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## AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

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### About the Program

African American Studies is an interdisciplinary program. The program focuses on African American experiences, while recognizing that other academic subjects bear importantly on the understanding of these experiences and should have a place in the African American Studies curriculum.

Within the interrogative, interdisciplinary, reflexive, and justice oriented mode that guides African American Studies, students in the program acquire sophisticated knowledge of African American and other African diasporic experiences; become conversant with the role of race, power, difference, and intersectionality in the personal, institutional, and structural relations of our daily lives including their relevance for local, regional, national, and international affairs; cultivate rigorous transdisciplinary skills in analytic, reflexive, and community-based research methodologies, and written, oral, and multi-media communication, to formulate, articulate, and interrogate ideas in private and public spheres; develop critical, intellectual, and ethical perspectives that can guide and advance personal, educational, civic, political, and professional actions; and engage and interact with differential sites of community development and leadership in the Puget Sound and beyond so as to deepen and apply their understanding of African American Studies and to learn to contribute collaboratively to the ongoing work of equity.

### General Requirements for the Major or Minor

General university degree requirements stipulate that 1) at least four units of the major or three units of the minor be taken in residence at Puget Sound; 2) students earn a GPA of 2.0 in courses taken for the major or the minor; and 3) all courses taken for a major or minor must be taken for graded credit. Any exceptions to these stipulations are indicated in the major and minor degree requirements listed below.

### Requirements for the Major

A major in African American Studies consists of 9 units:

1. AFAM 101
2. AFAM 201
3. AFAM 399
4. Four elective units, including two depth and two breadth courses, selected and approved through advising from the courses listed below. At least three of the four must be taken at the upper-division level (courses numbered 300 or higher).
5. Capstone sequence: AFAM 401 and 402

### Requirements for the Minor

A minor in African American Studies consists of 5 units:

1. AFAM 101.

2. Three elective units meeting the following conditions: (i) at least two must be taken outside the student's major; (ii) at least one must be a depth course from the list below; (iii) at least one must be a breadth course from the list below; and (iv) at least one must be an upper-division course (i.e., numbered 300 or higher).
3. Capstone: AFAM 401.

### Notes for the major and minor

- a. Students may apply up to two approved courses of study abroad credit toward their African American Studies major or minor.
- b. Majors and minors may satisfy no more than two university core requirement from African American Studies offerings.
- c. When a course both supports their African American Studies major and fulfills a major or minor requirement in another field, a student may count no more than two units from that major or minor toward their African American Studies major.
- d. Students majoring or minoring in African American Studies must earn a grade of C- or higher in all courses which are taken in fulfillment of a major or minor requirement.
- e. The African American Studies program reserves the option of determining, on an individual basis, a time limit on the applicability of courses to the major or minor.

### Depth Electives

Depth courses provide students with specialized knowledge in African American experiences, opportunities for sustained and deep thinking about a topic in African American Studies, and specifically highlight how African American Studies acquires, organizes, and defines knowledge. Students will acquire new methodological or theoretical tools to understand and situate African American experiences and their import. A course will meet the depth criteria if: (1) course topics are central to African American experiences; (2) these topics are considered across the course; and (3) the course introduces methodological or theoretical tools rooted in African American Studies. Courses that currently count toward the depth elective are:

AFAM 205 Survey of African American Literature  
AFAM 210 Black Fictions and Feminisms  
AFAM 310 African Diaspora Experience  
AFAM 346 African Americans and American Law  
AFAM 355 African American Women in American History  
AFAM 360 The Art and Politics of the Civil Rights Era  
AFAM/COMM 370 Communication and Diversity  
AFAM 375 The Harlem Renaissance  
AFAM 495 Independent Study  
COMM 347 African American Public Discourse  
CONN 335 Race and Multiculturalism in the American Context  
CONN 390 Black Business Leadership: Past and Present  
ENGL 332 Genre: Poetry\*  
ENGL 335 Genre: Drama\*  
ENGL 338 Genre: Popular Literature\*  
ENGL 339 Genre: Print Media\*  
ENGL 363 African American Literature  
ENGL 381 Major Authors\*  
HIST 254 African American Voices: A Survey of African American History  
HIST 291 Modern Africa  
HIST 293 Early Africa to 1807  
MUS 221 Jazz History  
PG 304 Race and American Politics  
PG 346 Race in the American Political Imagination

PHIL 389 Race and Philosophy  
REL 307 Prisons, Gender, and Education

\* Applicable when the course emphasizes African American literature.

