

A414

Seminar in African American and African Diaspora Studies

Section: TBA

Days/Time: TBA

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Course Description

Welcome to A414 Seminar in African American and African Diaspora Studies. This course is designed as a senior capstone seminar. The course is thematic. Coursework will involve intensive discussion of AAADS as an interdisciplinary field of scholarship--its historical development, current condition and future prospects. Students are also expected to develop an individual or group research paper or project which applies diasporic theory in the discussion and analysis of selected people, events and/or issues impacting people of African descent that demonstrates mastery of the discipline's key concepts and paradigms.

Course work will involve knowledgeable and informed discussion of assigned course readings, development of a 1-2 page research paper/project bibliography, a 5-7 page research paper/project proposal and a 12-15 page individual or group research paper or project. Students will be graded on the basis of their: a) attendance--15%; b) informed participation in discussions--15%; c) research paper/project bibliography--20%; d) research paper/project proposal--20%; and e) completed research paper/project and executive summary--30%. Please note that the instructor reserves the right to modify the content of this syllabus, at his discretion, during the semester.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to assist students in achieving the goals outlined in IUPUI's Principles of Undergraduate Learning which include:

Core Communication and Quantitative Skills

Students will develop a one to two page bibliography and a five to seven page proposal leading to a finely crafted, substantive twelve to fifteen page research paper or project on a topic of their choosing in African American and African Diaspora Studies in which their ideas are presented effectively in written and/or visual formats as well as orally. This paper or project will reflect your ability to comprehend, interpret and analyze ideas and facts using the abundant information resources and technology available to you at IUPUI's library and other repositories of information.

Critical Thinking

Students are expected to engage in disciplined thinking in conducting their individual AAADS research and weekly in-class discussions. This not only includes your ability to remember and understand important course content, but also a clear demonstration of the ability to apply, analyze, evaluate and create knowledge, discern bias, challenge assumptions, identify consequences, and arrive at reasoned conclusions in the course of your seminar paper/project research as well as participate in seminar discussions.

Integration and Application of Knowledge

Students will use information and concepts from studies in multiple disciplines such as history, literature, art, and the social sciences in this course. You are expected to integrate and apply knowledge in both your individual research paper/project as well as in-class discussions from a variety of disciplines which transcends traditional course and disciplinary boundaries in both your individual research and classroom participation.

Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness

Students are expected to demonstrate their ability to show substantial knowledge and understanding of African American and African Diaspora Studies as a discipline, be capable of comparing and contrasting its approach to knowledge with other disciplines and, when necessary, modify one's understanding of an issue or problem based on that new information.

Understanding Society and Culture

Students will demonstrate an understanding of society and culture by being able to compare and/or contrast the range of diversity and universality of experiences of those individuals and groups which comprise the African diaspora as well as comprehend the linkage of those experiences with all of human history, societies and ways of life in their individual research as well as assigned course readings and in-class discussions.

Values and Ethics

Students will demonstrate an ability to make informed and principled choices and to foresee consequences of these choices during their participation in this course. This includes punctuality, attentiveness in class, academic honesty in fulfilling course requirements, and valuing hard work as well as showing respect for your classmates and the instructor. Students are also expected to understand and the aesthetics of African beauty, art and ethical principles within the diverse cultural, social, environmental, and personal settings of the African diaspora.

Course Policies

Civility Statement

The classroom is a learning community in which we all need to collaborate in order to meet our goals. We can only create a positive learning environment through positive behavior. Rude, sarcastic, obscene, disrespectful, insensitive speech and behavior will negatively impact the classroom learning community and impede the process of learning. Positive speech and behavior create and nurture a safe learning environment where the instructor and students respect one another and freely share knowledge. All students enrolled in this class have a responsibility to create and maintain a safe and positive environment conducive to learning and intellectual growth. A learning-friendly and safe environment is one that is free of distractions, engages and nurtures all participants in the learning process, does not inhibit, frustrate, demean or dehumanize any individual or group. Students who use rude and inflammatory language, who distract other students, who engage in inappropriate behavior, and thus obstruct the learning process, will be asked to leave as a first preventive step.

