



ETHS 30 - Introduction to African American Studies

Catalog Description

Transfer Status: CSU/UC

Unit(s): 3.00

Lecture: 51.00 Contact hours/102.00 Out of class hours/153.00 Total hours/3.00 Unit(s)

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Course Description: This course is a multi-disciplinary exploration of the cultural history and experience of African Americans. The African American experience is described and conceptualized as a function of cultural history and the adaptations made by African Americans in more contemporary contexts. The culmination of the comprehensive and detailed history highlights the challenges and creative triumphs of African Americans as indicated through action in social, political, economic, religious, and artistic endeavors.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Describe the historical background of African Americans as a contextual framework for understanding contemporary conditions.
2. Evaluate the continued significance of race in the 21st century.
3. Explain some of the contemporary socio-cultural issues facing African Americans today.
4. Identify key concepts, vocabulary, and terms relevant to African American Studies.
5. Analyze sociological theories of race, social and economic class, ethnicity and gender in order to understand the theoretical arguments that help to explain the basis for social inequality found in African American communities.
6. Analyze and articulate concepts such as race and racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethnocentrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, imperialism, settler colonialism, and anti-racism as analyzed in African American Studies.
7. Describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements in African American communities to build a just and equitable society.
8. Apply theory and knowledge produced by African American communities to describe the critical events, histories, cultures, intellectual traditions, contributions, lived-experiences and social struggles of those groups with a particular emphasis on agency and group-affirmation.
9. Critically analyze the intersection of race and racism as they relate to class, gender, sexuality, religion, spirituality, national origin, immigration status, ability, tribal citizenship, sovereignty, language, and/or age in African American communities.
10. Explain and assess how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation, as experienced, enacted, and studied by African Americans are relevant to current and structural issues such as communal, national, international, and transnational politics as, for example, in immigration, reparations, settler-colonialism, multiculturalism, language policies.

Course Content

Topic Titles / Suggested Time Topic	
	<u>Lecture</u>
<u>Topics</u>	<u>Lec Hrs</u>
Historical Background	9.00
Sociocultural Issues and Activism	9.00
Gender Roles	3.00
Contemporary Issues	9.00
Religion and the Black Church	3.00
Media Representation	3.00
The Black Family	3.00
Pop Culture	3.00
The Politics of Beauty	3.00
Mass Incarceration: The New Jim Crow	6.00
Total Hours: 51.00	

Methods of Instruction

- A. Collaborative Group Work
- B. Discussion
- C. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture

- D. Lecture
- E. Multimedia Presentations

Methods of Evaluation

- A. Quizzes
- B. Research Projects
- C. Homework
- D. Short papers
- E. Class Discussion
- F. Student presentations (oral and written). Each student will write a minimum of 1,500 words as part of his/her class requirement which will be graded for grammar and content.

Examples of Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Please respond in 2-3 pages critically analyzing the readings from "Black Feminist Thought" by Patricia Collins. State the main issues and concepts found within her work. Specifically, address concepts around intersectionality and Black women. In doing so, include a reflection of your intersectionalities. Compare and contrast your own experiences with those of the readings.
2. Prepare a one-page reading response addressing the social construction of beauty in American media and how it affects African Americans. You should address the following in your response: how does American media define "beauty"? How does this definition affect African Americans? What have been some responses from the African American community to address this issue? As you reflect on what you read, what questions do you have about this topic that we should discuss in class?

Writing Assignments

1. Choose a topic or issue that relates to African American Studies or cultural life. Briefly describe what exactly you found. Remember to attach an image, link to the website, or include a picture. Provide a short narrative of your search. Explain how and where you found it, and whether the search was easy or challenging, and why. Be sure to cite the source (even if that means saying, "It is from my family photo album") and include the web address, when applicable. Explain in detail what you find interesting about it and how it relates to a specific topic, theme, historical figure, or event that you learned about in class lecture (or want to learn more about). This paper should be a minimum of 3 pages typed, double-spaced, and include cited sources in MLA format.
2. Read the assigned chapters from "Black Los Angeles: American Dreams and Racial Realities" by Darnell Hunt and Ana Christina Ramon. Write a 2-3 page response reflecting on the historical and social implications of race and space in Los Angeles using key excerpts from chapters 1-7.

Out-of-Class Assignments

1. In this assignment, you will explore the use of concept maps as a tool for visualizing and organizing complex information. In doing so, you will need to (1) read and analyze this week's readings (2) pick a specific topic or subject found within a reading and (3) create a 1-page concept map around your chosen topic or subject. These maps and assignments are meant to help you develop your skills in synthesizing information, identifying key concepts, and presenting ideas visually.
2. For this assignment, we will read the 2023 UCLA Hollywood Diversity Report (TV & Film) to understand and analyze representations of African Americans and diverse communities in the industry. Write a 2-page response with your reactions and reflections and your own interpretation of the importance of representation. Be prepared to share your reflections in a class discussion with your Learning Community.

Recommended Materials of Instruction

Bain, B. R. (2022). Rebel speak: A justice movement mixtape. *University of California Press, 2nd*. 9780520388437.

Collins, P. H. (2022). Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment. *Routledge, 1st*. 9781032157832.

Mays, K. T. (2022). An Afro-Indigenous History of the United States. *Beacon Press, 1st*. 9780807006993.

Smitherman, G. N. (2022). My Soul Look Back in Wonder: Memories from a Life of Study, Struggle, and Doing Battle in the Language Wars. *Routledge, 1st*. 9781032080024.

Zero Cost Textbook

Gutierrez, E. Hund, J., Johnson, S., Ramos, C., Rodriguez, L., & Tshako, J. Race and Ethnic Relations in the U.S.: An Intersectional Approach. Long Beach City College, Cerritos College, & Saddleback College via ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)

Minimum Qualifications

Sociology (Masters Required)

Ethnic Studies (Masters Required)

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