Fall 2018 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 Perry

AFRI 0670: Global Black Radicalism
The decade from the mid-Sixties until the mid-Seventies witnessed the rise of Black Radicalism as a global phenomenon. The emergence of Black Power in the US, Brazil and the Caribbean, the consolidation of liberation struggles in Portuguese Africa and the rise of a Black Consciousness trend in Apartheid South Africa all represent key moments. What led young activists to embrace “Black Power?” What led to the emergence of Marxist movements in Portuguese Africa? What events in the Caribbean gave ascendancy to radical tendencies? And what forces contributed to the decline of these movements? This course seeks to answer these questions.
Professor Meeks/Professor Augusto

AFRI 1040: Decolonized Bodies, Spirit Bodies: Tracing the Indigenous Knowledge of Africans
This course is a comprehensive study of the indigenous bodies of knowledge of rituals as they permeate the wholeness of the existence of African people referencing Yoruba nation of West Africa. It will integrate visual art methods with Rites and Reason Theatre’s Research-to-Performance Method, where students will explore and trace the hidden legacies of the indigenous people of Africa in visual arts, music, dance, fashion, poetry, story-telling as a way of understanding the impacts of slavery, colonialism and decolonization of indigenous knowledge. Students will have the opportunity to study selected enduring indigenous festivals, organize and stage performance as knowledge production.
Professor Atiku

AFRI 1060U: An Introduction to Africa
Africa invokes myriad images in the global imagination. It figures in debates on the evolution of humans; in the formation of capitalism, and even as a counterpoint to discourses on human progress. This course interrogates how “Africa” gets mobilized in popular discourse in the US and beyond. How might we reconcile the idea of Africa with contemporary conditions of the African continent? We will not only examine Africa through a broad range of disciplinary perspectives; but
also become familiar with social, cultural, political and economic diversity of the African continent. We will engage the disciplines of history, economics, politics, cultural studies and gender studies among others.

Professor Ayobade

AFRI 1060W: Policy, Culture and Discourse that Shape Health and Access to Healthcare
The global discourse on health and access to healthcare are shaped by narratives that often conflate health with being about the healthcare system rather than about where we live, the policies, the politics, and narratives/discourse that shape them. Global health also tends to promote a perspective that it is about those people over there and has nothing to do with us here. This course will create a platform that ties the global to the local. We will discuss how political and cultural discourse on race, class, and gender create the conditions that allow social inequalities to thrive.

Professor Ritchie

AFRI 1060X: African Development
Course takes an interdisciplinary approach to introduce contemporary development issues in Africa. Drawing on literature from political sciences, economics, sociology and history, it explores the challenges of development in the continent since independence, as well as investigates the influences of governance, institutions, conflicts and external forces in Africa’s development trajectories. This is an applied course that would utilize both theoretical and policy analytical approaches to examine the political and socioeconomic dynamism in contemporary Africa. This course is guided by questions, such as: Why have most African countries remained underdeveloped, poor and susceptible to conflicts (many of which seem intractable)?

Professor Agupusi

AFRI 1060Z: Race, Sexuality, and Mental Disability History
This seminar investigates the fraught entanglement of mental disability with race and homosexuality beginning with late 19th Century ideas of scientific racism and the invention of the homosexual body in African American communities. By tracking changes in Psychiatry and Psychology through the 1960s and 1970s, the course examines the impact of the Civil Rights and Gay Rights movements on sustaining contemporary mental health diagnosis of "gender dysphoria" associated with Trans people. The course will further examine several approaches to queer, trans, and gay history from the fields of color critique, black feminism, and disability studies. Enrollment limit is 20.

Professor Ramos

AFRI 1110: Voices Beneath the Veil
VBV is an interdisciplinary exploration of African-American history and cultures through the analyses of Black authored plays from 1858 to the present. The course focuses on the development of a thesis paper, which includes an incremental re-writing process.

Professor Terry-Morgan

AFRI 1190A: Framing Haiti: History, Culture, Politics + Literature
In broadest terms, the objective of this multidisciplinary course will be to introduce students to the varied “nature” of the Haitian society and its fluid and dynamic culture, and then attempt to make historical and socio-anthropological sense of the country in relation to the region as a whole (particularly to the United States and Dominican Republic). Throughout the course we will discuss the dynamics of power in the realm of governance, with particular emphasis placed on the notion of
struggle for sovereignty and the culture of resistance (through the arts) that forms the fundamental character of the national culture.

Professor Sylvain

AFRI 1968: 1968: A Year in Review
In 1968 students walked-out at Brown, leading to the 1969 creation of the Rites and Reason Theatre and later the formation of Afro-American Studies, now the Department of African Studies/Rites and Reason Theatre. 1968 was also a global year of contention, confrontation and change, with consequences that continue to resonate into the present. This class harnesses the multiple narratives and studies of our faculty across the campus and alumni who took part in the 1968 walk-out. Classes blend lecture and discussion. Speakers assign appropriate reading to coincide with their topics. Requirements include mandatory participation to planned anniversary events.

Professor Hamlin

AFRI 2001: Theories of Africana Thought: Intellectual History and Critical Theory
This course will be a close reading of the various ideas, theories and practices of the thinkers, writers, artists and activists whose work and practices have constituted an Africana intellectual tradition. In conducting this review, we will examine questions around the formation and the history of thought and intellectual traditions in general. We will also think about the various fields of knowledge which have shaped Africana thought. The course therefore will spend some time working through the different meanings of intellectual work and critical thought and theory. Enrollment limited to 12 graduate students.

Professor Henry

AFRI 2010: Black Transnational Feminism
This graduate seminar brings together methodological and theoretical approaches to interpreting the significance of race, gender, sexuality and nation in the feminist literature on transnationalism and diaspora. We'll explore how transnational studies can benefit from a critical analysis of global black feminist thought, placing special emphasis on canonical and emergent scholarship. The course materials include humanistic and social scientific texts that include literary criticism, ethnography, historical analyses, film and fiction. The texts illustrate ways in which black feminist scholarship has always been crucial for understanding critical geopolitical issues that shape the theorization of the transnational in the Africana world.

Professor Perry

AFRI XLIST: RELS 1650 Gospel Music from the Church to the Streets
Black gospel music has informed popular music artists including Beyoncé, Elvis, and Chance the Rapper. This course surveys African American gospel music as it is implemented for worship, evangelism, and popular consumption. Beyond analysis of key musical and lyrical characteristics of gospel, this class gives attention to the religious and sociocultural contexts that inform gospel composition and performance. Gospel music is integrally connected to the worship traditions of black American Pentecostals, Baptists, and Methodists. Consequently, this course is also a musical introduction to African American Christianity. Classes include interactive demonstrations in addition to discussion of audio/video recordings and required texts.

Professor Barron