Fall 2010 Course Offerings

AFRI 0090: An Introduction to Africana Studies
This course introduces students to the vibrant and contested field of Africana Studies by critically exploring and analyzing the links and disjunctures in the cultural, political, and intellectual practices and experiences of people of African descent throughout the African diaspora. Beginning with a critical overview of the history, theoretical orientations, and multiple methodological strategies of the discipline, the course is divided into three thematic units that examine intellectuals, politics, and movements; identity construction and formation; and literary, cultural, and aesthetic theories and practices in the African diaspora.

Professor Walker

AFRI 0110B: The Last Professors
Addresses the profound effects of contemporary economic, political, and social changes on the role and function of the university in the 21st century. A primary concern of the seminar is to critically analyze how and in what ways the transformations in the broader society challenges, constrain, and, at times, frustrate critical intellectual activity. The seminar will draw on a broad and diverse set of readings ranging from classic statements by Cardinal Newman and W.E.B. DuBois to contemporary critical analyses by Henry Giroux and Adolph Reed, Jr. Enrollment limited to 20 first year students.

Professor Walker

AFRI 0210: Afro Latin Americans and Blackness in the Americas
This course focuses on the position of Blacks in the national histories and societies of Latin America from slavery to the present-day. Emphasis is on a multidisciplinary engagement with issues and the exposure of students to the critical discussion of national images and realities about blackness and Africa-descended institutions and practices. The role of racial issues in national and transnational encounters and the consequences of migration of people and ideas within the hemisphere are explored.

Professor Dzidzienyo

AFRI 0600: Race, Gender, and Urban Politics
This course will introduce students to the methods and practice of studying black urban life with a primary focus on US cities. We will critically examine the urban cultural studies debates concerned with race, gender, class and sexuality. The approach of the course will be interdisciplinary, drawing upon works from anthropology, literature, history, music, and film. Topics include tourism, immigration, poverty, popular culture, gentrification, violence, and criminalization.

Professor Perry
AFRI 0800B: African American Literature and the Legacy of Slavery
Traces the relationship between the African American literary tradition and slavery from the
antebellum slave narrative to the flowering of historical novels about slavery at the end of the
twentieth century. Positions these texts within specific literary, historical, and political frameworks.
Authors may include Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, Charles Chesnutt, Octavia Butler, and
Toni Morrison. Students should register for ENGL 0800C S01 and may be assigned to conference
sections by the instructor during the first week of class.
Professor Murray

AFRI 0950: History, Literature and the Caribbean Novel
This course examines the ways in which literature is influenced by major historical events with
special reference to the literatures of the Caribbean. Students will undertake a critical examination of
the fictional representation of Europe's encounter with Africa and Asia in the Americas.
Professor Lamming

AFRI 1020B: Freedom in Africana Political Thought
This course will be a comparative analysis of freedom as a central value in political thought. It will
do this by comparing the knowledge and practices of freedom to slaves in the Haitian Revolution,
the ideas of freedom in the Civil Rights Movement, and then finally, the conceptions of freedom in
South Africa. Enrollment limited to 30.
Professor Bogues

AFRI 1050A: Advanced RPM Playwriting
Third level of RPM Playwriting; for students that have successfully completed RPM Playwriting and
Intermediate RPM Playwriting (workshop). Instructor’s permission required.
Professor Terry-Morgan

AFRI 1050D: Intermediate RPM Playwriting
Second level of RPM Playwriting; for students that want to continue developing their RPM plays or
want to begin a new project (workshop). Instructor’s permission required.
Professor Terry-Morgan

AFRI 1050E: RPM Playwriting Research-to-Performance Method (RPM)
Playwriting guides students through the process of developing new plays that are informed by
scholarly research (workshop). Instructor’s permission required.
Professor Terry-Morgan

AFRI 1050G: Narrating the Radical Self
How black women in the United States and elsewhere have written about their lives in
autobiographies will be the focus of this course. We will discuss black women's use of
autobiographical writing to document their own individual experiences in political movements as
well as to provide key insights into how black people throughout the black diaspora have organized
in recent history. Enrollment limited to 20.
Professor Perry
AFRI 1060A: Africa Since 1950
This seminar offers a survey of post-colonial African history, while probing the challenges of writing post-colonial history. Readings and discussions will focus on histories that bridge the colonial and postcolonial periods. How robust are these periods? What can historians draw from post-colonial theory? How can historical narratives account for both the colonial legacy and post-colonial dynamism. Enrollment limited to 20; instructor permission required. Students with a background in African history or contemporary African social science will be given priority. Interested students should email the professor at Nancy_Jacobs@brown.edu.

Professor Jacobs

AFRI 1060L: Varieties of American Philosophical Experience
In contrast to Pragmatist and European-oriented views of American philosophy, this course will emphasize the colonial dimensions and features of American philosophy that emerged out of the colonial soil of early America. Out of this soil sprang extended debates between Native Americans, Euro-Americans and African Americans over the legitimacy of the hegemony that Euro-Americans were establishing over increasing portions of North America. This course views American philosophy as having within it two opposing traditions that have been engaged in ongoing angry dialogues: the dominant or Prosperan tradition of Euro-Americans and the subjugated or Caliban tradition of Native Americans and African Americans.

