COURSES FOR GENDER AND RACE STUDIES

African American Studies Courses

AAST201 Intro African Amer Study
SB
Hours 3
A basic outline of the diversity and complexity of the African-American experience in the United States: the early academic and social concerns of Black Studies advocates; the changes in the field's objectives that arise from its connections to contemporary social movements for Black Power, women's liberation and multiculturalism; and its major theoretical and critical debates.

Social and Behavioral Sciences

AAST249 African American Literature
HU, L
Hours 3
Survey of African American literature from its earliest expressions to the present. In order to identify the aesthetics of the African American literary tradition, the course material includes spirituals, slave narratives, poetry, drama, autobiography, fiction, and nonfiction.
Prerequisite(s): (Undergraduate level EN 101 with minimum Grade of C- and Undergraduate level EN 102 with minimum Grade of C-) OR (Undergraduate level EN 104 with minimum Grade of C-) OR (Undergraduate level EN 120 with minimum Grade of C- and Undergraduate level EN 121 with minimum Grade of C-)

Humanities, Literature

AAST302 The Black Church
Hours 3
A survey of mainstream Christian expressions of black spirituality as well as other forms of sacred collective consciousness. Study of local churches and theology is encouraged.

AAST303 Education Of Southern Blacks
Hours 3
A study of the "miseducation" of Africans in America. The course explores education for blacks from West Africa at the middle of the second millennium and early American society to the emergence of the separate school system of the 19th and 20th centuries.

AAST319 19th Century Black History
Hours 3
Role of black Americans in American life from the 17th century to the beginning of the 20th century, with emphasis on the institutions and events of the 1800s.

AAST322 Slave Resistance
Hours 3
This course introduces students to the major themes, questions, primary sources, monographs, and fiction in regards to slave resistance in the United States and Atlantic World. Specifically, course readings and assignments will revolve around agency and empowerment of enslaved individuals, power relations between masters and enslaved individuals and the various forms of resistance (everyday acts, runaways, rebellions, and marronage).

AAST323 Hate Crimes
Hours 3
What are the causes and consequences of bias-motivated crimes? What are the larger social and political contexts? In this class, students will examine how bias-motivated violence receives attention in the media, how and why hate crimes legislation came to be seen as a necessary legal tool to curb crimes based on race, gender, gender identity, religion, and sexual orientation. Students will also explore the opposition to such laws and the degree to which communities are able to respond to incidents of bias-motivated violence. Students will also explore the proliferation of hate groups and the impact of those groups on social and political debates over hate crimes laws.

AAST333 Black Family Studies
Hours 3
The field of Black Family Studies is an area that has received very little attention in the last decade. This course will use historical literature to address issues that have impacted Black families in America. Throughout this course, we investigate the various reasons why the majority of Black families are not the traditional units that were prevalent before the turn of the 20th century. A broad perspective will be taken to provide a balanced understanding of gender and the challenges men and women face from patriarchy, racism, mass incarceration, poverty, and economic exploitation. Students will be responsible for reading the assigned text and actively engage in class discussion.

AAST336 Concepts of Race and Racism
Hours 3
Analysis of American social structure, demographic and institutional trends over time related to race and the description of racism. This course offers a critical introduction to the conditions of possibility for modern racial thinking, with particular emphasis on racial slavery and anti-blackness. We will begin with the working assumption that slavery is at the root of the problem of race and racism. In order to excavate this assumption, we will survey debates on 1) the origin and history of race and racism (from the Ancients to the early moderns); 2) the deployment of categories in contested proximity to race (from class to gender); and 3) the development of different conceptual paradigms (from double consciousness to political ontology) to parse the relationship between race and the world. Instead of resolving these debates, our problem-based approach will emphasize how the scope and framing of texts bear on present problematics. In doing so, we will learn to mobilize our readings as theoretical and historical tools in interpreting the contemporary and interrogating our responsibility toward the themes of the class.
AAST345 Black Politics
Hours 3
This course examines the historical origins and present framework of Black politics, including the civil rights movement, Black political culture, local and community politics, and current and future issues for Black America such as Black imagery in television/film, Black feminism, sexuality, the War on Drugs, the impact of mass incarceration, and modern social justice and protest movements like #BlackLivesMatter. Students will explore questions regarding the history of race in American political life as well as how race has shaped a broader national identity. And evaluate what concepts like “equal treatment under the law” and “liberty and justice for all” mean with respect to the legacy of Black political participation.

