AFRICAN&BLACK DIASPORA STUDIES (ABD)

ABD 100 | INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN AND BLACK DIASPORA STUDIES | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)
This interdisciplinary introductory course examines 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.

ABD 144 | AFRICAN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)
A survey of the varieties of African religious practice and thought.

ABD 200 | AFRICA: PEOPLES, CULTURES, IDEAS AND MOVEMENTS | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)
This is an introductory survey course on African politics. The organizing topic and focus of the course will be Africa’s experience with democratic governance, especially its continuing vigor and popular appeal on the continent despite its elusive character. Our goal in this course is to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of Africa: its rich political tradition, incredible diversity, its contradictions, achievements and failings. The objective is to be able to ask better questions, and develop some insights about why democracy, self-sustaining economic growth, equity and social justice have been so difficult to accomplish and sustain in the region.

ABD 202 | AFRICA, 1750-1900 | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)
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. Cross-listed with HST 132.

ABD 203 | AFRICA, 1900-PRESENT | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)
The workings of the colonial system, the rise and course of independence movements, and the history of individual African states since independence. Cross-listed with HST 133.

ABD 206 | AFRO-CARIBBEAN AND AFRO-LATIN AMERICA: PEOPLES, CULTURES, IDEAS AND MOVEMENTS | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)
This course introduces students to the study of peoples of African descent in the Caribbean and Latin America through lenses of history, politics, and culture. Students will learn how racial identities are constructed and interpreted in the Americas and the ways these identities have shaped Latin American and Caribbean cultures, politics, and societies. This course will explore broad patterns, changes, and continuities in the history of the African Diaspora in the hemisphere through an analysis of various topics such as conquest, colonization, slavery, independence struggles, nation-building, imperialism, neo-colonialism, revolution, violence, social movements, and inter-American relations.

ABD 208 | AFRICAN AMERICA: PEOPLES, CULTURES, IDEAS AND MOVEMENTS | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)
This course is intended to acquaint the student with a range of texts that illustrate some of the major themes in African American studies while emphasizing the development of students’ critical reading, writing, and analytical skills. The course will serve as an introduction to African American historical, literary, political, and cultural study. This course is meant to introduce students to some of the issues, debates, and questions that have shaped the study and development of Black Americans in the United States and the broader world.

ABD 209 | RACE AND RACISM | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)
Although it is common for us to talk about race, very few of us have an understanding of what the term means, much less how it came to signify human diversity. Race is not an objective scientific category that reliably conveys information about people or groups of people; it is a set of ideologies and practices that originated in modern Europe and has a traceable intellectual history. In this course we will study the origin of race as an intellectual and scientific project designed to organize humanity into discrete and hierarchical groups, and the implications of racial thinking, i.e. racial discrimination perpetuated by rhetorical and pictorial stereotypes, discriminatory behavior and institutional practices. We will utilize racial formation theory which links race and racism by showing the dynamic connections between stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination and privilege.

ABD 210 | AFRICA ON FILM | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)
Africa is a continent with a rich and growing repertoire of film. This course explores this repertoire, focusing primarily on films made about Africa by filmmakers of African descent. This class will feature fiction and non-fiction films (full-length and shorts) by well-known filmmakers of African descent. In addition to screenings, students will read essays that illuminate the background necessary to intelligently interpret and critique film. Topics for discussion include the funding, distribution, and presentation of African Films as well as modes of criticism appropriate to film made by Africans and the relation of filmmaking to history. Film directors include Souleymane Cisse, Bassek ba Kobhio, Jean-Marie Teno, Djibril Dio Mambety, Mohamad Camara, and Ousmane Sembene.

ABD 211 | AFRICA TO 1800: AGE OF EMPIRES | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)
A study of African history from earliest times, concentrating on the political, social and religious aspects of major African states and empires. Cross-listed with HST 131.

ABD 214 | ARCHEOLOGY OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA | 4 quarter hours  
(Undergraduate)
Africans have been on the move since the dawn of humanity. Archaeology is one discipline that can inform us about the presence and influence of Africans throughout the world, beginning with our hominid ancestors and continuing through the 20th century. Prior experience with archaeology is not required. Topics include: the evolution and development of our species; migrations within the African continent and abroad; and the cultural insights to be gained from the rapidly-growing field of African-American archaeology.
This course will examine the religious experience of African Americans and its African precursors through historical and literary resources, reflecting African Americans' distinctive past and interaction with other elements of American culture. Cross-listed with REL 115.