### Breadth Electives

Breadth courses multiply points of application of specialized knowledge and expertise which students gain from African American Studies, allowing them access to different methodological and theoretical modes of treating topics and interrogating course material across disciplines, and varied platforms for building their capacity for critical and recursive intellectual engagement. A course will meet the breadth criteria if the syllabus or conversation with the instructor indicates that (1) topics show a distinct relationship to African American studies; (2) topics allow application of methods and theories from AFAM studies; and (3) the course expands lenses and extends contexts on topics instructive to African American experiences. Courses that currently count toward the breadth elective are:

AFAM/REL 265 Thinking Ethically: What is Justice?  
AFAM 304 Capital and Captivity  
AFAM 320 Race, Power, and Privilege  
ARTH 302 The Art of Mexico and Mesoamerica  
COMM 321 Film Criticism  
COMM 322 Television Culture  
COMM 373 Critical Cultural Theory  
CONN 325 Homelessness and Race  
ECON 218 American Economic History  
ECON 241 Urban Economics  
ENGL 362 Native American Literature  
ENGL 364 Asian-American Literature  
ENGL 365 Gender and Sexualities  
ENGL 366 Critical Whiteness Studies  
GQS 201 Introduction to Gender, Queer, and Feminist Studies  
HIST 280 Colonial Latin America  
HIST 281 Modern Latin America  
HIST 360 Frontiers of Native America  
HIST 381 Film and History: Latin America  
HIST 382 Comparative Revolution in Twentieth Century Latin America  
HIST 383 Borderlands: La Frontera: The U.S.-Mexico Border  
HIST 384 Transnational Latin America  
HIST 391 Nelson Mandela and 20th Century South Africa  
HIST 392 Men and Women in Colonial Africa  
HIS 393 Missions and Christianity in Africa  
LAS 100 Introduction to Latin American Studies  
LAS 387 Art and Revolution in Latin America  
LTS 200 Latina/o America: A Critical Introduction to Latina/o Studies  
LTS 300 Latina/o Literatures  
MUS 222 Music of the World's Peoples  
PG 303 Diversity in Post-Industrial Democracies  
PG 311 Politics of Detention: Criminal Justice, Immigration, and the War on Terror  
PG 315 Law and Society  
PG 316 Civil Liberties  
PG 325 African Politics  
PSYC 225 Social Psychology  
PSYC 265 Cross-Cultural Psychology  
PSYC 373 Perceiving Self and Other  
REL 302 Ethics and the Other  
SOAN 103 Social Problems  
SOAN 213 City and Society

SOAN 230 Indigenous Peoples: Alternative Political Economies  
SOAN 301 Power and Inequality  
SOAN 305 Heritage Languages and Language Policies  
SOAN 335 Third World Perspectives  
SOAN 350 Border Crossings: Transnational Migration and Diaspora Studies  
SPAN 212 Latin American Culture and Civilization  
SPAN 301 Literature of the Americas  
SPAN 306 Latin American Film  
SPAN 311 Migration Narratives  
SPAN 402 Seminar in Nineteenth-Century Latin America  
SPAN 405 Seminar in Twentieth and/or Twenty-First Century Latin America (only if significant African American Studies content)  
THTR 250 World Theatre I: African Diaspora

Note that the following first-year seminars have relevance but cannot count toward the major or minor:

SSI1/SSI2 115 Imaging Blackness  
SSI1 121 Multiracial Identities  
SSI1/SSI2 135 Hurricane Katrina and the History of New Orleans

### Course Offerings

Unless otherwise specified, each course carries 1 unit of credit and is offered at least once each academic year. Please see "Frequency of Course Offerings" on page 10.

**Seminars in Scholarly Inquiry** See *Seminars in Scholarly Inquiry in the Core Curriculum* section of this Bulletin for course descriptions. While these courses cannot count toward a major or a minor, the following are recommended for their focus on important aspects of African American Studies.

**SSI1/SSI2 115 Imaging Blackness**  
**SSI1 121 Multiracial Identity**

**Connections courses.** See the *Connections in the Core Curriculum* section of this Bulletin for course descriptions (page 24).

**AFAM 346 African Americans and American Law**  
**AFAM 355 African-American Women in American History**  
**AFAM 360 The Art and Politics of the Civil Rights Era**  
**AFAM 375 The Harlem Renaissance**  
**AFAM 401 Narratives of Race**

**101 Introduction to African American Studies** This course provides an examination of intellectual and creative productions, developments, and events that have come to be recognized as forming the discipline of African American Studies. The course explores literature, history, popular culture (music, television, magazines, newspapers, movies, film documentaries), and politics as a way to identify the historical and political origins and objectives of Black Studies. It also explores and the 1960's national and transnational Black Liberation struggles, the early academic and social concerns of Black Studies advocates, the theoretical and critical approaches to Black Studies as a discipline, and the early objectives of Black Studies in relation to present conversations and projects regarding goals of multiculturalism and diversity. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirements. Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, and Power graduation requirement. Offered each semester.*

**201 Methods in African American Studies** This course is the primary methods course for the major. The course provides students with a thorough grounding in the literature and research areas within African American Studies. In this course students are taught to investigate his-

torical, cultural, economic, religious, political, and literary phenomena and are encouraged to formulate new thinking based on thoughtful reflection on personal and community experiences. *Prerequisite: AFAM 101. Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, and Power graduation requirement.*

**205 Survey of African American Literature** This course aims to provide a panoramic view of African American literature, from early oral traditions through the first written and published works in the 18th century, and continuing into the era of published slave narratives and early autobiographies. From there the course follows African American literature as its production accelerates and its variety expands after Emancipation, during and after Reconstruction, into the early 20th century. Students study poetry, prose, and drama from the Harlem Renaissance (circa 1919-1934). The latter part of the course concerns literature from the Civil Rights Era, the Black Arts period of the 1960s and 1970s, and more recent decades, when African American literature, criticism, and literary theory achieved immeasurable success and generated enormous influence nationally and globally. Cultivating an informed sense of African American literature as a whole is one major objective of the course. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement.*

**210 Black Fictions and Feminisms** This course is an integrative course in the humanities that explores various constructions of black female identity. The course looks at black womanhood as it's represented in the public imaginary, feminist theories, critical race theories, and in literature and literary criticism written by black women writers. One of the questions the course asks is: How have scholars and writers addressed fundamental questions of black female identity? To answer this question, students read and view a wide survey of materials including novels, essays, memoir, and film. Through this investigation, students consider how studies of race, feminism, and gender connect to personal lives. *Prerequisites: AFAM 101 strongly recommended. Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement.*

**265 Thinking Ethically: What is Justice?** This course provides students with tools of ethical analysis so that they can think critically about pressing contemporary moral issues through the lens of justice. The course focuses on ethical methods from world Christianity and western philosophy. The course introduces both ethical theories and modern justice theories, and examines multicultural perspectives of the long-standing religious and philosophical understanding of justice. It analyzes how social justice concepts have been applied in different cultural contexts, including non-western communities. Students examine different models of justice and their implications for contemporary moral issues (e.g. healthcare, social welfare, racism, war, capital punishment, human rights, immigration, refugees, property rights, and the environment). The class includes interactive lectures on justice theories and students actively participate in discussions on selected case studies. Course readings include excerpts from Aristotle, Aquinas, Mill, Pope, Locke, Calvin, Kant, Rawls, Sandel, Nussbaum, Singer, and Hauerwas. *Crosslisted with AFAM 265. Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, and Power graduation requirement.*

**304 Capital and Captivity: African Americans and the U.S. Economy** This course is designed to be both an introduction and a deep dive into the interconnectedness of African Americans and Capitalism within the United States. Capitalist ideologies are continually at the foundation of the captivity (oppression) of African Americans. Emphasis is on the ways in which African Americans have financed the capitalist gains in this country, and the ways that capitalism in the U.S. has harmed African Americans. The necessities of life—healthcare, education, job and food security—are more accessible to some than all, and one's status within the U.S. economy is a major determinant. This inequity

becomes very apparent during national emergencies. This course focuses on the economic intricacies within U.S. systems, using a social impacts approach to engage with the inequity of the U.S. economy. Major areas of economic oppression potentially to be covered include: The Slave Trade & U.S. Slavery, Mass Incarceration (free labor), Education (Student Loan Debt), Sports and Music (Black culture/White Ownership), Housing policies (Redlining/Blockbusting), Medical Industry (Health Advancements/Black Bodies), Drug Industry (Marijuana), Lottery (The Numbers), and Pandemics and Natural Disasters (Hurricane Katrina & COVID-19). *This course satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, and Power graduation requirement.*