AAST350 Topics African American Lit
SP
Hours 3
A cross-genre survey of African American literature, historical events, and critical movements. Authors may include Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, Richard Wright, Zora Neale Hurston, Nella Larson, Langston Hughes, and Toni Morrison.

AAST352 Social Inequality
Hours 3
Analysis of inequities of wealth, power, and prestige; major theories of racial and cultural minorities; behavioral correlates of stratification; social mobility.

AAST365 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in US Society
Hours 3
Students in this course study the development of policies that seek to build a more equitable society in the US. Providing a historical perspective on how social change has occurred in the society, the course also discusses how change has taken place in the last few decades. How have societal institutions changed how the issues of race and gender are addressed since the Civil Rights Movement? How do we apply concepts such as diversity, intersectionality, community, equity, and inclusion throughout US society? The course provides students with an understanding of why these concepts are important, and how social change occurs today.

AAST375 Freedom Beyond Rights
Hours 3
Feminism understands itself to be fundamentally liberatory - that is, concerned with increasing liberty, particularly (but not exclusively) of women. Feminist political theory often treats freedom within a liberal framework that prioritizes individual rights: for example, the right to control one’s reproductive health, the right to equal pay, or the right not to experience harassment. According to this framework, to be free is to enjoy one's rights without interference or limitation. The aim of this course is to think about freedom beyond rights. Specifically, we will consider what it means to be a free political actor, whether freedom is the highest political good, whether, and how, freedom is compatible with other values, such as equality and justice, and how different kinds of politics, social norms, and modes of living might affect attempts to increase and experience freedom.

AAST395 Special Topics
SP
Hours 3
Examination of selected problems and issues in Sociology, African American Studies, and Women’s Studies. May be taken a total of six times, with different topics.

AAST401 Black Intellectual Thought
Hours 3
An upper level seminar designed to provide students with an in-depth study of major intellectual debates and movements that have shaped the politics, history and identities of the people of African descent in the United States and the African diaspora. The course will combine methodologies and concepts from multiple disciplines including, history, political theory, literature, women's studies, sociology, psychology and philosophy.

Prerequisite(s): AAST 201 and AMS 201

AAST402 Special Topics
SP
Hours 3-9
An examination of selected African American topics. May be repeated for a maximum of 9 hours.

AAST413 Communication & Diversity
W
Hours 3
Study and analysis of issues of diversity as they relate to groups in society and in communication fields. Emphasis is on the media’s treatment of various groups in society. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Writing

AAST415 African American Rhetoric
W
Hours 3
A historical-critical investigation of African American public discourse from the Revolutionary era to the present, exploring rhetorical strategies for social change and building community. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Writing
AAST434 Race, Ethnicity and Health Disparities
Hours 3
This course is designed to provide the student with an overview of race and ethnicity as it relates to health as well as major issues facing the overall health status of our society. This class will provide examples for the application of minority health basic competencies in the field of community health and medical sociology. Topics to be covered include: mental health and individual behavior access to health care, socioeconomic status and racial differences, racial/ethnic group specific health issues. The health care system covers the physician-patient relationship and increasing commercialization in the health care system.

AAST435 Race, Feminism, and Society
Hours 3
Emphasis is placed on theories and research on the inter relationships between the conceptualizations of gender, race, and class. The many different schools of thought on these issues are brought into productive tension with each other, depending on the course content. Students explore through reading primary and secondary texts the interactions between the practices that define these concepts. This course is preparation for further study at the graduate level, and considered a capstone course in the major.

