

Africana Studies (AFCS)

AFCS 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

AFCS 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 Difference/Diversity, NUpath Interpreting Culture

AFCS 1140. Introduction to African-American History. (4 Hours)

Surveys the development of African Americans in the United States from their African background to the present. Covers medieval and early modern societies in West and Central Africa; the transatlantic slave trade; the evolution of slavery from the colonial period through the Civil War; free blacks; Reconstruction; migration; civil rights; and black nationalism. Considers gender relations throughout the entire period and emphasizes how an historical perspective helps to inform discussions of contemporary issues.

AFCS 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 and contemporary as well as historical examples to trace the evolution of “scientific truth” and its impact on the U.S. cultural landscape. Offers students the opportunity to question assumptions about science and view the scientific process as a site for critical analysis.

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity

AFCS 1261. Global Caribbean. (4 Hours)

Focuses on the culture and history of Caribbean societies in global perspective. Explores Caribbean creativity and resilience across English, French, and Spanish linguistic and political spheres with examples from literature, art, music, food, technology, and performance. Considers the global reach of Caribbean diasporas, highlighting the long local histories of Caribbean communities in Boston. Follows four key themes—indigeneity, blackness, diaspora, and creolization—to understand this unique point of entry for the study of race, gender, and sexuality in the Americas.

AFCS 1270. Introduction to Global Health. (4 Hours)

Introduces global health in the context of an interdependent and globalized world focusing on four main areas of analysis: infrastructure of global health; diseases; populations; and terms, concepts, and theories. While the focus is on lower-income countries, the course examines issues in a broader global context, underscoring the interconnections between global health disparities and global health policy response. Applies case studies describing interventions to improve healthcare in resource-poor settings in sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere to help illuminate the actors, diseases, populations, and principles and frameworks for the design of effective global health interventions.

Attribute(s): NUpath Societies/Institutions

AFCS 1990. Elective. (1-4 Hours)

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions.

AFCS 2270. Race, Ethnicity, and Inequality. (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

AFCS 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 or ENGW 1113 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1114 with a minimum grade of C

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

AFCS 2318. New England Stories: Storytelling and the African American Experience. (4 Hours)

Delves into the fascinating stories of African Americans who have called New England home, from the seventeenth century up to the present. Discusses themes such as freedom and slavery, migration, and civil rights. Introduces an interdisciplinary framework for understanding Black identity formation, activism, and cultural as well as intellectual traditions amid the long struggle for justice.

Prerequisite(s): ENGW 1102 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1111 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1113 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1114 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C

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

AFCS 2325. Black Feminist Studies. (4 Hours)

Invites students to study the history and contemporary landscape of Black feminist scholarship. Covers a range of disciplines and historical periods to introduce students to important texts and theoretical developments in this vast and interdisciplinary field.

Prerequisite(s): ENGW 1102 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1111 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1113 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1114 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C

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

AFCS 2330. Afro-Latin American Studies. (4 Hours)

Introduces the history of Afro-Latin America and of Black identities particular to this region. Frameworks such as transnational migration and diaspora provide an entry to the specific histories of African-descended people in the countries in the region known as Latin America and contemporary interpretations and revisions of that history. Covers topics including the history of slavery in the Americas; the Haitian Revolution; debates about "racial democracy"; and the relationship between gender, race, and empire. Explores the relationship between scholarship and struggle, social analysis, and social transformation.

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

AFCS 2337. African American History Before 1900. (4 Hours)

Traces the presence of African-descended people in North America. Emphasizes the historical and cultural links between Africa and North America that have shaped the Black experience in the United States. Explores and analyzes the institution of slavery, the role of free Black communities, the Civil War and emancipation, and Black leadership and protest during the Reconstruction era. Introduces students to the historian's craft, theoretical debates concerning race and gender, and the persistence of the past in the present.

Prerequisite(s): ENGW 1102 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1111 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1113 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1114 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C

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

AFCS 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.

Prerequisite(s): ENGW 1102 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1111 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1113 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1114 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity

AFCS 2380. Black Families and Incarceration. (4 Hours)

Focuses on how the Black family functions, both interpersonally and as a social unit within a carceral state. Introduces the diverse institutional, cultural, and historical issues relating to past and present circumstances from the effects of slavery and colonization on the Black family structure. Explores policies and practices within carceral institutions dealing with childhood, motherhood, and fatherhood. Assesses the social and psychological harms of incarceration on Black children and their families.