This course explores the evolution of African-American political participation from the mid-1800's to the present. Topical areas include black political leadership and involvement in social movements (including abolitionism, nationalism, civil rights and the black power movements), electoral politics, political parties, urban politics, public policies, political culture, and as elected officials. Special attention will also be given to the influence of laws and the courts on African-Americans' political participation.

This course employs cultural criticism, race and ethnic studies, and women's and gender studies to examine the visual representations of blacks and love in art, film, and literature. The course begins by examining the construction of race in eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth-century European and American philosophy and body politic and with an examination of art, art history, film, and literature. Section two explores the definition of love; it examines Christian definitions of love as well as secular definitions from black intellectuals, cultural critics, and scholars. Section three examines a range of genres in search of progressive, transformative, positive images that depict blacks in loving relationships, rediscovering what it means to love oneself and others in spite of/because of our human differences (in race/ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality).

This course examines how writers represent gender and race in the romance genre. The course begins with a study of the literary elements that comprise popular romance novels. It also examines the design elements for their covers used primarily to attract women readers from varied racial/ethnic backgrounds, who, as major consumers of this genre, generate over a billion dollars in revenue annually. Next, attention will be devoted specifically to examining women writers and black readers of romance novels, who make up 25% of the billion dollar publishing industry. Questions to be addressed include: How does a writer's gender and racial/ethnic identity shape the representations of race and gender in romance fiction and cover design? How have writers complicated the popular romance plot to address the issues of gender, race, class, and age? How do writers utilize the romance novel during specific historical periods to address social, political, and health issues? The course concludes by examining how the internet has transformed the writing, publishing, purchasing, and reading practices for the writers, publishers, and readers of romance novels with black characters.
ABD 234 | BLACK AESTHETIC THOUGHT | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course will examine the aesthetic thought and artistic movements that have emerged from Black creative intellectuals in the U.S. and globally. The course will examine Black aesthetics through various creative forms such as visual arts, cinema, music, and others. Figures examined in this course may include: W.E.B. Du Bois, Alain Locke, Zora Neale Hurston, Stuart Hall, bell hooks, Larry Neal, among others.

ABD 235 | HARLEM RENAISSANCE AND NEGRITUDE | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This interdisciplinary course will examine the diasporic literary and cultural movements known as the Harlem (or New Negro) Renaissance and the Negritude Movement. Through close attention to the essays, novels, and poetry from these movements, students will explore the connections between these two multifaceted cultural movements and their contributions to the growth of a global Black political and cultural consciousness. Authors to be studied include: Du Bois, Hughes, Locke, McKay, Césaire and Senghor, among others.

ABD 236 | BLACK FREEDOM MOVEMENTS | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course examines the movement for freedom by Black people in the US and throughout the African diaspora. Students will analyze the struggle for liberation in cultural, historical, and political contexts through the study of anti-slavery and abolition movements, the Civil Rights movement, anti-colonial struggles, the Black Power movement, Black Lives Matter/Movement for Black Lives and the work of activists and scholars throughout the diaspora.

ABD 239 | PHILOSOPHIES OF AFRICA | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
A study of the patterns of philosophical thinking from the African continent. Cross-listed with PHL 239.

ABD 240 | BLACK MUSIC IN AMERICAN CULTURE | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course will focus on the historical development, cultural significance, political commentary, and social effects of Black music in the U.S. from the 1960s to the 1980s. Beginning with the rise of R&B and Soul in the 1960s, the course will continue on to examine innovations such as funk, disco and the emergence of hip hop. It considers the aesthetics and themes of black music and how they reflect the Black experience in the U.S. during the latter half of the 20th century, as well as the ways that the music, the themes, and the people evolve over that period.

ABD 241 | RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA | 4-8 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course explores the dynamics of African religions throughout the Diaspora and the Atlantic world. It will pay particular attention to the variety of historical experiences and sacred institutions of those of African descent. Questions of the course include: how were these religions and their communities created?; how have they survived?; and how are African-based traditions perpetuated through ritual, song, dance, drumming, and healing practices? Specific attention will be given to one or more of the following: Yoruba religion and its New World offspring, Santeria, Voodoo and Candomble; Africanisms in American religion; gospel music; Islam; urban religions; and/or Vodun and Voodoo.

ABD 244 | AFRICAN DIASPORA WOMEN WRITERS | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course examines fiction, poetry, drama, and other creative writings by African diaspora women writers with the purpose of studying how the writers from Africa and its diaspora configure themselves in literature. Students will engage how these writers engage topics such as literary form, feminism, gender, identity, politics, and community. Authors who studied in this course may include Aidaou, Emelcheta, Danticat, Cliff, Kincaid, Brand, Head, Hurston, Adichie, Lorde, among others.