AAST436 Gender and Black Masculinity
Hours 3
This course will examine the socio-historical perceptions and constructions of Black masculinities in various regions and periods. Students will also examine the social, political, and economic conditions of Black male life in the contemporary period and interrogate representations of Black men and boys in U.S. culture and society in relation to the broader politics of race, class, gender, and sexuality in the post-civil rights era. Specific attention will be paid to the history of ideas and approaches that have shaped and defined our understanding of Black males. Students will be introduced to historical and socio-cultural circumstances that affect Black males and the diverse nature of Black culture. This course will also attempt to heighten awareness and sensitivity to the contemporary problems affecting Black males and thus help discover and evaluate social policies and programs geared towards Black males.

AAST490 AAST Independent Study
SP
Hours 1-6
Independent study on any subject pertaining to African-American studies, under the supervision of a professor in the chosen field and/or Director of the program.

Special Topics Course

AAST495 Special Topics
SP
Hours 3
An examination of selected African American topics. May be repeated for a maximum of 18 hours.

Special Topics Course

Sociology Courses
SOC101 Intro To Sociology
SB
Hours 3
Introduction to the scientific study of human social behavior.

Social and Behavioral Sciences

SOC202 Social Problems
SB
Hours 3
Study of contemporary social problems, including definition, description, and analysis. Emphasis is on sociological explanations, social change perspectives, and cultural complexity of social problems.

Social and Behavioral Sciences

SOC205 Social Psychology
Hours 3
Interrelationships between the individual and the group. Includes perception, cognition, attribution, attitudes, helping behavior, aggression, personal relationships, prejudice, and gender in social life.

SOC215 Animals and Society
Hours 3
Explores the social relationship between humans and animals; examines the social meanings which shape the roles and status of animals in society and our interactions with them.

SOC216 Sports and Society
Hours 3
Structural and cultural relationship of sport to society and the importance of sport to the development of self and community identity.

SOC301 Social Statistics
Hours 3
Elementary statistical techniques applied to sociological data; tables and graphs, central tendency and dispersion, probability and sampling, tests of significance, and measures of association.

Prerequisite(s): SOC 101 and MATH 110 or MATH 112 or MATH 125

SOC302 Sociological Theory
Hours 3
Examines the role of theory in sociology; focuses on the major contributions to sociological theory in both the classical and contemporary periods with an emphasis on historical context and philosophical backgrounds.

SOC305 Food, Culture, and Society
Hours 3
Examination of food as a social construction; emphasis on food rituals, cultural distinctions and perspectives, federal regulations and subsidies, food-related diseases, and sustainable agriculture.
SOC315 Race And Ethnic Relations
Hours 3
Analysis of American social structure, demographic and institutional trends over time related to race and the description of racism. This course offers a critical introduction to the conditions of possibility for modern racial thinking, with particular emphasis on racial slavery and anti-blackness. Students will begin with the working assumption that slavery is at the root of the problem of race and racism. In order to excavate this assumption, Students will survey debates on 1) the origin and history of race and racism (from the Ancients to the early moderns); 2) the deployment of categories in contested proximity to race (from class to gender); and 3) the development of different conceptual paradigms (from double consciousness to political ontology) to parse the relationship between race and the world. Instead of resolving these debates, the problem-based approach will emphasize how the scope and framing of texts bear on present problematics. In doing so, students will learn to mobilize the readings as theoretical and historical tools in interpreting the contemporary and interrogating our responsibility toward the themes of the class.

SOC352 Social Inequality
Hours 3
Analysis of inequities of wealth, power, and prestige; major theories of social stratification and poverty; social mobility.

SOC370 Sexuality and Society
Hours 3
In-depth examination of human sexuality from a sociological perspective, analyzing how sexual behaviors and attitudes are shaped and influenced by larger society.

SOC390 Selected Topics In Soc SP
Hours 3
Examination of selected problems and issues in Sociology, African American Studies, and Women's Studies. May be taken a total of six times, with different topics.

SOC405 Gender & Society
Hours 3
Sociological approach to the study of women and men; exploration of the social construction of genders in institutions and in everyday life, feminist theories of masculinity, gender inequality, and social change.