Professor Henry

AFRI 1060R: Comparative Africana Literatures and Criticism
Caribbean, African American and African literature has been called engaged literature with explicit commitments to memory, history and ways to think about the political. This course will explore a set of writers, their novels, critical essays and their practices of criticism. It will examine anti-colonial, post-colonial writers as well as African American writers who in the words of Toni Morrison, "rip that veil drawn over proceedings to terrible to relate." We will in this course read the works of George Lamming, Patrick Chamoiseau, Toni Morrison, Richard Wright, Edwidge Danticat, Yvonne Vera, Zoe Witomb and Njabulo Ndebele.

Professor Bogues

AFRI 1090: Black Freedom Struggle Since 1945
Examines the extended history of the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. with a range of primary sources. Starting at World War II, the course considers the roles of the courts, the government, organizations, local communities, and individuals in the ongoing struggle for African American equality, focusing on African American agency. Sources include photographs, documentaries, movies, letters, speeches, autobiography, and secondary readings. Must have taken at least one post-1865 U.S. history course demonstrating a foundation in this time period. Enrollment limited to 50.

Professor Hamlin

AFRI 1110: Voices Beneath the Veil
Thirty plays, written by Afro-American playwrights and presented on the American stage between 1858 and the 1990s, are examined as cultural and historical documents of Afro-American realities. Supplementary readings from the humanities and social sciences provide critical framework for in-class discussions and student papers. Enrollment limited to 40. Instructor permission required.

Professor Terry-Morgan
AFRI 1150F: Home and Abroad
This course combines seminar and workshop sessions for students with special interest in the writing of novels and short fiction. Attention will be given to the ways certain English and American writers - Herman Melville, Joseph Conrad, E. M. Forster, Graham Greene - have interpreted the lives of people in other and foreign cultures. These are classic examples of the meeting of insiders and outsiders in the house of fiction. Instructor permission required. Enrollment limited to 12.
Professor Lamming

AFRI 1210: Afro-Brazilians and the Brazilian Polity
Explores the history and present-day conditions of Afro-Brazilians, looking specifically at the uses of Africana in contemporary Brazil, political and cultural movements among Afro-Brazilians, domestic politics and its external dimensions, and Brazilian race relations within a global comparative framework. Texts from a variety of disciplines. A reading knowledge of Portuguese is not required but students so advantaged should inform the instructor.
Professor Dzidziienyo

AFRI 1280: Writing About Race in the Post Civil Rights Era
This seminar is an explanation of the transformation of racial policies, relations and rhetorics since the end of the civil rights era in the United States. We will examine the complex ways race has remained central to US society and yet has dramatically shifted examining terms such as: color-blind society; integration; political race; racialized (and gendered) community formation. Enrollment limited to 20. Instructor’s permission required.
Professor Rose

AFRI 1580: Contemporary African Women's Literature
The aim of the course is to introduce students to novels like Head's A Question of Power, El Saadawi's God Dies by the Nile, Adochie's Half of a Yellow Sun and other major prose works by contemporary African women writers. It will present the African woman as a writer, her environment and her commitments. The emphasis is on the writing of continental African women, but will include works of other women writers. For a brief but necessary historical background to the course, it will be introduced with selections from Margaret Busby's Daughters of Africa. Enrollment limited to 25.
Professor Aidoo

AFRI XLIST: ENGL 1710H Black Internationalism and African American Literature
The notion that African Americans are an extension of a global racial community has been a fixture of black politics and culture for more than a century. In this course, we will consider how the concept of global racial alliance has shaped black political resistance, literary practice, and critical theory. Likely writers include DuBois, Hughes, McKay, and Wideman.
Professor Murray

AFRI XLIST: ENGL 1710J Modern African Literature
Many African writers produce their works in one European language or another. Often, these works are more widely read in Europe and North America than on the African continent itself. This course will use these facts as starting points to explore key themes, antecedents, and intellectual contexts of contemporary African writing. We will examine fiction, drama, poetry, critical prose, and visual
Professor George

AFRI XLIST: ANTH 2110 Anthropological Theories in Africa
Focuses on debates over significant social and cultural issues in Africa. Historical and cultural continuities are premised as a way of understanding political, economic, and religious complexities in present-day Africa.  
Professor Leis

AFRI XLIST: HIST 2970C Rethinking the Civil Rights Movement
This graduate course encourages a rethinking of the complex components, arguments and activities that have characterized what we have come to know as the Civil Rights Movement, concentrating primarily on African American agency, actions and politics, through careful reading of recent scholarship in the field. While knowledge of U.S. history is preferred, this course asks larger thematic questions about protest movements (the role of the state, relationships with and between oppressed groups and organizations, and periodization), that will interest non-Americanists also. Some of the topics covered include: gender, organizing and strategies, the local, global ramifications and interactions, organizational structures and politics, and the recent concept of the Long Civil Rights Movement.  
Professor Hamlin