Prerequisite(s): ENGW 1102 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1113 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1114 with a minimum grade of C

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity

AFCS 2390. Africa and the World in Early Times. (4 Hours)

Addresses the place of Africa in the world, from human evolution to the establishment of large-scale iron-making societies. Examines debates on the evolution of man in Africa and migrations to other regions. Traces the formation and spread of language groups, the rise of agriculture, formation of family and political structures, and patterns of trade up to 1000 C.E.

AFCS 2410. Possession, Sacrifice, and Divination in African Diasporic Religions. (4 Hours)

Examines religious thought and rituals and the Diaspora in a comparative context. Topics include traditional religions, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in Africa, and the Diaspora. Emphasizes the transformation of religions practiced in Africa when African captives were forced into the three slave trades affecting the continent of Africa: trans-Saharan, Indian Ocean, and transatlantic.

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

AFCS 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): 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 or ENGW 1113 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1114 with a minimum grade of C

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

AFCS 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.

AFCS 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

AFCS 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

AFCS 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): 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 or ENGW 1113 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1114 with a minimum grade of C

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

AFCS 2900. Swahili, Culture, and Politics in Kenya. (4 Hours)

Introduces and immerses students in Kenyan African culture, the Swahili language and politics, and studies their impact on the everyday life of the local population. Offers students an opportunity to learn Swahili, which is the national language of Kenya; its use in a context of varied indigenous languages; and cultural dynamics. Exposes students to the major issues that characterize everyday life in rural and urban settings through visits to and stays in the rural areas and transect walks in villages and urban communities. Students visit projects run by community-based organizations, observing the everyday life of ordinary Kenyans and attending formal and informal classes and settings on Swahili language, culture, and the local politics.

Attribute(s): NUpath Integration Experience

AFCS 2973. Topics in Africana Studies. (4 Hours)

Introduces specific topics in Africana studies as selected by the instructor. Topics will vary. May be taken once for a maximum of 8 semester hours.

AFCS 2990. Elective. (1-4 Hours)

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions.

AFCS 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.

AFCS 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

AFCS 3210. Black Abolition Studies: Carcerality, Liberation, and Resistance. (4 Hours)

Analyzes how Black people have resisted carcerality in social and political organizing from the 16th century to the present. Explores historical understandings of abolition as the end of slavery and the current abolition project of ending prisons, policing, and other institutions that are shaped by the legacy of slavery. Offers students an opportunity to critically analyze and engage contemporary social movements and political discourse in their everyday lives. Topics include the Haitian Revolution, maroon communities, 19th-century slavery abolitionists, anti-lynching organizing, chain gangs, Black political prisoners, contemporary carceral abolition, and abolitionist texts and films.

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity

AFCS 3305. Beyond the Binary: Race, Sex, and Science. (4 Hours)

Considers how gender, race, and sexuality have been treated in science, focusing primarily on the 19th and 20th centuries. Examines the history of ideas about gender, race, and sexuality as reflected in fields such as biology, psychology, endocrinology, and neuroscience. Discusses contraceptive and reproductive technologies, pharmaceutical trials, the gendering of scientific professions, and recent studies that use algorithmic predictions of sex or sexual orientation. Uses close reading techniques and discussions to advance student expertise.

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

AFCS 3323. Race, Inequality, and the Law. (4 Hours)

Examines the relationship between and material impact of race, public policies, and the administration of justice in the United States. Explores the ways the American legal system and political institutions have constructed and reinvented racial categories and their legal and social implications over time. Emphasizes the legacy of this legal history by examining how race and racial inequities intersect with contemporary public policy and social justice issues, including educational equity, employment discrimination, policing, and technology.