SOC406 Organizational Failures and Disasters
Hours 3
Examination of a variety of organizational failures and disasters; exploration of the major social and psychological factors that contribute to technical, practical, and ethical failures in organizations.

SOC460 Body and Society
Hours 3
Social construction of the body; exploration of how the human body is socially, culturally, and politically constructed according to gender, race/ethnicity, occupation and social class.

SOC471 Medical Sociology
Hours 3
Social issues relating to health, medicine, and society; how society shapes individual understandings of what it means to be healthy, produces differential patterns of health and illness, and how medicine is practiced in the United States.

SOC480 Death and Dying
Hours 3
Examination of death and dying from a sociological perspective; death as a social process that varies by culture, context and historical moment.

SOC490 Seminar In Sociology
Hours 1-3
Examination of selected problems and issues in sociology. A maximum of 12 hours may be used toward the minor.
Prerequisite(s): SOC 101

SOC499 Ind Study in Sociology SP
Hours 1-6
1-6 hour independent study course allowing students to conduct sociological research under faculty supervision.
Prerequisite(s): SOC 101

Women's Studies Courses

WS200 Intro To Women Studies HU
Hours 3
An interdisciplinary course examining the roles of women in patriarchal society, with emphasis on how factors such as race, class, gender, and sexuality contribute to the oppression of women and ways they can be challenged through feminist critical practices.

WS205 Women's Autobiographies
Hours 3
Through an examination of women's autobiographical writings, the roles women have assumed in different cultures and periods are considered. Analytical techniques from the study of art, literature and psychology are used to discover issues inherent in women's experiences.

WS220 Mothers And Daughters
Hours 3
Investigation of the institution of motherhood, the forces shaping it, and the significance of mother-daughter relationships.
WS300 Studies in Gender and Sexuality

Hours 3

Students in the course will consider the description of gender and sexuality in popular culture, with the aim of understanding the relationship between both concepts. The goal is to follow up on the introduction to Women's Studies with more in depth analysis of how gender and sexuality are defined for individuals, in the law, and as a consequence of social change.

Special Topics Course

WS310 Special Topics

Hours 3

Examination of selected problems and issues in Sociology, African American Studies, and Women's Studies. May be taken a total of six times, with different topics.

Special Topics Course

WS323 Hate Crimes

Hours 3

What are the causes and consequences of bias-motivated crimes? What are the larger social and political contexts? In this class, students will examine how bias-motivated violence receives attention in the media, how and why hate crimes legislation came to be seen as a necessary legal tool to curb crimes based on race, gender, gender identity, religion, and sexual orientation. Students will also explore the opposition to such laws and the degree to which communities are able to respond to incidents of bias-motivated violence. Students will also explore the proliferation of hate groups and the impact of those groups on social and political debates over hate crimes laws.

WS329 Social Movements through Social Media

Hours 3

This course explores contemporary U.S. social movements around gender and racial justice through the lens of social media activism. The multifaceted online forums that activists have at their disposal today marks a significant break with the past and yet, “using” the media has long been a central tactic for many U.S. justice movements of the late 20th century. Students will be guided through data collection exercises and discursive analysis of the information gathered in order to interrogate the knowledge produced by select social movements through their use of social media overtime. Employing theoretical, historical, and ethnographic arguments at the center of feminist and anti-racist struggles, students will explore the opportunities and constraints of relying on social media and its particular import for what the academy refers to as a “public intellectualism.”

WS340 Women And Law

Hours 3

This seminar’s major focus is the impact of law on the status and lives of women.

