention to all genres of American women's writing, introduces issues of race, genre and gender; literary identification; canons; the politics of recuperation; silence and masquerade; gender and sexuality; intersectionality; sexual and literary politics, compulsory heterosexuality, and more.

Prerequisite(s): ENGW 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1102 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1102 with a minimum grade of C

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity, NUpath Interpreting Culture

AFAM 2549. Public Policy and Black America. (4 Hours)

Examines the impact of public policy on African Americans and the role of African Americans in the formulation of public policy. These roles include protest, interest-group politics, electoral politics, and blacks as policy researchers and advisers. The process of public policy formulation as it affects blacks is explored through a series of case studies ranging from the formulation and enforcement of fugitive slave laws in the pre-Civil War era to strategic military and foreign policy, affirmative action, welfare reform, and reparations in our own time.

AFAM 2600. Issues in Race, Science, and Technology. (4 Hours)

Examines the social impact of diverse forms of technological development and application that will have sweeping effects on the everyday lives of individuals, groups, governments, and societies in the twenty-first century. The global, transforming effects of technology as it affects communities of color in the United States and internationally are explored in three main areas: the computer, DNA, and quantum revolutions. Topics include the digital divide, minority media ownership, human cloning, the "dot.com" phenomenon, race and cultural representations in cyberspace, and biopiracy. Lectures, class discussions, fieldwork, and interaction with leaders in these various fields are integral elements of the course.

AFAM 2618. Community Psychology. (4 Hours)

Seeks to familiarize students with some of the topics, theories, and research methods employed by psychologists and other social scientists working in the area of community psychology. Community psychologists study people in their social contexts, emphasizing the mutual influences that individuals and communities have upon each other. Rather than attempt to understand and treat problems at the individual level, research in community psychology aims to offer practical solutions to social problems. Focuses on race, gender, and class. Offers students an opportunity to focus on a particular community, which they may utilize for data collection, and to develop survey instruments/interview schedules; collect data; and analyze and interpret the findings with a qualitative design, if necessary.

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity, NUpath Societies/Institutions

AFAM 2619. Race and Religion in Film. (4 Hours)

Explores how relationships between historical and contemporary representations of African Americans, other persons of the African Diaspora, and the continent of Africa have been presented in film in relation to religious themes. An interdisciplinary study in how race and religion are represented in ways that reflect and actively contribute to "real world" faith beliefs, experiences, and actions. Critically examines how representations of "the Other" compared to "the chosen" relate to the intersectionality of race, religion, class, national origin, gender, sex, and sexuality. Provides a framework for ethical analysis of how societal institutionalized systems of power influence beliefs about racialized identities and religion.

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity, NUpath Interpreting Culture

AFAM 2690. Boston in Literature. (4 Hours)

Explores the various ways in which the city of Boston and its environs are represented in literature and other media. Each semester, the course focuses on a different aspect of Boston in literature, such as representations of Boston's different communities, different historical eras, particular genres or concepts associated with the city, and so forth. Offers students an opportunity to build upon their readings about the city by experiencing independent site visits, class field trips, guest speakers, and other activities. In addition to a culminating group or individual research project about Boston, students may also have the opportunity to participate in a community-based reading project. AFAM 2690 and ENGL 2690 are cross-listed.

Prerequisite(s): ENGW 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1102 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1102 with a minimum grade of C

Attribute(s): NUpath Integration Experience, NUpath Interpreting Culture

AFAM 2990. Elective. (1-4 Hours)

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

AFAM 2991. Research Practicum. (2-4 Hours)

Involves students in collaborative research under the supervision of a faculty member. Offers students an opportunity to learn basic research methods in the discipline. Requires permission of instructor. May be repeated once for up to 4 total credits.

AFAM 3120. Race, Crime, and Justice. (4 Hours)

Provides students with an overview of the role and treatment of racial/ethnic minorities in the criminal justice system. Covers historical and theoretical frameworks for understanding the relationship between race, crime, and criminal justice. In so doing, students become familiar with trends and patterns in criminal offending by racial/ethnic minorities, as well as system response to such behavior.

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity

AFAM 3270. Race and Ethnic Relations. (4 Hours)

Focuses on the social construction of race and ethnicity and the nature of dominant/minority relations in the United States. Emphasizes the peculiar evolution of race relations in U.S. history, the political and economic conditions that have transformed race relations, and the nature of contemporary racial and ethnic relations in the United States. Topics include immigration, ethnic and racial identity, discrimination, and race-based policies (e.g., residential restrictive codes, Jim Crow segregation). Offers students an opportunity to develop a critical lens from which to observe and interpret contemporary debates over structural racism.

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity, NUpath Societies/Institutions

AFAM 3404. African American Rhetorical Traditions. (4 Hours)

Examines and organizes the ways that African Americans have historically maintained their humanity and negotiated freedom through discourse. Explores various discursive practices of African American discourse communities—such as the enslaved, abolitionists, feminists, nationalist/revolutionaries, and entertainers—to engage discussions about freedom, access to democracy, racial uplift, gender equity, and the discursive and recursive nature of racial identity. Studies historical contexts and current sociopolitical dynamics emphasizing the Black Jeremiad, civil rights rhetoric, the Black Power Movement, Black Feminist Thought, and Hip-Hop.

Prerequisite(s): ENGW 1111 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity, NUpath Interpreting Culture

AFAM 3663. The African American Novel. (4 Hours)

Focuses on the modern and contemporary African American novel and its place in the history of American as well as global fiction. Writers may include James Baldwin, Charles Chesnutt, Ralph Ellison, Roxanne Gay, Zora Neal Hurston, Toni Morrison, Walter Mosley, Jean Toomer, Nella Larsen, Colson Whitehead, Octavia Butler, Tayari Jones, and Richard Wright, among others.

AFAM 3664. Black Poetry and the Spoken Word. (4 Hours)

Focuses on the black poet's place in the history of American poetry. Considers black poetry as both written words and spoken words.

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 1102 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1102 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1111 with a minimum grade of C

AFAM 3990. Elective. (1-4 Hours)

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

AFAM 4700. Capstone. (4 Hours)

Offers students the opportunity to prepare a professional research project under the close supervision of a scholar interested in students' particular research areas.

Attribute(s): NUpath Capstone Experience, NUpath Writing Intensive

AFAM 4990. Elective. (1-4 Hours)

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

AFAM 4991. Research. (4 Hours)

Offers an opportunity to conduct research under faculty supervision.

Attribute(s): NUpath Integration Experience

AFAM 5001. Special Topics in Race and the Law. (4 Hours)

Explores the various questions, relationships, and connections between the law and racial issues and concepts. Each offering focuses on a special topic such as reparations, civil rights, gender, or the environment and energy policies. May be repeated up to three times for a maximum of 16 credits.

AFAM 5544. Seminar in Black Leadership. (4 Hours)

Offers students an opportunity to conduct in-depth studies of significant black leaders—male and female—in a wide range of fields. Focuses on black leadership in the political arena as elected officials; leaders of pressure groups; leaders of protest organizations, black nationalist organizations, and feminist/womanist groups; and as advisers to political parties and presidential administrations.