Black Popular Cultures
AFA 2004**
Spring 2015

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African and African Diaspora Studies

Course Hours: T/Th 11AM-12:15PM
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Office Hours: T 3-5 or by appt.

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Phone: 315-212-8855
Rm: LC 301
Office Hours: T 12:30-1:30PM or by appt.

**This is the core course required for students who want a Certificate in African & African Diaspora Studies. This course also meets the University Core Course (UCC), Global Learning (GL), and Gordon Rule/Humanities with writing requirements.

COURSE DESCRIPTION


Through an in-depth examination of key aspects of black popular cultures in their global dimensions, this course considers fundamental questions about the nature of identity, identification, and belonging. It employs a comparative, interdisciplinary approach, focusing on historical processes, race or racialization, Diaspora, gender and sexuality, music, and other related topics. The course begins with a look at how artists and intellectuals have theorized race, blackness, Diaspora and globalization. It then proceeds to further explore these concepts through various articulations of black popular culture.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Define the race concept and discuss its development and application.
Understand how scholars, researchers, and culture workers have theorized blackness and Diaspora.

Identify key interrelated experiences, both historical and contemporary, that are relevant to black people in both continental Africa and in the Diaspora.

Demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate popular and scholarly texts (both written and visual) on the various perspectives and diverse cultural backgrounds of African peoples throughout the globe.

GLOBAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Demonstrate global awareness through understanding key interrelated issues, both historical and contemporary, that are relevant to the local and global experiences of people of African descent in both continental Africa and in the Diaspora.

Demonstrate a global perspective through analyses of the different local and global experiences of blackness articulated and produced by people of African descent in continental Africa and in the Diaspora.

Demonstrate engagement with intercultural systems of social categorization through critically evaluating popular and scholarly texts (both written and visual) on the experiences of African people throughout the globe.

Develop problem solving and critical thinking skills through engagement with issues that impact people of African descent across the globe.

Demonstrate engagement with one specific topic in black popular cultural production through independent research.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to attend class and participate in discussion. This includes completing in-class writing assignments. Be sure to bring something to write on or in for these in-class exercises.

Students are required to submit a one-page response to questions on the assigned materials EACH WEEK at the end of the week.** Students are allowed to revise and resubmit up to weekly 3 response papers based on instructor feedback in order to improve their score. These papers will be used to evaluate student global awareness.

There are three take home exams, one for each module of the course. Students will be given a question or set of questions that require students to draw upon the readings and films in order to demonstrate familiarity with and understanding of the relationship between key issues and events relevant to people of African descent. Each exam will be posted at or near the conclusion of each module and students will have one week to answer the questions. Exam responses are between 3-5 pages (12 pt, double-spaced). Course time will be devoted to discussing the take home exam questions and expectations for successful responses.**
• Students are required to write a 7-10 page research paper that explores a question or problem related to Black Popular culture and demonstrates understanding of key issues and different perspectives associated with diverse populations of African descent. The instructor must approve of this question and students must submit an annotated bibliography with a minimum of five scholarly sources as a part of the assignment. Course time will be devoted to discussing the development of the research paper. The term paper will be used to assess the student global perspective and global engagement.

**FOR ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES, GO TO THE “COURSE CONTENT” FOLDER ON BLACKBOARD

GRADING

Class Attendance and Participation: 20 pts
Weekly Reading/Film Response Papers (1-2 pages): 28 pts (2 POINTS EACH)
Take Home Exams (3): 30 pts (10 POINTS EACH)
Final Term Paper (5-7 pages): 22 pts

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The total number of points that you can earn in this course is 100. There is no extra credit.

GROUND RULES

1) Turn your cell phones OFF. If you have an emergency and have to use it, leave the room so that I do not have to request that you do so.
2) Use laptops ONLY for course related activity (i.e. taking notes)
3) Arrive to class ON TIME. Persistent lateness will result in a lower grade.
4) Papers are to be submitted electronically. NO late papers will be accepted without a medical excuse. Each day late will result in the loss of 10% of the total possible points.
5) Plagiarism is a serious offense. If you use the work of other authors without giving them credit, you will receive a ‘0’ for the assignment.
6) Papers must include a title, your name, the course name and number, and page numbers.
7) All email correspondence must begin with a salutation (Professor ________: Dear Dr. ________, Hi Professor ________, etc.) and end with your name.
8) In this course, we will be discussing topics some might consider sensitive, provocative, or taboo such as race and sexuality. It is imperative that you express your opinions in a respectful manner.
9) Some of the material in this course uses slang, profanity, and what some might consider derogatory racial and sexual terminology. If you find such language offensive, please see me.

COURSE MATERIALS

Readings from this course consist of journal articles and chapters from various texts. There are also several required films. All readings and films will be available on the course’s blackboard website. To Access go to online.fiu.edu, enter panther ID and 8 digit DOB. Required readings for the course are located below in the weekly section for which they are assigned.

