Introduction to Africana Studies

Course Syllabus

Course Number: 21:014:111 Section 03
Term: Fall 2022
Class Location: Life Sciences Center (LSC1) – Room 103
Class Times: Tuesday & Thursday 2:30 p.m. – 3:50 p.m.

Instructor: Wendell Marsh, Ph.D.
Email: wm276@rutgers.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. via Zoom
(See course site for link and password)

Course Description:

Africana Studies is an interdisciplinary field of knowledge about the experiences and contributions of peoples of African descent in and to the classical and modern world. Africana -- which is sometimes referred to as Black, African American, African Diasporic, and African Studies – emerged from a history of resistance against slavery, colonization, inequality and other forms of power. It entered into universities throughout North America in its institutional form as a direct result of student interest in understanding their place in the world and their willingness to take action in the name of that knowledge. This course serves as an introduction to the field. It emphasizes the Black Radical Imagination as a framework for understanding Black life and thought.

Required Materials: There are two required books for this course. I highly suggest purchasing them in their physical form. We will be using them actively during in-class activities and it will be helpful to mark them up. They are available at the book store. Any edition is acceptable, but the most recent edition is ideal.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Use primary and secondary sources to develop and sharpen your analytical and critical thinking skills.
2. Demonstrate your understanding of the major events that shaped the early African American experience
3. Gain a greater understanding of the historic relationship between race and class in the Americas
4. Identify the contributions of African descended people to early history and culture of the Americas
5. Evaluate the impact of American slavery, capitalism, and democracy on African American socio-cultural and political expressions

Course Policies and Expectations:

This course requires presence. By presence, I mean that students should be physically present, mentally attentive to course material, and emotionally attuned to themselves and their peers. Such a degree of engagement makes focus and diligence necessary. Increasingly, these are rare features of contemporary life. In order to facilitate our practice of presence, our classroom will be free of digital devices. No laptops. No tablets. No phones. Each class session, if executed well, will be an event irreducible to an amount of information covered. In order to experience an event, one must be there. No summary, no set of slides can replace it. Moreover, the class will be defined by what the students bring to it and take away from it. Physical attendance, is therefore mandatory, but insufficient for success in this course. It also requires your attention and care.

Each session will focus on a short reading from the main course texts. Supplemental reading and other resources will be provided by the professor for the enterprising student, but it will not be required. Virtually all required work for the course will take place during class-time. Class time itself will consist of the practice of close reading and verbal argument. Together, we will practice the openly iterative process of noticing, describing, and questioning.
Assignments:

1) Attendance
2) Self-evaluation
   a. Statement of Intention
   b. Mid-term self-evaluation
   c. Final self-evaluation
3) Final Oral Exam

In addition to mandatory attendance and statements of self-evaluation, there is only one mandatory assignment this semester that will be assessed by the professor: a final oral exam. In preparation for this exam, I suggest that students keep a class notebook in which they keep track of the questions we gather in each class session. The student will bring three of these questions to the exam. I will choose one question to which the student will respond. The exam will last no more than fifteen minutes.

Grading policy:

Throughout the course, students will set goals for themselves, and assess their performance on those goals. The final grade will be determined in a consultation between the student and the instructor on the standard grading scale of the university. If a student’s misses more than three class sessions, they forfeit their privilege of self-assessment.

Course Schedule:

1. Week 1 (Sept 6, 8) – Black Study, Black Struggle
   1.1. Robin Kelley, “Black Study, Black Struggle”
   1.2. Statement of Intention
       1.2.1. Draft Statement of Intention
2. Week 2 (Sept 13, 15) – Homegoing, Part 1, Effia and Esi
3. Week 3 (Sept 20, 22) – Homegoing, Part 1, Quey and Ness
4. Week 4 (Sept 27, 29) – Homegoing, Part 1, James, Kobo, and Abena
5. Week 5 (Oct 4, 6) – Homegoing, Part 2, H, Akua, and Willie
6. Week 6 (Oct 11, 13) – Homegoing, Part 2, Yaw and Sonny
7. Week 7 (Oct 18, 20) –
   7.1. Homegoing, Part 2, Majorie and Marcus
   7.2. Mid-Term Self-evaluations
9. Week 9 (Nov 1, 3) – Freedom Dreams, “Dreams of the New Land”
10. Week 10 (Nov 8, 10) – Freedom Dreams, “Red Dreams of Black Liberation”
12. Week 12 (Nov 22, 24) – Thanksgiving (NO CLASS)
   15.1. Final Self-Evaluations

Final Exam: Thursday, Dec. 22 11:45 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.
University Policies and Resources

Academic Integrity:

As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University’s educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community. The entire Academic Integrity Policy can be found here: [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/)

Your health and well-being matter, and Rutgers has put in place a number of resources that are intended to help students through the challenges that might emerge during these times. Information on many of these resources appears below. Please let me know immediately if you are experiencing circumstances that are negatively impacting your academic performance. I also strongly encourage you to contact your academic advisor.

Accommodation and Support Statement:

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

- **Absences:** All students are responsible for timely notification of their instructor regarding any expected absences. The Division of Student Affairs can provide assistance for absences related to religious observance, emergency or unavoidable conflict (illness, personal or family emergency, etc.) Students should refer to the University’s Course Attendance policy (10.2.7), for complete expectations and responsibilities. The office can be contacted at: (973) 353-5063 or deansoffstudents@newark.rutgers.edu.

- **Disabilities:** The Office of Disability Services (ODS) works with students with medical, physical, and/or mental conditions who encounter disabling barriers in order to determine reasonable and appropriate accommodations for access. Students who have completed the process with ODS and have approved accommodations are provided a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) specific to each course. To initiate accommodations for their course students must both provide the LOA to and have a conversation with the course instructor about the accommodations. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu. Contact ODS: (973) 353-5375 or ods@newark.rutgers.edu.

- **Temporary Conditions/Injuries:** The Division of Student Affairs can assist students who are experiencing a temporary condition or injury (broken or sprained limbs, concussions, or recovery from surgery). Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury should submit a request for assistance at: https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu.

- **Pregnancy:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist students with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy. Students may contact the office at (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.
• **Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance can assist students experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking. Students can report an incident to the office at: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. Incidents may also be reported by using: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. For more information, students should refer to the University’s Title IX Policy and Grievance Procedures located at https://uec.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/60-1-33-current-1.pdf.

• **Interpersonal Violence:** The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance (VPVA) can provide any student with confidential support. The office does not have a reporting obligation to Title IX. Students can contact the office by calling (973) 353-1918 or emailing run.vpva@rutgers.edu. There is also a confidential text-based helpline available to students; students can text (973) 339-0734 for support. Students do not need to be a victim/survivor of violence; any student can receive services, information and support.

• **Crisis and Concerns:** The Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team works with students in crisis to develop a plan of support plan and address personal situations that might impact their academic performance. Connect with the CARE Team by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNCARE or emailing careteam@rutgers.edu.

• **Stress, Worry, or Concerns about Well-Being:** The Counseling Center has confidential therapists available to support students. Students should reach out to the Counseling Center to schedule an appointment: counseling@newark.rutgers.edu or (973) 353-5805. If students are not quite ready to make an appointment with a therapist but are interested in self-help, check out Sanvello for an easy, web-based approach to self-care and support. Visit https://my.rutgers.edu/, click on Sanvello: Wellness @ RUN, and log in with your netid to begin your journey toward wellness.

• **Emergencies:** Call 911 or contact Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) at (973) 353-5111.

## Learning Resources:

• **Rutgers Learning Center (tutoring services):**
  Tutoring available in a variety of math, science, technology, and business courses. Contact the Learning Center to determine whether tutoring is available for a specific course. Room 140, Bradley Hall (973) 353-5608
  learning.center@newark.rutgers.edu
  https://sasn.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/learning-center

• **Writing Center (tutoring and writing workshops)**
  (973) 353-5847
  nwc@rutgers.edu
  https://sasn.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/writing-center

## Technology/Internet Resources for Students:
- [https://myrun.newark.rutgers.edu/covid-technology-resources](https://myrun.newark.rutgers.edu/covid-technology-resources)
- [https://mytech.newark.rutgers.edu/tlp](https://mytech.newark.rutgers.edu/tlp)