ABD 245 | RACE AND ETHNICITY IN LITERARY STUDIES | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course examines various ways in which race is constructed and, concurrently, how race as a “fiction” operates in literary studies. Literature presents and explores the ways in which the world is viewed and experienced by individuals in a particular society or social group. Since literature provides unique insights into different historical and cultural movements, studying how race is understood and deployed (explicitly and implicitly) in a text provides a powerful way to examine the fluidity of race and to compare how it is understood in different parts of the Black diaspora.

ABD 246 | INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN ART | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course is based on a series of important issues in the study of African art, such as medium and color, portraiture, the artist and innovation, relationships with language, royal patronage, divination, gender, aesthetics, Othering, and authenticity. The course will explore each of these concepts through a variety of artistic traditions from the continent. In this manner, students will gain basic theoretical tools which will enable them to work with art from across Africa.

ABD 247 | ANCIENT AFRICAN ART | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course surveys a selection of artistic traditions from across the African continent beginning with the earliest attempts by humanity to visually represent complex thought until the Portuguese began trading along the coast of West Africa in the mid-fifteenth century. Emphasis is placed on demonstrating connectedness with a larger cultural environment, while also suggesting connections to future artistic traditions. Cross-listed with HAA 201.

ABD 248 | CLASSICAL AFRICAN ART | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course surveys a selection of artistic traditions from across the African continent beginning with the arrival of the Portuguese along the coast of West Africa in the mid-fifteenth century until the age of African independence in the 1960s. While the impact of a European presence helps define the boundaries of this course, artistic response to that presence is but one theme. Interactions between African cultures and the impact of Islam are equally important considerations. Cross-listed as HAA 202.

ABD 249 | JAZZ AND THE DIASPORIC IMAGINATION | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course will examine the role jazz has played in the cultural imagination of people across the African Diaspora. What does jazz symbolize for authors and artists, and how have they adapted jazz to fit their own aesthetic, ideological, and political needs? How has it been used in literature, visual art, politics, sociology (among others)? What are the different ways in which ‘jazz’ (itself a multifaceted idea) has been imagined, presented, and manipulated? Figures to be examined include: Amiri Baraka, Sonia Sanchez, Romare Bearden, Langston Hughes, Jackson Pollock, Billie Holiday, Ralph Ellison, Dizzy Gillespie, John Coltrane, among others.
African-American History to 1800 (Undergraduate)

This course focuses primarily on the colonial era, with an emphasis on topics such as the construction of race and gender, the Black Atlantic, the emergence of African diasporic cultures in the Americas, slavery, black political thought, and the Revolutionary War. Cross-listed with PSC 254.

African-American History, 1800-1900 (Undergraduate)

This course surveys African art from the age of African independence in the 1960s until the present day. The meaning of the term contemporary as it applies to African art is questioned in this course. The position of the artist between African artistic tradition and the global art market is also of vital importance. Cross-listed with HAA 203.

World Refugee Crisis (Undergraduate)

This is a survey of global refugee crisis and internal displacement between 1945 and the present. The course will focus on the following issues and challenges: human rights, definitions and causes of crisis, internal/external displacements, ‘environmental’ refugees, protection and integration, refugee children, and conflict resolutions in post-war societies. Cross-listed with HST 241.

Post-Colonial African Art (Undergraduate)

This course surveys African art from the age of African independence in the 1960s until the present day. The meaning of the term contemporary as it applies to African art is questioned in this course. The position of the artist between African artistic tradition and the global art market is also of vital importance. Cross-listed with HAA 203.

African Politics (Undergraduate)

An introduction to African politics. The course will focus on the basic concepts, issues, and theoretical models used in studies of the dynamics of government and politics in Africa from the pre-colonial era to the contemporary period. Cross-listed with HST 246.

African-American History, 1800-1900 (Undergraduate)

This course focuses primarily on the colonial era, with an emphasis on topics such as the construction of race and gender, the Black Atlantic, the emergence of African diasporic cultures in the Americas, slavery, black political thought, resistance, and the Revolutionary War. Cross-listed with HST 246.

African-American History, 1900-1990 (Undergraduate)

The African experience in America beginning in the colonial era and lasting through the present day. This course will focus on a portion of that history that spanning the 19th century. The course is organized thematically, with an emphasis on topics such as resistance, the construction of race, slavery and the law, gender and slavery, the nature of antebellum free black life, abolition, the Civil War, Reconstruction. Cross-listed as HST 247.