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

AFCS 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 1102 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1111 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1113 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1114 (may be taken concurrently) with a minimum grade of C

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

AFCS 3424. Epidemiology of Pandemic Diseases and Health Disparities in the African Diaspora. (4 Hours)

Examines the epidemiology and determinants of diseases and the public health practice among continental African peoples and African-derived populations in the Americas and elsewhere in the African Diaspora. Emphasizes such epidemic diseases as malaria, yellow fever, tuberculosis, smallpox, the current AIDS pandemic, obesity, and cancer. The course also aims to critically address the breadth of factors behind these pandemics, such as socioeconomic, political, health system, behavioral, and genetic. A cross-cutting theme throughout the course is the entrenched health disparities in society.

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

AFCS 3512. Religion, Race, and Politics. (4 Hours)

Engages the intersections of religion, race, and political power through cultural history, ethnography, and lived religions. Explores the social and cultural categories of our historical and contemporary worlds. Examines how some peoples' histories have been centered, while others' histories have been marginalized. Explores religion as a social category that reproduces existing relations of power while alternatively supporting social revolution and change. Class engagements are centered on theories of power, understandings of difference, and changes in social structures over time, from the colonial period to the present (1500s–2000s).

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

AFCS 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 or ENGW 1113 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1114 with a minimum grade of C

AFCS 3900. Gender and Black World Literatures. (4 Hours)

Explores different aspects of the literary and cultural productions of black women throughout history. Examines writing by women in the United States—like Octavia Butler, Zora Neale Hurston, and Toni Morrison—in addition to writing by women across the global African diaspora—like Chimamanda Adichie and Jamaica Kincaid. Students may also engage with theories such as Black feminism, womanism, or intersectionality; consider issues of genre such as the novel, poetry, or science fiction; and explore key themes such as class, sexuality, and disability. AFRS 3900, WMNS 3900, and ENGL 3900 are cross-listed.

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

AFCS 3990. Elective. (1-4 Hours)

Offers elective credit for course taken at other academic institutions.

AFCS 4526. Afro-Asian Relations in the Americas. (4 Hours)

Examines the comparative racialization of Blacks and Asians in the Americas and relations between these communities. Introduces sociological theories of race/ethnicity, a chronology of Afro-Asian relations in the United States, and the impact of 1970s deindustrialization and post-1965 Asian immigration. Covers the internationalism of Black and Asian leaders (e.g., W.E.B. du Bois and Mao Tse-Tung) in the developing nations and the overlapping Civil Rights, Black Power, and Asian American movements.

Prerequisite(s): SOCL 1101 with a minimum grade of D- or ANTH 1101 with a minimum grade of D- or CRIM 1100 with a minimum grade of D- or HUSV 1101 with a minimum grade of D- or WMNS 1103 with a minimum grade of D- or POLS 1140 with a minimum grade of D- or POLS 1160 with a minimum grade of D-

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

AFCS 4588. Literature in Context. (4 Hours)

Places writers in the context of a special theme or specific geographic location; for example, students might discuss a group of writers influenced by their commitment to revolution or radical thinking, or in the context of a geographical national or regional setting (i.e., Black France, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Francophone West Africa).

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 or ENGW 1113 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1114 with a minimum grade of C

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

AFCS 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

AFCS 4939. Community Health, Culture, and Development in Kenya. (4 Hours)

Introduces the community health and development arena in Kenya. Community development has been presented as the panacea to many of Africa's problems, including leadership, democracy, conflict, disease, and poverty. Through teaching, research, and action, the course seeks to expose and sensitize students to the global and local debate on poverty, primary healthcare, and community development. Offers students an opportunity to gain hands-on experiences in some of the major determinants and solutions to poverty and disease by interacting with community stakeholders and organizations in a variety of cultural, rural, and urban settings and through visits to, and participating in, projects run by community-based organizations.

Attribute(s): NUpath Integration Experience

AFCS 4973. Topics in African American Studies. (4 Hours)

Offers focused analysis of a special topic in African American studies. Course content may vary from term to term. May be repeated up to three times.

AFCS 4990. Elective. (1-4 Hours)

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions.

AFCS 4991. Research. (4 Hours)

Offers an opportunity to conduct research under faculty supervision.

Attribute(s): NUpath Integration Experience

AFCS 4992. Directed Study. (1-4 Hours)

Offers independent work under the direction of members of the department on a chosen topic. Course content depends on instructor. May be repeated without limit.

AFCS 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.

AFCS 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.

AFCS 6962. Elective. (1-4 Hours)

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions.