

COURSE SYLLABUS



SOC110/AFST110
Introduction to Africana Studies
Department of Sociology, Moravian College
Instructor: Dr. Akbar Keshodkar
Fall 2015

Office Hours: Tuesday, 1-2 pm, Thursday, 9-11 am, or by appointment

Office Location: Comenius Hall, Room 301

Office Tel. #: 610 861 1685

Email: keshodkara@moravian.edu (please provide up to a minimum of 24 hours for response)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores methodologies and themes analyzing the historical experiences and contributions of the African diaspora in the modern world. Students will examine the different contextual frameworks within which people from different parts of the African continent have voluntarily and/or involuntarily migrated out of Africa at different periods throughout modern history and the extent to which their migratory experience shaped different notions of the African diaspora across the world. The course begins by outlining the methodological challenges in the orientation of African and African American Studies and raises questions that are central in the formulation of a monolithic “African” identity. Students will subsequently engage in deconstructing the historical developments within which different notions of agency, power, community, identity and race transformed the experiences of the descendants of the African diaspora in the domains of religion, gender, kinship relations, literature, and popular culture in the western world. This course is a pre-requisite for the Africana Studies minor.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the course, students should have improved their ability in:

- Identifying major themes that have shaped the historical experiences of the African diaspora
- Developing an understanding of the methodological and theoretical challenges prevailing in constructing representations of people of African descent
- Critically evaluating a variety of sources and acquiring an awareness of the issues involved in interpreting different sources in the study of the African diaspora
- Acquiring an understanding of the following important concepts in sociology: Ethnocentrism, hegemony, agency, diaspora, power, identity, modernity, globalization
- Developing writing conventions appropriate to the discipline of Sociology

TEXT:

Required reading materials:

The following book is available for purchase at the college bookstore:

Azevedo, Mario (ed). 2005. *Africana Studies: A Survey of Africa and the African Diaspora*. Third Edition. Durham, North Carolina: Carolina University Press (ISBN: 978-0-89089-4859)

Additional articles and other documents and resources required for the course can be accessed through the college library electronic journal database or will be posted on blackboard.

Supplementary reading materials:

Adekunle, J.O. and H.V. Williams (eds). 2013. *Converging Identities: Blackness in the Modern African Diaspora*. Durham, North Carolina: Carolina University Press

Manning, P. 2010. *The African Diaspora: A History through Culture*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Okpewho, I, C.B. Davies, A.A. Mazrui (eds). 2001. *The African Diaspora: African Origins and New World Identities*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press

Wright, M.M. 2004. *Becoming Black: Creating Identity in the African Diaspora*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press

Fanon, F. 2008. *Black Skins, White Masks*. Grove Press.

Gates, Jr. H.L. 2010. *Tradition and the Black Atlantic: Critical Theory in the African Diaspora*. Basic Civitas Books.

Gilroy, P. 2001. *'There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack': The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Gilroy, P. 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Stepan, N.L. 1996. *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*. 5th Edition. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press

Wright, K. 2009. *African American Experience: Black History and Culture Through Speeches, Letters, Editorials, Poems, Songs, and Stories*. Black Dog & Leventhal.

Recommended Websites:

The Black Past:

<http://www.blackpast.org/>

African Diaspora Studies:

<http://www.africandiasporastudies.com/Links.html>

African Diaspora on the Internet (Columbia University):

http://library.columbia.edu/locations/global/virtual-libraries/african_studies/diaspora.html

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP):

<https://www.naacp.org/>

Internet African History Sourcebook:

<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/africa/africasbook.asp>

African history archives:

<http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/30/index.html>

Annotated resource list from Africa:

http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Home_Page/WWW_Links.html

Museum of the African Diaspora:

<http://www.moadsf.org/>

African Diaspora Network:

<http://africandiasporanetwork.org/>

Africa bibliographical database:

<http://www.africabib.org/>

The Tubman Institute:

<http://www.tubmaninstitute.ca/home>

UN International Decade for People of African Descent:

<http://www.un.org/en/events/africandescendecade/>

Suggested Videos:

Black Athena: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KL7-Y4_3QMs

Who is Black in America: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWcs7YsZVuY>

Africa: A History Denied (The Truth of Ancient Africa):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mNNZiHgZy5k>

Slavery and the Making of America: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24U156LHXYM>

Racism: A History

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5-R0rxQS7A&list=PL5e9Gq_buhCxKTKC-bX2HP0xsTav3ZB2T