COURSE SCHEDULE

MODULE ONE: FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS

WEEK ONE Foundations I: Race
January 13-15

Tuesday
Introduction to Course

Thursday
The Race Concept


2) The American Anthropological Association (AAA)’s statement on “race”
http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/racepp.htm

3) The AAA’s statement on “race” and intelligence
http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/race.htm

4) Review History of Race in the U.S.A.
http://www.understandingrace.org

WEEK TWO Foundations II: Theorizing Blackness and Diaspora
January 20-22

Tuesday
1) Film: Black Is…Black Ain’t (a film by Marlon Riggs)
In-class viewing and response to film
Thursday

WEEK THREE Foundations II: Theorizing Blackness and Diaspora
January 27-29

Tuesday


Thursday
1) Film: W.E.B. DuBois: A Biography in Four Voices
   **VIEW ON BLACKBOARD BEFORE CLASS

   Recommended

WEEK FOUR Foundations III: Transnationality of Black Popular Culture
February 3-5

Tuesday

Writing Assignment Workshop

Thursday
WEEK FIVE  Foundations III: Transnationality of Black Popular Culture  
February 10-12

Tuesday

Thursday
NO CLASS

FIU ROOTS HERITAGE TOURISM CONFERENCE  
Thursday, February 12th-14th  
Assignment: Attend one session and write weekly response paper summarizing and commenting upon that session. Papers can be 1-2 pages.

TAKE HOME ESSAY EXAM #1 POSTED, DUE FEBRUARY 19th 11:59PM  
DUE February 12th 11:59PM:  
PROPOSED FINAL RESEARCH PAPER QUESTION

MODULE TWO: PERFORMING BLACKNESS: AFRICA AND HER DIA SPORA

WEEK SIX  
The Diaspora in Africa: Muhammad Ali’s Rumble in the Jungle  
February 17-19

Tuesday
1) Film: When We Were Kings

DUE: one paragraph describing potential topics for the final research project.

Thursday


DUE: TAKE HOME EXAM ESSAY #1 11:59PM

WEEK SEVEN  
The Diaspora in Africa: Fela Kuti’s Afrobeat  
February 24-26
Tuesday
1) Film: *Fela Kuti: Teacher Don’t Teach Me Nonsense*

Thursday

LIBRARY RESEARCH SESSION WITH GLOBAL LEARNING LIBRARIAN

CRI CONFERENCE: RACE IN THE AMERICAS, FEBRUARY 26-28

WEEK EIGHT   Africa in the Diaspora: Carnival and Parade Culture
March 3-5

Tuesday
2) In Class Film Clips: Esta Es La Conga (Santiago) and Second Line Parades (New Orleans)

Thursday

TAKE HOME EXAM #2 POSTED, DUE MARCH 19th 11:59PM

WEEK NINE   Spring Break
March 10-12

MODULE THREE: REPRESENTING BLACKNESS

WEEK TEN   The Black Body: History and Politics of Representation
March 17-19

Tuesday
1) Film: Marlon Riggs, *Ethnic Notions*
Thursday
1) Jackson, Ronald L. 2006. CONT’D

DUE: TAKE HOME EXAM #2 THURSDAY 11:59PM

WEEK ELEVEN The Black Body: Femininity
March 24-26

Tuesday
1) Film: *The Life and Times of Sara Baartman*

Thursday

WEEK TWELVE The Black Body: Masculinity
March 31-April 2

Tuesday
1) Jackson, Ronald L., “Black Masculine Scripts” in Scripting the Black Masculine Body, pp. 73-103.


DUE: TUESDAY 11:59PM Bibliography for Term Paper

Thursday

TAKE HOME EXAM #3 POSTED (COVERS WEEKS 10-12)

MODULE FOUR: GLOBAL HIP HOP

WEEK THIRTEEN “Black” Musics: Global Dimensions of Hip Hop
April 7-9 Latin America

Tuesday
SPECIAL GUEST LECTURE:

SHANEEQUA CASTLE ON DANCEHALL IN JAMAICA
In preparation, view “Yuh Understand of Yuh Ovastand”

Thursday

3) Film: Cuban Hip Hop All Stars

DUE: TAKE HOME EXAM #3 THURSDAY 11:59PM

WEEK FOURTEEN  “Black” Musics: Global Dimensions of Hip Hop
April 14-16 Europe

Tuesday


Thursday
3) Brown, Timothy S. 2007, “‘Keepin it Real’ in a Different ‘Hood: (African-) Americanization and Hip Hop in Germany”, in The Vinyl Ain’t Final, pp. 137-150.

WEEK FIFTEEN  Black Musics: Global Dimensions of Hip Hop
April 21-23 Africa

Tuesday
1) Film: I [heart] Hip Hop in Morrocco: peace, love, hip hop

Thursday


WEEK SIXTEEN  EXAM WEEK
April 28-30

FINAL PAPER DUE MONDAY APRIL 27th 11:59PM