Examples of uncivil classroom behaviors:

Tardiness, leaving class early, packing before dismissal time, eating, chewing gum, sleeping, vulgarity, sarcastic remarks or gestures, insensitive comments concerning race, ethnicity, gender, or life style, interrupting other students or instructor, not listening to other students, private conversations unrelated to the class, not paying attention, use of computer for purposes not related to the class, cell phone and pager disruptions, reading materials (e.g. newspapers) unrelated to class, cheating on exams or quizzes, demanding make-up exams, extensions, grade changes or special favors, inappropriate emails to instructor or other students.

Assignments

Failure to complete the class assignments will mean an F grade for the course. All Assignments must be submitted on or before the due dates, exceptions only in extraordinary circumstances and with my prior approval. Your absence from at these times does not in itself grant you an automatic extension. Assignments must be typed, stapled, with your name and date in the footer of each page. Five points will be deducted for each class period an assignment is late. Failure to follow these instructions will be penalized a point for each infraction. **Assignments are due one week after the date of assignment, they will not be accepted after the due date. On-course/email submissions will not be accepted.**

Essays

Papers are assessed for their logic, cogency, and appropriate use of sociological, economic, historical, and labor perspectives and concepts. When grading papers, comparisons are inevitable. This means that an **A** paper is qualitatively better than a **B** paper, which is better than a **C** paper. The difference may lie in the fact that one paper is

more factually comprehensive than another, argues its case more persuasively, is better organized, contains fewer errors of grammar, spelling and punctuation, or is simply a more literate, polished piece of work. All papers must be in paper copy format and handed to me on the due date.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you are unsure about the university's policy on plagiarism go to the following web site:

Htm1 <http://www.education.indiana/frick/plagiarism/item1>

In-class Discussion

In assessing in-class oral contributions, I will listen for thoughtful, insightful remarks that occur on a regular basis. Assessment criteria for in-class oral contributions include the abilities to sustain dialogue, to demonstrate mastery of the subject matter, to identify and focus on the main points of a text, lecture or oral argument and to display a capacity for effective synthesis and analysis.

Attendance

It is extremely important that you attend class regularly and on time. As this is an interactive learning course, you are expected to participate in discussion. Clearly, you cannot participate in discussion if you are absent. You will be allowed three absences without penalty. Thereafter, excessive absences will cause your final grade to be lowered – please inform me of extenuating circumstances such as serious illness or other relevant emergencies. For example please be prepared to produce a doctor's note or such documentation to ensure excused absences. Excuses such as I overslept, I was finishing my homework and time got away, or my room mate turned off the alarm clock are not acceptable.

Policy Regarding People with Disabilities

Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis is committed to the spirit and letter of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These laws provide a clear and comprehensive mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Together, they require equal treatment of persons with disabilities in employment, public services and transportation, public accommodations, and telecommunications services, and include an obligation to provide reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of qualified individuals with disabilities.

Course Requirements and Grading

The following is the grade scale I will use:

A+ 98, A 93, A- 90, B+ 88, B 83, B- 80, C+ 78, C 73, C- 70, D+ 68, D 63, D- 60.

Your performance in this course will be guided by the following standard criteria for a total of 400 points.

Class attendance	15%
In-class discussions	15%
Research paper/project bibliography	20%
Research paper/project proposal	20%
Completed research paper/project	30%

Written assignments are assessed for their logic, cogency, and appropriate use of historical as well as social science perspectives and concepts. When grading papers, comparisons are inevitable. This means that an **A** paper is qualitatively better than a **B** paper, which is better than a **C** paper. The difference may lie in the fact that one paper is more factually comprehensive than another, argues its case more persuasively, is better organized, contains fewer errors of grammar, spelling and punctuation, or is simply a more literate, polished piece of work.

In assessing your individual contributions during in-class discussions, I will listen for thoughtful, insightful remarks that occur on a regular basis. Assessment criteria include demonstration of mastery of the subject matter, to zero in on the main points of the assigned reading and to display a capacity for effective synthesis and analysis.

The following is the grade scale used in the course:

A+ 98, A 93, A- 90, B+ 88, B 83, B- 80, C+ 78, C 73, C- 70, D+ 68, D 63, D- 60.