White Like Me: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItiXR5m1yAY>

Black in Latin America (4 part series):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6RIG4b3LV9o&list=PLDudsSkw6Ec-VRYZu14DE994iZbGzi7rA>

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

1. *Attendance and Participation:* Students will be required to *attend* class regularly and *participate* in discussions. Questions, feedback, and student interaction are an integral part of the learning process. Students are expected to come prepared, having read the assigned materials prior to coming to class and having the materials accessible during class. Students should work a minimum of 6 hours on a weekly basis outside of class preparing for the course. Chronic absences, tardiness and leaving early will adversely affect your grade. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class and tardiness or absences will result in a deduction of 5 points per infraction from the class participation grade. Absences due to illness or emergencies must be communicated via email to the instructor prior to the class.
2. *Basic classroom rules:* Students are expected to use appropriate language with the instructor as well with each other, have their cell phones on silent and not be involved in personal conversations or any activities which would disrupt the classroom environment. If a student needs to check/send a text message, they are requested to do so outside the classroom. Infraction of these rules will result in a deduction of 20 class participation points for each infraction and the student being asked to leave the classroom.
3. *Plagiarism:* I take plagiarism, copying someone else's work and representing it as your own, very seriously. This applies to all work submitted for the course. Students will be required to submitted all work done outside of the classroom on Safe Assign, through Blackboard. If a student's work is suspected of plagiarism, the student as well the Dean's office will be notified of the offence and it will be the student's responsibility to demonstrate evidence reflecting the originality of the work, such as all notes and other materials utilized in developing the submitted work. **Students found guilty of plagiarism, academic dishonesty, or cheating will receive an automatic grade of F for the course.** Students should refer to the college's academic handbook for more information about plagiarism.
4. *Blackboard:* All assignments, additional reading materials, announcements and information related to the course, including grades for all assignments, will be posted on Blackboard. It is the students' responsibility to check Blackboard and their Moravian College email on a regular basis throughout the semester.
5. *Accommodating disabilities:* Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Academic and Disability Support, located in the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling [610-861-1401](tel:610-861-1401). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.
6. *Quizzes:* There will be short, random quizzes on weekly reading materials throughout the semester. Students should note that no makeups will be offered and those arriving late would not receive extra time to complete the quizzes. Students will also be allowed to drop the lowest quiz grade.
7. *Reaction/reflection Papers:* During the semester, students will submit three reflection papers, providing an analysis of and response to materials covered in class the previous weeks. These reaction papers should critically evaluate the issues discussed in class and further incorporate personal opinions on the materials covered in class and should engage course materials. The

prompts for the reaction papers will be posted on blackboard at least two weeks before they are due. Each reflection paper should be a minimum of two pages in length.

8. *#AfricandiasporaintheUS* Project: Students will explore different aspects of the lives and cultural experiences of African diaspora, past and present, in the United States, and if possible, more specifically in the Lehigh Valley and surrounding areas. Students will investigate issues pertinent the changing diasporic experience of the descendants of Africans in (one) areas of religion, kinship, popular culture, politics, gender, community relations/engagement, socio-economic development and mobility or any other area of their choice and explore their relevance in relation to the content covered in the course. Students will work on this project in groups of two or three (based on the number of students in the course). Presentations for the projects will in front of a broader audience during the final week of the semester. More details and guidelines about the project are posted on blackboard.
9. *Midterm and Final Exam*: The midterm and final exam will cover material from lectures, discussions, films, and reading, consisting of objective questions (e.g. short answer questions), primary source documents and/or essay questions. Questions will be primarily based on the assigned readings and supplementary materials. Make-up exams will be given only in emergency situations, and student should contact me before the scheduled exam if possible.

10. *Explanation and Breakdown of Grades*:

Attendance and Class Participation	10%
Reaction Papers (3 x 5% each)	15%
Quizzes	10%
Project	20%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	20%

Grade Equivalence		
A	4.0	93 – 100
A-	3.7	90 – 92.9%
B+	3.3	87 – 89.9%
B	3.0	83 – 86.9%
B-	2.7	80 – 82.9%
C+	2.3	77 – 79.9%
C	2.0	73 – 76.9%
C-	1.7	70 – 72.9%
D+	1.3	67 – 69.9%
D	1.0	63 – 66.9%
D-	0.7	60 – 62.9%
F	0	59.9% and below

- A/A-: Excellent; performance was outstanding and surpassed all expectations set forth in the course; consistently displayed superior grasp of course materials in assessments and through participation in class activities
- B+/B: Above average; fulfilled all requirements set forth in the course with a very good grasp of course materials in assessments and through class participation

- B-/C+/C: Average; adequately fulfilled course requirements, average performance on assessments, participation in class activities was satisfactory
- C-/D+/D/D-: Below average: performance minimally acceptable to pass the course, consistently displaying inadequate understanding of course materials on assessments and not sufficiently participating in class activities
- F: Failure to demonstrate basic understanding of course materials, consistently underperforming on assessments and not adequately participating in class activities

11. *Withdrawals/Incompletes*: Under no circumstances will a student receive an academic incomplete if they are failing the course or if they have done little or no work. In circumstances that an Incomplete is given, it will be the responsibility of the student to ensure that the work is submitted on time and meets the requirements of the course. If work is not submitted by the deadline given, the student will automatically receive an "F".

COURSE OUTLINE/SCHEDULE

The course will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays, 8:55 am – 10:05 am. Students are required to come prepared for each class, having completing the reading assignments beforehand. Unless indicated, all the required readings listed below are from Mario Azevedo (MA). All other documents can be accessible through the links provided or will be posted on Blackboard (BB) and can also be accessed through the college library's electronic journal collection.

Part I – Approaching Africana Studies

Week 1:

31 Aug 2015 Introduction to the Course
2 Sept 2015 Ch. 1 – African Studies and the State of the Art (MA)

Week 2:

7 Sept 2015 Ch. 2 – African American Studies and the State of the Art (MA)
9 Sept 2015 Ch. 3 – Africa and the Genesis of Humankind (MA)
Discussion of the Film, “Black Athena”

Part II – Movement and Displacement of Africans in Modern History

Week 3:

14 Sept 2015 Ch. 4 – Legitimate Trade, Diplomacy and the Slave Trade (MA)
Reaction paper 1 due at the beginning of class
16 Sept 2015 Ch. 5 – Diaspora Africans and Slavery (MA)

Week 4:

21 Sept 2015 Ch. 6 – European Exploration and Conquest of Africa (MA)
23 Sept 2015 Ch. 9 – Africa's Road to Independence, 1945-1960 (MA)

Week 5:

28 Sept 2015 Ch. 7 – Civil War to Civil Rights: The Quest for Freedom and Equality (MA)
Primary Source document: “We Charge Genocide” (BB)
30 Sept 2015 Ch. 8 – The Caribbean: From Emancipation to Independence (MA)
Discussion of the documentary, “Slavery and the Making of America”

Week 6:

5 Oct 2015 Ch. 10 – The Pan African Movement (MA)
Reaction Paper 2 due at the beginning of class
7 Oct 2015 **MIDTERM EXAM**

Part III – Transformations of the African Diasporic Cultures and Identities in the Modern World

Week 7:

12 Oct 2015 NO CLASS – FALL RECESS
14 Oct 2015 Ch. 12 – Contemporary Diaspora and the Future (MA)

Week 8:

19 Oct 2015 Ch. 13 – Continental Africans and Africans in America (MA)
Discussion of Documentary, “Who is Black in America”
21 Oct 2015 Ch. 14 – Music in Africa and the Caribbean (MA)

Week 9:

26 Oct 2015 Ch. 15 – African American Music (MA)
28 Oct 2015 Ch. 16 – The Art of Africa and the Diaspora (MA)

Week 10:

2 Nov 2015 Ch. 17 – Literature in Africa and the Caribbean (MA)
4 Nov 2015 Ch. 18 – African American Literature (MA)

Week 11:

9 Nov 2015 Ch. 20 – The African Family (MA)
Reaction Paper 3 due at beginning of class
11 Nov 2015 Ch. 21 – The African American Family (MA)

Week 12:

16 Nov 2015 Ch. 22 – Religion in Africa (MA)
18 Nov 2015 Ch. 23 – Religion in the Diaspora (MA)

Week 13:

23 Nov 2015 “The Role of the Church in the African American Experience”
Pastor Dr. Gregory Edwards, Resurrected Community Church
Readings will be posted on blackboard
25 Nov 2015 NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 14:

30 Dec 2015 Ch. 24 – African Women (MA)
2 Dec 2015 Ch. 26 – Lifting as we Rise: Black Women in America (MA)
Discussion of Documentary, “Dark Girls”

Week 15:

7 Dec 2015 **Project Presentations** (Format TBA)
9 Dec 2015 Ch. 27 – The Health of Africa and its Diaspora (MA)

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, 16 December 2015, 1:30 pm

Writing Assessment Rubric for the Course:

Criteria	Comments	Percentage			
<p>Content Analysis (70%) How well does the student respond to the Question/prompt? Are the arguments relevant, sufficient, explained clearly, persuasive? Is the synthesis of information adequate, and can the student differentiate between objective and subjective analysis? Is the thesis well developed? Is there both a specific and broader dimension to the argument? Is the evidence sufficient and adequately explained in relevance to the thesis?</p>		Strong	Good	Adequate	Weak
		63-70	54-62	49-53	48 >
		/ 70%			
<p>Organization & Style (20%) Is the essay well-organized, with an introduction and conclusion? Is supporting evidence presented logically within each paragraph? Are there clear and appropriate links between the paragraphs? Does the student use an academic writing style, with a variety of well-structured simple, compound and complex sentences? Is the vocabulary sufficiently academic and accurate?</p>		Strong	Good	Adequate	Weak
		17-20	12-16	7-11	6 >
		/ 20%			
<p>Correctness / Accuracy (10%) Are commas and full-stops used accurately? Are capital letters used correctly? Is spelling sufficiently accurate? Are verb forms (tense and agreement) used appropriately and accurately?</p>		Strong	Good	Adequate	Weak
		9-10	8	7	6 >
		/ 10%			
Total Percentage		/ 100%			

A paper (90-100%)

- The student responds well to the prompt, using relevant, logical arguments with strong understanding of the evidence.
- Sources are appropriate for the topic, and quoted material is used effectively. All sources are correctly cited.
- The essay is well-organized, with a clear thesis, evidence is presented clearly, and the ideas and paragraphs are well-linked. The student uses an academic writing style, with a variety of sentence types, and academic vocabulary use is varied and appropriate for the topic.
- Language use is accurate, with correct punctuations and spelling. Occasional errors with prepositions and articles.

B paper (80-89%)

- The student responds reasonably well to the prompt, and most of the arguments and evidence are relevant, with clear understanding of the evidence.
- Most sources are appropriate for the topic, and quoted material is used effectively most of the time. Only occasional inaccuracies of logic or citation.
- The essay is mostly well-organized, with a clear thesis, some evidence is presented clearly, and the ideas are well-linked. The student uses an academic writing style, with a variety of sentence types that are mostly well-structured. Academic vocabulary use is varied and mostly appropriate for the topic.
- Language use is mostly accurate, punctuation is generally well-controlled, some spelling errors in less common words. May be several errors with prepositions and articles.

C paper (70-79%)

- The student responds adequately to the prompt, with some arguments and evidence that are relevant and with partial understanding of the evidence.
- Most sources are appropriate for the topic, and quoted material is used effectively some of the time. More frequent inaccuracies of logic and citation.
- Attempts to organize the essay, with a thesis, and attempts to organize ideas within paragraphs, but with only limited success. Some evidence is presented clearly, and some ideas are well-linked. The student attempts to use an academic writing style, with a variety of simple and compound sentence that are mostly well-structured, and some complex sentences. Academic vocabulary is attempted.
- Language use is varied, attempts at accurate punctuation, but more frequent errors, frequent spelling mistakes in less common words. Errors with prepositions and articles may be frequent, but do not impede meaning.

D paper (60-69%)

- The student responds minimally to the prompt, with limited arguments and evidence that are relevant and with little understanding of the evidence.
- Some sources are relevant for the topic, but quoted material is often ineffective or inappropriate. Frequent inaccuracies of logic and citation.
- Limited attempt to organize the essay, thesis is unclear, and limited attempts to organize ideas within paragraphs. Evidence and ideas are not presented clearly or logically linked. The student has limited control of academic writing style, sentences are poorly-structured, and complex sentences are rarely attempted. Vocabulary use is rather basic.
- Language use is varied, punctuation is often inaccurate, spelling mistakes even in common words. Errors with prepositions, articles, verb forms may be frequent and sometimes impede meaning.

Failing paper (below 60%)

- Failure to respond to the prompt, with irrelevant information and little or no understanding of the evidence.
- Sources are not relevant, and quoted material, if any, is ineffective or inappropriate. No attempt at citation.
- Very little attempt to organize the essay, no thesis is presented, and information within paragraphs is not organized. Evidence and ideas are unclear. Academic writing style is not attempted, and even basic sentences are poorly -structured. Vocabulary use is inadequate.
- Little control of language, with inaccurate punctuation and frequent spelling mistakes in common words. Errors with prepositions, articles, verb forms are frequent and cause difficulty for the reader.