

AFAM 202: Artistic and Cultural Foundations in Black Studies

Meets: M (asynchronous), W 2:20- 3:35pm (synchronous)

AFAM 202: Artistic and Cultural Foundations in Black Studies (3 Credits)

BULLETIN COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Introduction to the analysis and discussion of creative works and traditions by and about African Americans through folklore, music, art, dance, and literature.

Course Description:

Black Studies is the study of peoples of the African diaspora. In this course, we will focus on the Black experience of those in the United States, specifically how Black Americans have conceptualized identity, liberation and resistance, especially as developed in their representations of the future and the past. We will look at the ways black art, aesthetics, and politics strives to analyze and transform a world founded on anti-Blackness. We will also discuss the very idea of Black Studies—a discipline and academic field, as a way of seeing the world, and as a way and possibility of imagining new worlds.

Course Objectives

- Ability to identify and engage the central questions, themes, and aesthetic foundations and objectives of Black Studies.
- Critical engagement with the intersections of anti-racist thought and practice with Black cultural experience and production.
- Develop an ability to analyze texts closely in order to build convincing critical arguments both in your writing and verbally through class discussion.

CAROLINA CORE OUTCOME:

AIU - Aesthetic and Interpretive Understanding: Students will be able to create or interpret literary, visual or performing arts.

Course Delivery:

Due to ongoing public health risks, this course will be delivered in a blended **synchronous** and **asynchronous** format. On **Mondays you will work asynchronously** [posting to the course Slack, listening to prerecorded lectures], and on **Wednesdays we will meet virtually** during our scheduled course time 2:20-3:35 on Blackboard Collaborate [live lecture, in class activities]. Course work will be submitted and posted to our class forums (Slack or Blackboard). I will be available for office hours, but only virtually.

I've chosen this method of course delivery because I believe students shouldn't be asked to choose between the health and safety of themselves or their families to take my course. I acknowledge that there may be an adjustment period, but I am willing to work with everyone and engage a spirit of flexibility to make sure we can have a good and productive time.

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Required Texts:

The majority of the texts for this course will be available via Blackboard. The following books are available for purchase in the University Bookstore or through various online sellers:

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

ISBN: 978-0486419312

Octavia Butler, *Parable of the Sower*

ISBN: 978-1538732182

Required Technology:

- Blackboard Collaborate Ultra: You have access to Blackboard through the University.
- Slack : You have already been invited to the Slack workspace. You can access the workspace through a browser; however you might find it easier to download either the mobile or desktop app. In addition to Slack being a repository for our daily discussions and your daily work in the course, it is also a place where you can ask questions of me and of your peers, a place to share course related content, and to contact group members for group projects.

Assignments:

Discussion on Slack

Each week members of the course will be responsible for responding to the text/texts the course Slack under the appropriate #channel. Mondays will often feature a longer discussion prompt. Students will be expected to post their own response and then respond to **at least one** classmate's response using Slack's "thread" feature. Wednesdays posts will often ask you to attend to a question raised during our class time. On either day, you may be asked to respond to student collaborations. All posts are due Mondays or Wednesdays by 11:59pm.

Context/Facilitation/Collaboration

Once during the semester, students will be responsible for writing an extended post and generating discussion on the class forum. This project is a chance for students to work and write together, and invoke response from their peers with the intent of generating a college-level discussion.

Student will post a collaboratively-written forum post and generating questions for their classmates to answer on Slack. These co-written posts (~ 500 words) will contain two (2) elements:

- 1) A close interpretation of the work (not just a summary). Successful forum posts will select a section of text and deeply engage with the author's language or other formal elements. Posts are also a chance for students to make connections across texts or to things outside of the course.
- 2) Students will pose **three** generative questions to begin discussion. Your job in this project is to spark conversation. Questions should be generative and debatable (avoid yes or no/agree or disagree questions).

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Work must be posted to Slack under the appropriate #channel by 11:59pm the night before class [Sundays or Tuesdays].

Writing Projects:

Information on writing assignments will be available as the semester progresses. All writing assignments are due in Blackboard by 11:59 pm on the date listed on the syllabus. Requests for extensions will be considered if they are submitted 48 hours before the due date (just email me!). Late papers will be accepted with penalty (docked 1/2 grade per each 24 hour period).

Class Engagement

This course is discussion based and we will endeavor to have discussion virtually through Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. Please come to class each week with a handful of questions and comments attached to specific passages of the reading. If you are unable to attend class, please let me know. Class participation will be evaluated through your input, interaction, reception/response, and collegiality in both class discussion and on the course Slack.