Administrative Withdrawal

A basic requirement of this course is that you will participate in class and conscientiously complete writing and reading assignments. **Please contact me in advance if you are unable to attend class or complete an assignment on time for any reason.** If you miss more than half our class meetings within the first four weeks of the semester without contacting me, you will be administratively withdrawn from this section. Our class meets once per week. Thus, if you miss more than two classes in the first four weeks, you may be withdrawn. Administrative withdrawal may have serious academic, financial aid and/or student scholarship implications. Administrative withdrawal will take place after the full refund period, and if you are administratively withdrawn from the course you will not be eligible for a tuition refund. If you have questions about the administrative withdrawal policy at any point during the semester, please contact me.

Academic Misconduct

It must be noted that any form of academic misconduct by a student in the course will not be tolerated. This includes obvious types of academic misconduct such as cheating on examinations and/or plagiarism as well as submitting the same paper for credit in different courses without prior consultation with the instructor. Any student who is found

guilty of such misconduct by the instructor will receive an F on that assignment as well as the course and have his/her infraction recorded as a permanent part of his/her academic record. For a more detailed explanation of the different types of academic misconduct, please consult "[Attendance, Policies and General Course Requirements](#)" for this course and the IUPUI *Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct* handbook.

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Course Texts

The following texts are **required** reading for the course. They can be purchased at the Campus Center's Barnes & Noble bookstore as well as online at either Amazon.com or Barnes & Noble.com. Additional readings marked with an asterisk (*) are available online via the "Calendar" option in Oncourse or directly thru the University Library website on JSTOR.

Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*

Ruth Simons Hamilton (ed.) *Routes of Passage: Rethinking the African Diaspora*. Vol. 1, Part 2

Noliwe Rooks, *White Money Black Power: The Surprising History of African American Studies and the Crisis of Race in Higher Education*

Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract*

Weekly assignments are as follows:

Week 1 - Introduction to the Course

Overview of course objectives, policies and assignments.

Week 2 - Understanding the Ideology of Race and Racial Domination I

Read: Mills, pp. 1-40

Week 3 - Understanding the Ideology of Race and Racial Domination II

Read: Mills, pp. 91-133

Individual research paper/project consultation with instructor.

Week 4 - Perspectives on the Historical Development of AAADS

Read: Rooks, pp. 1-60; Joy Ann Williamson, "In Defense of Themselves: The Black Student Struggle for Success and Recognition at Predominantly White Colleges and Universities." *Journal of Negro Education* Vol. 68 (Winter, 1999), pp. 92-105;* Peniel E. Joseph, "Dashikis and Democracy: Black Studies, Student Activism and the Black Power Movement." *Journal of African American History* Vol. 88 No. 2 (Spring, 2003), pp. 182-203.*

Week 5 - Perspectives on the Present and Future of AAADS

Read: Rooks, pp. 123-177; Charles C. Verharen, "Black to the Future: A Philosophy for a Global Village." *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 33 No. 2 (Nov., 2002), pp. 199-217;* Rhett S. Jones et al., "The Lasting Contributions of African American Studies." *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* No. 6 (Winter, 1994-1995), pp. 91-94;* William M. King, "The Importance of Black Studies for Science and Technology Policy." *Phylon* Vol. 49 (Spring-Summer, 1992), pp. 23-32.*

Submission of research paper/project bibliography

Week 6 - The Diaspora as Concept and Method

Read: Colin A. Palmer, "Defining and Studying the Modern African Diaspora." *Journal of Negro History* Vol. 85 No. 1/2 (Winter-Spring, 2000), pp. 27-32;; Michael Gomez, "Of DuBois and Diaspora: The Challenge of African American Studies." *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 35 No. 2 Special Issue: Back to the Future of Civilization: Celebrating 30 Years of African American Studies (Nov., 2004), pp. 175-194*; Tiffany R. Patterson et al., "Unfinished Migrations: Reflections on the African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World." *African Studies Review* Vol. 43 No. 1 (April, 2000), pp. 11-45.*

Week 7 - The Diaspora as Concept and Method

Read: G. Ugo Nwokeji and David Eltis, "The Roots of the African Diaspora: Methodological Considerations in the Analysis of Names in the Liberated African Registers of Sierra Leone and Havana." *Africans in History* Vol. 29 (2002), pp. 365-379*; Reiland Rabaka, "W. E. B. DuBois's Evolving Africana Philosophy of Education." *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 33 No. 4 (March, 2003), pp. 399-439.*

Submission of research paper/project proposal

Week 8 - Toward a Synthesis

Read: Earl Lewis, "To Turn as on a Pivot: Writing African Americans into a History of Overlapping Diasporas." *American Historical Review* Vol. 100 No. 3 (June, 1995), pp. 765-787;* Anthony J. Lemelle, Jr. "Oliver Cromwell Cox: Toward a Pan-Africanist Epistemology for Community Action." *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 31 No. 3 Special Issue: Africa: New Realities

and Hopes (Jan., 2001), pp. 325-347*

Week 9 - The African Diaspora in Operation: The Case of Religion

Read: Nei Lopes, "African Religions in Brazil, Negotiation and Resistance: A Look from Within." *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 34 No. 6 African Descendants in Brazil (July, 2004), pp. 838-860*; David V. Trotman, "The Yoruba and Orisha Worship in Trinidad and British Guinea, 1838-1870." *African Studies Review* Vol. 19 No. 2 (1976), pp. 1-17*; Harry G. Lefever, "When the Saints Go Riding In: Santeria in Cuba and the United States." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* Vol. 35 No. 3 (Sept., 1996), pp. 318-330.*

Week 10 - Settlement, Identity and Transformation I

Read: Edmund T. Gordon and Mark Anderson, "The African Diaspora: Toward an Ethnography of Diasporic Identification." *Journal of American Folklore* Vol. 112 No. 445 Theorizing the Hybrid (Summer, 1999), pp. 282-296*; Shane White and Graham White, "Slave clothing and African American Culture in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries." *Past and Present* No. 148 (Aug., 1995), pp. 149-186*; Ibrahim K. Sundiata, "Africanity, Identity and Culture." *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* Vol. 24 No. 2 African Diaspora Studies (1996), pp. 13-17.*

Week 11 - Settlement, Identity and Transformation II

Read: Kevin A. Yelvington, "The Anthropology of Afro-Latin America and the Caribbean: Diasporic Dimensions." *Annual Review of Anthropology* Vol. 30 (2001), pp. 227-260*; Josildeth Gomes Consorte, "The Black Question in Brazil: An Issue Denied." Hamilton (ed.) *Routes of Passage*, pp. 1-11; Ruth Simms Hamilton with Getahun Benti, "Redefining a Collective Identity in the Struggle for State and National Identity in Ethiopia and Israel: The Case of Ethiopian Jews." Hamilton (ed.) *Routes of Passage*, pp. 135-161; E. Frances White, "Creole Women Traders of the Nineteenth Century." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* Vol. 14 No. 4 (1981), pp. 626-642.

Week 12 - Settlement, Identity and Transformation III

Read: F. Njibui Nesbitt, "African Intellectuals in the Belly of the Beast: Migration, Identity and the Politics of Exile." *African Issues* Vol. 30 No. 1 (2002), pp. 70-75*; Edward Paulino, "The Evolution of Black Identity in the Dominican Republic." Hamilton (ed.) *Routes of Passage*, pp. 13-35; Alfred B. Zack-Williams, "African Diaspora Conditioning: The Case of Liverpool." *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 27 No. 4 (Mar., 1997), pp. 528-542*; C. Aisha Berkshire-Belay, "The African Diaspora in Germany: African Germans Speak Out." *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 31 (Jan., 2001), pp. 264-287*; Sidney Littlefield Kasfir, "Elephant Women, Furious and Majestic: Women's Masquerades in Africa and the Diaspora." *African Arts*

Vol. 31 No. 2 Special Issue: Women's Masquerades in Africa and the
Diaspora (Spring, 1998), pp. 18-27+92.*

Week 13 - New Perspectives on the African Diaspora

Read: Gilroy, pp. 1-40, 72-110

Week 14 - New Perspectives on the African Diaspora

Read: Gilroy, pp. 187-223

Week 15 - In-class executive summary of student research paper/project

Submission of completed research paper/project.

Last revised: 2/23/08