AFRS 4010: AFRICAN DIASPORA THEORY

FALL 2014
CLASSROOM: DENNY 109
Monday 5:00-7:40pm - HYBRID

THIS IS A HYBRID CLASS:
PAY ATTENTION TO THE DAYS THE CLASS MEET IN-CLASS AND ONLINE

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Office Hours: Mon. 2:00-3:00pm; Tues. 3:00-4:00pm; Wed. 2:00-3:00 pm, and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The course explores a wide range of conceptual and theoretical perspectives in African Diaspora Studies. We will especially focus on the applications of topical concepts/ideas in the social sciences (identity, representation, race, colonialism, globalization, migration, transnationalism, development, cultural production) to the study of the African Diaspora subjectivities. The historical contexts that have defined the African Diaspora peoples will also be emphasized throughout the course.

This is a core class for majors and minors in the Africana Studies Department. It is also open to students interested in the African Diaspora studies.

At the end of the class, students are expected to (1) have an in-depth understanding of the major conceptual and theoretical approaches in African Diaspora studies as a branch of the social sciences; (2) master concise written presentations in the African Diaspora course content; (3) and develop a sound understanding of the relevance of the diaspora and transnational theories to issues relating to identity, capitalism, globalization, development, race, and migration, among others.

REQUIRED TEXTS
All the readings for the course are available in Moodle. The files are in pdf format, and you must have Acrobat Reader installed on your computer in order to download and view the readings.

E-PORTFOLIO
This course is part of a pilot e-portfolio program initiated by the University College at UNC Charlotte. The goal of the program is to facilitate improvement in students’ writing and critical thinking (analysis). The implementation of this program will involve the use of Mahara and Moodle by students to submit their written assignments. The two platforms are interlinked. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is available to assist with technical issues relating to the use of these platforms. Call 704-687-5500 or contact https://helpdesk.uncc.edu/helpdesk/prelogin.asp.

OTHER MATTERS
The success of this course ultimately depends on both the students’ and the instructor's efforts. Your understanding of the materials and your participation in class discussions are very important. You will receive constructive criticism of your work from the instructor. Take those criticisms as a way of improving your
understanding of the course content, writing, and/or diligence. Always ask questions when you do not understand the readings and lectures. Make efforts to see the instructor during office hours or by appointment.

On days that the class is in face-to-face session, no student is allowed to be more than 10 minutes late to class. No student is allowed to leave class until the session ends at 7:40pm unless instructor dismisses the class early.

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is the act of taking someone else's ideas or/and writings (including internet materials), and passing them off as your own. The penalty may include scoring an F in the affected paper or in the whole course, or/and being subjected to other University disciplinary actions. If you are in doubt regarding what plagiarism is all about, consult the instructor immediately. The only mojo for plagiarism is to correctly cite the sources of all the materials that you use in your paper, including quotations and paraphrases. You should note that most cases of plagiarism occur because students are in a hurry to meet the deadline after neglecting the assignment until the last "minute". To avoid being haunted by the ghost of plagiarism, plan ahead, give yourself ample time to complete your assignments, and consult with the instructor if you have questions.

The use of cell phone or any other electronic gadget for making and receiving calls and for texting is not allowed during class time.

GENERAL GRADING RUBRIC: Each paper will be assessed using the following criteria:
A = An intelligent, innovative, and well organized essay that reflects critical analysis of text, grammatical accuracy, sophisticated argument, and informed response to the question.
B = Good essay, mostly correct in fact, omits few aspects of the question, and/or some minor textual errors.
C = Essay demonstrates a basic understanding of the assignment; weakly organized, contains some textual errors and some weakness in critical analysis.
D = Essay demonstrates a poor understanding of the assignment, but meets the rubrics of a minimally acceptable effort; or/and contains unjustifiable errors and many textual infelicities.
F = Essay lacks the minimum acceptable effort; does not respond to the assigned question, and/or is plagiarized.
REQUIREMENTS:
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Students must attend and actively participate in the weekly discussions. The participation will be assessed based on the demonstration that the student completes the assigned readings, the degree of verbal articulation and interpretation of the readings, and general classroom engagement during the weekly meetings. The graded activities for undergraduate students are in four parts:

1. **Upload an essay you had written in a previous AFRS class (preferably 1100 but any Africana Studies-related course is acceptable). Write a 300-500-word essay** on what you think you might learn in AFRS 4010; and how your previous classes, background, and experience prepared you for this class. 3%

2. **Attendance and Active Class Participation 15%.**

3. **Online Discussion and Posting 12%.**

2-3. The course is designed for active learning. Class attendance is mandatory but it is not enough. Students must be prepared to discuss the readings, and the instructor may administer quiz during the class meeting or online. The points for attendance and class participation will be determined by punctuality, classroom engagement, and quizzes. The goal is to keep students focused on the weekly topics and to help students improve the learning and retention of the course materials. In order to be successful in these exercises, students are required to read the weekly course materials before coming to class or participating in online discussions.

Every student must log-in at least once between Sunday and Wednesday of the week, and participate in online discussion that is of relevance to the week’s topic. The instructor will join the discussion at 5:00pm on Mondays and at other times.

4. **Assignments: Discussion Essays (ONLY ONLINE SUBMISSION IS ACCEPTABLE). 60%**

   Each student must submit SIX discussion essays that respond to six (out of 11) of the weekly questions in the syllabus. (750 words per essay). With revisions and editing, you may add these essays to your career portfolio.

5. **Final Paper (ONLINE). 10%**

   Write a reflective essay on what you have learnt in this class and how you might use this knowledge in the future. In your essay, pay attention to the themes, theoretical positions, and topics covered, and relate these to your future goals (job, travel, personal development, current affairs, solving global problems, etc.). 1,500 WORDS.

6. **Optional.** Attend the Sixth Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey Distinguished Africana Lecture in October (date and time TBD). Venue TBD. Write a 3-page reaction paper on the subject of the lecture, TBD. For more details, visit [http://africana.uncc.edu/](http://africana.uncc.edu/) (5 points)
SCHEDULE OF LECTURES

Week 1 – IN CLASS
August 18
INTRODUCTION
• Course Information and Review of the Syllabus, Expectations, etc.
• What is Diaspora? Why is the concept important in an Africana Studies curriculum?

Write a 500-word essay on what you think you might learn in this course; how your previous classes, background, and experience prepared you for this class. 5%. Due August 21.

WEEK 2 – ONLINE
August 25
CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS OF “DIASPORA” AND “TRANSNATIONALISM”
REQUIRED

GRADUATE PRESENTATION

Discussion Question: Discuss the 1) characteristics of (a) Diaspora and (b) Transnationalism; and 2) the similarities and differences between the two. (750 words, 10 POINTS). Due August 29

WEEK 3
September 3
Labor Day – University Closed
NO CLASS

WEEK 4 – IN CLASS
September 10
ORIGINS OF CAPITALISM

REQUIRED

GRADUATE PRESENTATION

Discussion Question: What is Capitalism? Why is it important? (For class discussion only, not for submission)

Week 5 – ONLINE
September 17
CONCEPTUALIZING THE MODERN AFRICAN DIASPORA: SLAVERY, CAPITALISM, AND COLONIALISM

REQUIRED


**Discussion Question:** Discuss the impacts of capitalism, slavery, and colonialism on the creation of the modern African Diaspora. (750 words, 10 POINTS) – Due September 19

**Week 6 – IN CLASS**
**September 22**
**CITIZENSHIP AND IDENTITY: AFRICANISM, DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS, HYBRIDITY**
REQUIRED

**GRADUATE PRESENTATION**

**Discussion Question:** Use the concepts of Hybridity to analyze the meanings of DuBois’ idea of Double Consciousness in “Soul of Black Folk”. (750 words, 10 POINTS) – Due September 26