**310 African Diaspora Experience** This special topics course is dedicated to an international Black population with the additional course component of a faculty-led study abroad after the semester concludes. It provides students the opportunity to connect the literature-based course curriculum, along with additional content on historical, environmental, political, health, and gender related materials, with a guided experience within the African Diaspora. West African novels provide the primary curriculum of this course, covering various time periods and experiences. The course content also incorporates supplemental materials to guide in course discussions. Materials provide students with a general understanding of the past and current contexts of West Africa. Students gain a new perspective into the African American experience by reading and experiencing the culture and history of Africa. AFAM 310 provides students with alternative narratives of African experiences. It provides students tools to engage with persons from non-western societies in a productive, respectful, and culturally aware manner that will guide them in collaborating cross culturally. *Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, and Power graduation requirement.*

**320 Race, Power, and Privilege** This course is designed to be an introduction to major racial and ethnic groups which comprise the population of the United States. Emphasis will be according to the history and culture of racial/ethnic peoples in America as well as the role of race and nationality in the pursuit and achievement of the "American Dream." Also highlighted will be an exploration of the linkage between social power and the concepts of race and ethnicity in the United States and how this linkage affects personal identity formation and worldview assumptions. Discussion of the formation of myths and stereotypes and contemporary issues will be highlighted. *Crosslisted with LTS 320. Prerequisite: AFAM 101 or LTS 200, and junior or senior standing only. Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement.*

**360 Art and Politics of the Civil Rights Era** This course employs an interdisciplinary approach to explore the history and expressive culture of the civil rights era. Emphasizing what historians call the "long civil rights movement," the course explores earlier strategies of resistance, the civil rights and black power movements, and legacies of these movements. An interdisciplinary approach is particularly applicable for a course focused on the civil rights movement because the literature of racial protest and of the "black arts" was not simply parallel to the political upheavals. As Amiri Baraka put it in 1971, "Art is Politics." Readings and assignments engage the complex, sometimes contradictory, legal, political, literary, artistic, and musical responses of this charged historical period, and the intersecting struggles over knowledge, power, and identity. *Satisfies the Knowledge, Power, and Identity graduation requirement.*

**370 Communication and Diversity** The purpose of this course is to enhance students' understanding of diversity issues as they relate to the study of communication. The course looks at how the media,

its images and discourses, shape one's understanding of experiences, shape the experiences of women, and the experiences of people of color. The course also explores the ways in elements of the media socially reproduce prejudice and foster resistance to prejudice. As a result of engagement in the course, students gain the ability to critically analyze and evaluate media products. They also become aware of critical professional issues in relation to a diversified workforce as it relates to the production, distribution, and consumption of media products. *Cross-listed with COMM 370. Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, and Power graduation requirement.*

**399 Public Scholarship** This is the African American Studies Program course in public scholarship. It provides students the opportunity to connect their coursework with the Race and Pedagogy Institute. One of the tenets of African American studies is the production of scholarship and public programs that effects change and impacts lives especially for communities historically underserved by official state and national institutions (i.e., public scholarship; some prefer the term civic engagement). The Race and Pedagogy Institute articulates these tenets in its various initiatives. The African American Studies program builds on the synergy evolving between the Institute's various activities including its Community Partners Forum, and debates and events in the larger community to provide students with unique opportunities for dynamic engagement with social and cultural challenges. This course provides students with the necessary educational scaffolding for the production of public scholarship and then offers them the opportunity to contribute their work as part of ongoing critical efforts to confront and transform historical disparities in power, and privilege between different communities especially among local, regional, and national communities. *Prerequisite: AFAM 101.*

**402 Research Seminar in African American Studies** In this course students employ the range of methods and understandings gained through AFAM 101 and further studies in the major to complete an independent research project/paper. *Prerequisite: AFAM 401.*