African-American History, 1900 to Present (Undergraduate)

The African experience in America is expansive, beginning in the colonial era and lasting through the present day. This course will focus on only a portion of that history-1900 to the present. This course is organized thematically with an emphasis on topics such as migration, urbanization, segregation, 20th century constructions of blackness, arts & culture, African Americans and the World Wars, black political thought, freedom movements, and criminalization.

The Great Migration and Black Identity (Undergraduate)

The largest internal migration in US history took place in the early 20th century when three million African Americans fled racial terrorism in the South to pursue economic opportunities in the North. They were joined by people of African descent from the Caribbean, leading to what is now known as the Great Migration. The movement had profound political, social and economic ramifications. It changed how White Americans saw African Americans and how African Americans saw themselves. This course will explore how the Great Migration shaped Black cultural identity in the 20th century. Topics will include racial terrorism in the South, education and political philosophies, and social movements.

Dimensions of Black Family Life (Undergraduate)

This course will introduce students to the study of Black family life in Africa and its Diaspora. Special attention will be given to the ways in which values and patterns of living and thought are communicated across generations (time) and transported across geographies (space).

Radical Aesthetics of Hip Hop (Undergraduate)

This course engages the interrelated art forms that comprise hip hop, a culture conceived by African American, Afro-Caribbean and Latino youth in the 1970s. In this course, students will explore hip hop culture’s aesthetic strategies through a survey history of its four elements—emceeing, deejaying, bboying/bgirling, graffiti—and traces their wide influence in music, visual culture, dance, theatre, and politics. This course is interested in how hip hop culture has negotiated inequality through aesthetic practices that portray the fissures of the American dream while modeling alternatives.

What is Black Cinema? (Undergraduate)

What makes a black film a black film? Is a black film one made by a black director with a majority black cast and made for black audiences? What if the director of the film is non-black or it is made for a multicultural audience? Are these films still “black films?” Is black film a genre, a mode, or something else entirely? Do black filmmakers make films that are different than non-black filmmakers? These questions guide this course? s investment in the idea of black film from the 1960s to the present. Throughout the course, students will consider the formal, cultural, historical, industrial, and political ramifications at stake when we assume the existence and relevance of the idea of the black film. We will address topics such as genre, class, gender, sexuality, authorship, spectatorship, both individually and intersectionally.

Women in African Religion and Culture (Undergraduate)

A study of the role of religion and culture in the lives of women in Africa, introducing students to an "emic" (insider) interpretation of beliefs and practices of the triple religious heritage (Indigenous religions, Christianity and Islam), and critically evaluating their implications for women.

Black Feminist Theories in a U.S. Context (Undergraduate)

This course surveys the major figures, statements, and movements that shape Black feminist thinking, writing and activism in the United States. Figures examined include: bell hooks, Ida B. Wells Barnett, Mary Church Terrell, Angela Davis, Michelle Wallace, Audre Lorde, and Mark Anthony Neal, among others. Cross-listed with WGS 275.
This course explores how race, class, politics and culture find expression in Afro-Hispanic literature. We will read works that have been translated into English from their original Spanish versions and analyze how the use of language, imagery and narrative voice reflect the experience of people of African descent in the Spanish-speaking world.

This course explores various issues stemming from African and Black peoples being gendered and racialized subjects. Specific topics may vary.

Focused study of the impact of Islam on the artistic traditions of sub-Saharan Africa. Rather than necessarily replacing previous art forms, this course investigates in what circumstances preexisting visual culture might be integrated with the requirements and needs of Islam. This approach necessitates an understanding that neither Islam nor African art are monolithic entities, but rather their interactions represent a wide variety of negotiations across the continent. Likewise, this course will consider specific historical circumstances to which Islamic art in sub-Saharan Africa has responded in terms of form and content. Cross-listed with HAA 302.

This course examines a wide variety of issues pertinent to the study of architecture in Africa, highlighting above all else the diversity of traditions across the continent. Weekly themes are defined at times by materials, technology, type, geographical region, culture, or specific architectural elements. Examples of subjects studied include: earthen mosques of Mali; subterranean residences in Burkina Faso; nomadic tents; impluvial and courtyard traditions of Nigeria and Senegal; mural painting in Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and South Africa; Ethiopian rock cut churches; imperialist exploitation of Great Zimbabwe's legacy; and coral architecture of the Swahili Coast. Art history and related disciplines. Cross-listed with HAA 301.

Recent scholarship argues that Africa is not limited to geography, but is found in the traditions and identities of many peoples around the world. This course will examine different major themes in the study of the African and Black diaspora. Specific topics may vary.

The course will examine the often ambivalent place of Africa in the imaginations, cultures and politics of people in the African diaspora. Students will explore the contributions of African, African-American and Caribbean intellectuals in the formation of diasporic movements and Pan-African thought. We will ask, to what degree was the ideology of Pan-Africanism and the iconography of Africa employed to mobilize masses of black people around local and domestic issues? How important has a consciousness of Africa been to the construction of cultural identities in the diaspora, and how have class, gender, and race shaped or constrained those identities? Our goal is to develop further insights into how people of the African diaspora have continually reinvented and imagined the home of their ancestors, in turn reinventing and imagining themselves.

This course studies the science fiction by Black writers as well as critical responses to these novels and writers. The course explores the treatment of gender, oppression and empowerment, historical implications (past, present, future) of the middle passage, chattel slavery, and the struggle for freedom.

Considers black political thought through a variety of ideological, political, legal and historical perspectives. First explores early efforts by blacks to challenge the racialized limitations of America’s core principles of liberty, equality and democracy in the contexts of abolitionism, the women’s suffrage movements, Manifest Destiny, and American industrialism. Then concentrates on the evolution of contemporary black political thought, with an emphasis on both conceptual diversity and continuity over time. Cross-listed with PSC 336.

Cross-Cultural Study of self-discovery and identity as manifested in the literatures of self-awareness and self-definition. Authors to be studied include: Michael Anthony, Frantz Fanon, Jamaica Kincaid, George Lamming, V. S. Naipaul, and Jane Rhys.

An advanced examination of the indigenous religions of Africa as they encounter other religious traditions throughout the world.

Covers the problems of reunion between the North and the South after the Civil War, including the struggle for African-Americans’ civil and political rights, the transition to a free labor economy in the South, and the eventual end of reconstruction and establishment of racial segregation in the South and the nation. Cross-listed with HST 379.

Consent of the instructor is a prerequisite for this course.

This course engages the research and analyses in the field of public law - how do political scientists, public policy analysts and others develop informed public policy and law. Topics vary from year to year.

An exploration of women's experience as a primary resource and norm for theology, focusing on themes of inclusion, exclusion, representation and liberation in particular social, political and historical contexts.
ABD 371 | AFRICAN- AMERICAN FICTION | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)

ABD 372 | AFRICAN AMERICAN DRAMA AND POETRY | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
Survey of Black poetry and drama from 1865 to the present.

ABD 373 | TOPICS IN AFRICAN AMERICAN POETRY 1940-1960 | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)

ABD 374 | THE BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course looks at the intersection between political and artistic movements of the Black Power and Black Arts Movements. We will survey the aesthetic and political aspects of this era, including poetry, novels, drama, music, visual arts and film.

ABD 375 | RACE, MEDIA, AND REPRESENTATION | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course examines signal representations of blackness in American media from the 19th century to the present. Students will probe the media’s influence on perceptions of and possibilities afforded black people in the United States and abroad as well as black media makers attempts to proffer new visions.

ABD 379 | BLACK FEMINIST THEORY | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course engages with the multiple versions of woman-centered theory and practice developed in the writings; activism, and other creative work of Black, particularly African American women, from the mid-nineteenth century to the twenty-first. While not all of these theorists would use the word feminist; all have in common the aim of empowering women’s lives, advocating for women for equal economic, political, and cultural access.

ABD 380 | TOPICS IN AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course examines figures, texts, cultures or issues in African American studies. Specific topics may vary by term.

ABD 382 | TOPICS IN AFRICAN DIASPORA STUDIES | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
Topics vary. See schedule for titles and department website for specific descriptions.

ABD 386 | BLACK WOMEN’S LIVES | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course is a variable topics course directed to the examination of topics such as black women’s cultural criticism, Black women in the arts, Black lesbian rights, Black women’s participation in social movements, representation in the media, etc. Cross-listed with WGS 386.

ABD 390 | TOPICS IN POPULAR CULTURE IN THE BLACK DIASPORA | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course explores various topics in popular culture studies through the lens of the African Diaspora, including music, film, television, popular literature and subcultural practices. Specific topics may vary by quarter.

ABD 391 | CAPSTONE | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This senior seminar engages students in a synthesis of what they have learned through coursework. The capstone course will involve reading, writing, discussion, as well as the preparation by students of a substantive piece of work (e.g., a senior thesis, a research paper, or a creative work.)

ABD 397 | INTERNSHIP | 1-4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
By arrangement. Variable credit.

ABD 399 | INDEPENDENT STUDY | 1-6 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
Independent study. Variable credit.