Spring 2016 Course Offerings

AFRI 0660: Activist Scholarship: Research and Writing for Social Change
How can research advance the global social justice struggle? This course will emphasize the idea that education has never been a politically neutral undertaking. Students’ research can have social impact in the university and beyond. We will engage a variety of disciplinary fields to theorize key concepts such as intersectionality of oppression and resistance, power, hegemony, social justice, and activist research. Students will be required to carry out an original research project that tackles a pressing societal problem we face today.
Professor Perry

AFRI 0990: Black Lavender: Black Gay/Lesbian Plays/Dramatic Constructions in the American Theatre
An interdisciplinary approach to the study of plays that address the identities and issues of black gay men and lesbians and offers various perspectives from within and without the black gay and lesbian artistic communities. Focuses on analysis of unpublished titles. Also includes published works by Baraka, Bullins, Corbitt, Gibson, Holmes, West, and Pomo Afro Homos. Some evening screenings of videotapes. Enrollment limited to 40.
Professor Terry-Morgan

AFRI 1020C: The Afro-Luso-Brazilian Triangle
Examines three historical components of the South Atlantic in terms of history, culture, and contemporary political and economic consequences. European colonialism in Africa and Brazil constitutes the baseline for this exploration, but the long and tardy nature of Portuguese colonialism in Africa in comparison with other European colonial powers, especially in its post-World War II manifestations, is our starting point. Enrollment limited to 40.
Professor Dzidziienyo

AFRI 1050A: Advanced RPM Playwriting
Third level of RPM Playwriting; for students that have successfully completed RPM Playwriting and Intermediate RPM Playwriting (workshop). Instructor permission.
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).
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).

Professor Terry-Morgan

AFRI 1060E: West African Writers and Political Kingdom
Do West African writers have a role to play in the changing political landscape of their countries? An examination of the ways and means through which a select group of West African writers have dealt with issues that relate to the role of the state in the management of individual and group relations, the politics of gender, civil and military relations, and the construction of new forms of civil society. Enrollment limited to 20.

Professor Dzidziienyo

AFRI 2002: Theories of Africana Thought: Literary and Expressive Cultures
A preoccupation of Africana Studies involves the central yet highly contested role of the notion of what constitutes black culture in the modern world. To what degree can we claim aesthetic and other distinctions between black cultures in the Diaspora and other modern western cultural practices and expressive forms? What role did enslavement, forced migration and segregation play in shaping Africana culture in the modern west? These cultural debates which played a central role in literary, musical, philosophical, aesthetic, historical and sociological analyses of the culture of people of African descent frame this course. Enrollment limited to 12 graduate students.

Professor Guterl

AFRI 2104: Theorizing the Black Diaspora
This seminar will focus on the theorization of the black diaspora as a way to explore the various articulations of colonialism, gendered racism and resistance against that racism throughout African-descendant communities. Course readings will highlight the scholarship of black women who have contributed to the internationalization of radical black vis-a-vis theories of diaspora, transnationalism, transformative politics, identity formation, and community. Enrollment limited to 20.

Professor Perry

AFRI XLIST: ENGL 0150X The Claims of Fiction
This course explores the interplay of tropes of strangeness, contamination, and crisis in a range of novels and shorter fiction, in English or in translation. We will ask why social misfits and outsiders somehow become such fascinating figures in fictional narratives. How do these fictions entice and equip readers to reflect on collective assumptions, values, and practices? Writers will likely include Baldwin, Brontë, Condé, Conrad, Faulkner, Greene, Ishiguro, Lessing, Morrison, Naipaul, Salih. Limited to 20 first-year students.

Professor George

AFRI XLIST: ENGL 0510Q Unstable Subjects: Race and Meaning in Contemporary (African) American Literature
What are the stakes involved in defining (African) American literature through a racialized authorial framework? Should we adhere to this prescribed and contentious categorization when considering writers who only incidentally identify as “black,” and whose works challenge any critical or aesthetic alignment based upon racial affiliation? More broadly, this course seeks to question the lingering persistence of race as an ontological marker within the literary arts. Writers include but are not
limited to Fran Ross, Darryl Pinckney, Andrea Lee, David Henry Hwang, Maurice Manning, and Colson Whitehead.

Professor Clytus

AFRI XLIST: ENGL 0710E Postcolonial Tales of Transition
This course focuses on postcolonial British, Caribbean, and Southern African works that exemplify, complicate, or refashion the category of the bildungsroman, the "novel of education." Issues to be considered include the ways the texts rework archetypal tropes of initiation, rebellion, development, and the interplay of contradictory passions. We will also think about ways in which issues of race, gender, and sexuality emerge in the texts, and the connections or disjunctions between literature and "the real world." Writers will likely include Dangarembga, CLR James, Ghosh, Ishiguro, Joyce, Kincaid, Lamming, Naipaul, Rhys, Wicomb.

Professor George

AFRI XLIST: ENGL 1710I Harlem Renaissance: The Politics of Culture
The Harlem Renaissance was a remarkable flowering of culture in postwar New York as well as a social movement that advanced political agendas for the nation. This course takes up the relationship between literature and politics by exploring such matters as the urbanization of black America, the representation of the black poor, the influence of white patronage, and the rise of primitivism. Writers may include Hughes, Hurston, Larsen, Fisher, Locke, and McKay.

Professor Murray

AFRI XLIST: ENGL 2761H After Blackness: Framing Contemporary African American Literature
The remarkable aesthetic variety and volume of African American literary art produced since the 1980s seems to outpace intellectual labors to conceptualize this work. Nowhere is this dynamic more evident than in the proliferation of interpretive frames devised to articulate the defining currents of contemporary black expression—postnationalist, postmodern, postsegregation, and post-soul among them. By staging an interplay between these theories and literary works, the seminar provides a broad overview of thought about contemporary black culture and gestures towards the scholarship yet to be done. Literary and theoretical texts by Morrison, Whitehead, Wideman, Beatty, Gilroy, Dubey, and Warren.

Professor Murray