Grade Breakdown:

Assignment	Weight	Due Date
Race Journal	10%	September 4
Black Visual Arts Project	15%	October 16
Contextual Collaboration Project	20%	According to student sign-up
Collective Writing Assignment	10%	October 19
Final Multimodal Paper/Project	25%	November 30
Engagement [weekly posts + discussion]	20%	Ongoing

GRADE SCALE:

A = 90-100; B+ = 85-89; B = 80-84; C+ = 75-79; C = 70-74; D+ = 65-69; D = 60-64; F = 0-59

SAFE and ACCOUNTABLE SPACE: Our classroom and digital forums will strive to create an environment that is both a **safe and accountable**. Safe means that every student should feel respected in their learning environment. **As such, please refrain from using or sharing offensive and non-inclusive language, images, and etc. in class and on our online forums. In general, be respectful and mindful of your classmates.** Accountable means that you are accountable for your actions and your speech. We all enter the classroom with good intentions, but good intentions do not necessarily prevent us from saying hurtful things. If you say something that is hurtful or traumatizing, no matter your intentions, you are still accountable for your actions. This does not necessarily mean disciplinary action, but it does mean taking responsibility for what you said and being prepared to have thoughtful, adult conversation with your peers.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: I do not tolerate plagiarism of any kind and I will follow the University Policy for reporting any papers I suspect not to be your original work. It is imperative that you cite any quotes or paraphrases properly using MLA guidelines. The Online Writing Lab (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/>) is a wonderful resource. Additionally, you can come to me

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with any questions you have. Please consult the University of South Carolina Honor Code if you are unsure as to what counts as academic fraud: <http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf625.pdf>

ACCOMMODATIONS: If you require accommodations due to barriers in the structure of facilities, course design, technology, or other resources, please let me know and be sure to contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS – <https://www.sa.sc.edu/sds/>; 803-777-6142; or sasds@mailbox.sc.edu) to obtain documentation and assistance throughout the semester. Please make these arrangements early in the semester.

WRITING CENTER: The Writing Center provides experienced tutors who will work with you individually by discussing drafts of your papers in detail. You can set up an appointment online at <https://sc.mywconline.net/>.

Course Schedule:

Date	Author	Title
Unit 1: Foundations		
8/24 [A]	Manning Marable	“Black Studies and the Racial Mountain”
8/26 [S]	W.E.B. Du Bois	from <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i>
8/31 [A]	Booker T. Washington	from <i>Up from Slavery</i>
9/2 [S]	Ida B. Wells	from <i>The Red Record</i>
9/4 Assignment Due : Race Journal		
Unit 2: Cultural Resistance to Slavery		
9/7 [A]	Ibram X. Kendi	from <i>Stamped from the Beginning</i>
9/9 [S]	Harriet Jacobs	<i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> [chapters 1-10]
9/14 [A]	Harriet Jacobs	<i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> [chapters 11-24]
9/16 [S]	Harriet Jacobs	<i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> [chapters 25-end]
9/21 [A]	Charles Chesnutt	“The Goophered Grapevine”
9/23 [S]	Wesley Morris	1619 Podcast: The Birth of American Music
	Karl Miller	“Revisiting Minstrelsy <i>Love and Theft</i> at Twenty”
Unit 3: Renaissance, Identity, Art, and Politics		
9/28 [A]	Langston Hughes	“The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” + Poems
9/30 [S]	Zora Neale Hurston	“How it Feels to Be Colored Me”, “Story in Harlem Slang”
10/5 [A]	Amiri Baraka	“Black Art”, “Revolutionary Theatre” + Poems
10/7 [S]	Audre Lorde	“Poetry is Not a Luxury,” “The Master’s Tools...”
10/12 [A]	James Baldwin	from <i>The Fire Next Time</i>
10/14 [S]	Combahee River Collective	“The Combahee River Collective Statement”
10/16 Assignment Due: Black Visual Art Project		
10/19 [A]	Collaborative Writing Assignment on Blackboard Wiki	
10/21 [S]	Black Visual Artists	
Unit 4: Frameworks for Blackness As An Area of Study		
10/26 [A]	Derrick Bell	<i>Space Traders</i>

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	Delgado & Stefanic	Introduction to Critical Race Theory
10/28 [S]	Robin D.G. Kelley	Intercepted Podcast: “The Rebellion Against Racial Capitalism”
11/2 [A]	Angela Davis	from “Are Prisons Obsolete”
11/4 [S]	Marquis Bey	“Black Fugitivity Un/Gendered”
Unit 5: Black Futures		
11/9 [A]	Ytasha Womack	“Introduction to Afrofuturism”
11/11 [S]	NK Jemisin	“Emergency Skin”
11/16 [A]	Octavia E. Butler	Parable of the Sower [chapters 1-7]
11/18 [S]	Octavia E. Butler	Parable of the Sower [chapters 8-14]
11/23 [A]	Octavia E. Butler	Parable of the Sower [chapters 15-19]
11/30 [S]	Octavia E. Butler	Parable of the Sower [chapters 20-end] + Course Conclusions
12/1 Assignment Due: Final Paper/Project		