WS342 Women in the South

W

Hours 3

Examination of the cultural concepts, myths, and experiences of black and white Southern women from a variety of economic and social backgrounds. Special attention is given to the interaction of race, class, and gender in Southern women’s lives. Texts include historical studies, autobiographies, biographies, oral histories and novels written by and about women in the 19th and 20th-century South. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Writing

WS345 Black Politics

Hours 3

This course examines the historical origins and present framework of Black politics, including the civil rights movement, Black political culture, local and community politics, and current and future issues for Black America such as Black imagery in television/film, Black feminism, sexuality, the War on Drugs, the impact of mass incarceration, and modern social justice and protest movements like #BlackLivesMatter. We will explore questions regarding the history of race in American political life as well as how race has shaped a broader national identity. We will evaluate what concepts like “equal treatment under the law” and “liberty and justice for all” mean with respect to the legacy of Black political participation.

WS352 Social Inequality

Hours 3

Analysis of inequities of wealth, power, and prestige; major theories of racial and cultural minorities; behavioral correlates of stratification; social mobility.

WS360 Black Contemporary Drama in the U.S.

Hours 3

How do theatre and performance enable or contribute to our ability to understand race and racism? How do contemporary Black theatre artists and playwrights intervene in, redefine, or celebrate notions of Black identity? What are the limits or risks of thinking about race through performance? Students in this course will explore these questions through reading and viewing U.S. American dramatic works from the last 30 years. This course will seek to understand performance and drama as important modes through which African American artists generate and transmit their experience, form community, produce political analysis, and shape the artistic and cultural fabric of the United States.

WS365 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in US Society

Hours 3

Students in this course study the development of policies that seek to build a more equitable society in the US. Providing a historical perspective on how social change has occurred in the society, the course also discusses how change has taken place in the last few decades. How have societal institutions changed how the issues of race and gender are addressed since the Civil Rights Movement? How do we apply concepts such as diversity, intersectionality, community, equity, and inclusion throughout US society? The course provides students with an understanding of why these concepts are important, and how social change occurs today.
WS370 Gender, Sexuality, and the Law
Hours 3
This course will provide students with an historic and cultural overview of the laws, policies, and politics of gender and sexuality in the United States. In this course, students will understand how law and public policy have had an impact on the lives of marginalized communities in the United States. This course examines how courts have interpreted laws and set policies regarding civil unions and same-sex marriage, privacy and reproductive rights, and discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation in the workplace.

WS371 Race and Queer Desire
Hours 3
This course will provide the framework to examine how the broad spectrum of queer sexualities are understood. We will investigate stereotypes about masculinity and femininity that govern narratives about race, gender, and sexual orientation. We will explore answers and interpretations to questions of what a “queer” identity is, how gender is constructed, how power operates on sexuality and race, and how the intersection of race and sexuality form a unique positionality for gays and lesbians of color.

WS375 Freedom Beyond Rights
Hours 3
Feminism understands itself to be fundamentally liberatory - that is, concerned with increasing liberty, particularly (but not exclusively) of women. Feminist political theory often treats freedom within a liberal framework that prioritizes individual rights: for example, the right to control one's reproductive health, the right to equal pay, or the right not to experience harassment. According to this framework, to be free is to enjoy one's rights without interference or limitation. The aim of this course is to think about freedom beyond rights. Specifically, we will consider what it means to be a free political actor, whether freedom is the highest political good, whether, and how, freedom is compatible with other values, such as equality and justice, and how different kinds of politics, social norms, and modes of living might affect attempts to increase and experience freedom.

WS407 Contemporary Feminism
Hours 3
Political theory has traditionally associated men with citizenship, public life, and affairs of state, while subordinating or ignoring women's interests, experiences, and voices. Feminist political theory challenges this imbalance, while also expanding the boundaries of what ought to be considered “political.” Motivated by a concern for inequality in everyday life, feminist political theory seeks to provide a philosophical framework with which to address injustice, while also inquiring about the existential condition of those who identify as women, trans*, or genderqueer. In so doing, feminist political theory pries open the category of “woman” to reveal its complexities, contradictions, and promise. Students will read influential works from contemporary feminist scholars who come from a variety of intellectual traditions and possess differing political commitments. These texts not only disrupt the historic exclusion of women from political theory but also the exclusionary tendencies in some early feminist writing. Topics may include justice, oppression, solidarity, the state, and neoliberalism.