**WEEK 7 – ONLINE**
**September 29**
**MULTICULTURALISM, DIVERSITY, AND MIGRATION**
REQUIRED READING:

**Discussion Question:** Provide an appraisal of how two of these varieties of multiculturalism (assimilationism, cosmopolitanism, interactive pluralism, and fragmented pluralism) in North Carolina are being affected by one of these social variables in the state: social and demographic, income and poverty, and language and education. (Pay attention to the conditions/patterns of immigration as well as the cultural, racial and ethnic composition of the immigrants in the state. Feel free to also draw from your experience in the workplace, school, home, business center, or a social gathering that you attend, e.g., church) (750 words, 10 POINTS) – Due October 3

**WEEK 8**
**October 6**
**STUDENT RECESS – NO CLASS**

**WEEK 9 – IN CLASS**
**October 13**
**RACE/RACIALIZATION/RACISM: THE CONCEPT AND ORIGIN OF A PROBLEM**
REQUIRED
3. The American Anthropological Association (AAA)’s statement on “race”
http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/racepp.htm

GRADUATE PRESENTATION

Discussion Question: Argue for or against the idea that Racial Thoughts and the Construction of White/Black as racial categories were products of the global economic exploitation of Africa-descended populations. (750 words; 10 POINTS). DUE October 17.

WEEK 10 - ONLINE
October 20
AFRICANS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN WORLD: A LONGUE DUREE PERSPECTIVE
REQUIRED:

Discussion Question: TBD (750 words, 10 POINTS). Due October 24.

WEEK 11 – IN CLASS
October 27
POSTCOLONIALITY AND CRISIS OF CONSCIOUSNESS
REQUIRED:

GRADUATE PRESENTATION:

Discussion Question: Discuss the possibilities and limitations of Ogundiran’s Pedagogy of Renewal as a solution to the crisis of consciousness in postcolonial Africa and African Diaspora. (750 words; 10 POINTS). DUE October 31

WEEK 12 - ONLINE
November 3
PAN-AFRICANISM AS A THEORY OF BLACK TRANSNATIONALISM
REQUIRED
Discussion Question: What are the political goals and accomplishments of Pan-Africanism? (750 words; 10 POINTS). DUE NOVEMBER 7.

WEEK 13 – IN CLASS
November 10
NEO-GLOBAL CAPITALISM, NEO-PANAFRICANISM, TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS AND DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES
REQUIRED

GRADUATE PRESENTATION:

Discussion Question: Critically comment on the relevance of Pan-Africanism, Black Nationalism, and Black Transnationalism as frameworks for economic development plans in the Africana World, especially considering the neo-global capitalism of this time. (750 words; 10 POINTS). DUE NOVEMBER 14.

WEEK 14
November 17 - ONLINE
RASTAFARIANISM AS A THEORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF LIBERATION
REQUIRED

ADITIONAL READING FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS:

Discussion Question: Discuss the contributions of Rastafarianism to the critique of the post-colonial nation state, capitalism, and the denial of African humanity. (750 words; 10 POINTS). DUE NOVEMBER 21

WEEK 15 – IN CLASS
November 24
HIP HOP AND RAP AS A THEORY OF ENGAGEMENT OR DISENGAGEMENT?
REQUIRED

GRADUATE PRESENTATION:

**Discussion Question:** What are the strengths and limitations of Hip Hop and Rap as a discourse for social change and social justice? (750 words; 10 POINTS). DUE NOVEMBER 26.

**WEEK 16 – ONLINE**  
**DECEMBER 1**  
**SUMMING-UP AND REVIEW OF THE CLASS**

**WEEK 17 – ONLINE**  
**DECEMBER 8**  
**FINAL ESSAY**

Write a reflective essay on what you have learnt in this class and how you might use this knowledge in the future. In your essay, pay attention to the themes, theoretical positions, and topics covered, and relate these to your discoveries (new knowledge) future goals (career, graduate education, personal development, activism, community development, problem solving, etc.). 1,500 WORDS (Undergraduate); 2,500 WORDS (Graduate).

*EX POST FACTO SUBMISSION OF THE WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. REQUESTS FOR INCOMPLETE AND LATE SUBMISSION OF PAPERS/ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE GRANTED BY THE INSTRUCTOR EXCEPT IN CASES OF DOCUMENTED EMERGENCY.*