WS410 Essential Readings & Writings in Women's Studies
SP, W
Hours 3
This course explores texts and themes central to the interdisciplinary field of Women's and Gender Studies. Course texts may include theoretical, expository, autobiographical, and fictional writings from early feminism as well as contemporary selections. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Special Topics Course, Writing

WS430 Contemporary Issues: Feminist Theory
W
Hours 3
Through the study of key feminist political and theoretical texts on an issue central to contemporary feminism, students in this seminar will develop advanced undergraduate research skills and gain a substantial foundation for further study, including graduate work in this area. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Prerequisite(s): WS 200 or permission from the instructor.
Writing
WS436 Gender and Black Masculinity
Hours 3
This course will examine the socio-historical perceptions and constructions of Black masculinities in various regions and periods. Students will also examine the social, political, and economic conditions of Black male life in the contemporary period and interrogate representations of Black men and boys in U.S. culture and society in relation to the broader politics of race, class, gender, and sexuality in the post-civil rights era. Specific attention will be paid to the history of ideas and approaches that have shaped and defined our understanding of Black males. Students will be introduced to historical and socio-cultural circumstances that affect Black males and the diverse nature of Black culture. This course will also attempt to heighten awareness and sensitivity to the contemporary problems affecting Black males and thus help discover and evaluate social policies and programs geared towards Black males.

WS440 Seminar in Women's Studies
W
Hours 3
Courses under this rubric are designed to investigate a particular subject supplemental to regular course offerings. Students in this senior seminar will develop advanced undergraduate research skills and gain a substantial foundation for further study, including graduate work in this area. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.
Prerequisite(s): WS 200 or permission of the instructor.
Writing

WS442 Writings in Women’s Studies
Hours 3
This course will provide students with a writing course in topics important to contemporary feminist theory. Among the topics will be a study of classical texts, such as Antigone for gender politics, the development of student training in areas of feminist analysis from within the fields of natural science, political science, English, anthropology, rhetoric, art, economics, and American Studies. Demonstrated writing proficiency is a requirement for successful completion of the course. Students will complete at a minimum 5 short papers of from 1-3 pages each, essays derived from course readings and topical assignments, as well as a longer paper of from 7-10 pages. Instructor assessment of student writing and constant feedback is an important part of the course, and students will be asked to develop their own writing through in class assignments as well. Students will read a considerable amount of material in feminist analysis, comment upon this, and engage in classroom discussions on a regular basis.
Prerequisite(s): None

WS445 Seminar in the Study of Gender and Sexuality
Hours 3
Students will study the different approaches to the study of sexuality within the framework of the disciplines of Women’s Studies and African American Studies. The focus is on understanding how gender and sexuality develop through intersectionality, contemporary popular culture, and/or through policy changes. International research in gender and sexuality studies is also a potential focus of the course.

WS450 Independent Study in Women’s Studies
SP
Hours 1-6
Independent study on any subject pertaining to Women’s and Gender Studies conducted under the supervision of a professor in the chosen field.
Prerequisite(s): Permission of the supervisor and arrangement in advance of the semester in which enrollment is planned.

Special Topics Course

WS460 Race, Gender, and the Artist
W
Hours 3
Students in this writing seminar will develop advanced undergraduate research skills and gain a substantial foundation for further study. Demonstrated writing proficiency is a requirement for passing this course. This seminar will focus on how issues of gender and race emerge in and shape art and art practices across a range of media. Students will gain the tools to critically engage with a range of such work (including but not limited to visual art, TV, film, music, and theatre); to explore how artists have navigated race and gender and their intersections; and—as artists, audience members, fans, and critics—to develop their own feminist and anti-racist responses to art and popular culture. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.
Writing

WS470 Gender, Race, and Class
Hours 3
Emphasis is placed on theories and research on the interrelationships between the conceptualizations of gender, race, and class. The many different schools of thought on these issues are brought into productive tension with each other, depending on the course content. Students explore through reading primary and secondary texts the interactions between the practices that define these concepts. This course is preparation for further study at the graduate level, and considered a capstone course in the major.