AFRS 6610: AFRICAN DIASPORA THEORY

FALL 2012
CLASSROOM: FRIDAY 132
Monday 5:00-7:45pm

Instructor: Dr. Akin Ogundiran
Africana Studies Department
Office: Garinger 113
Phone: 704-687-2355
E-Mail: ogundiran@uncc.edu
Office Hours: Mon. 2:00-3:00pm; Tues. 4:00-5:00pm; Wed. 2:00-3:00 pm, and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The course focuses on the diverse conceptual and theoretical perspectives in Diaspora and Transnational studies, with emphasis on the dialectical relationships between social theories of nation, state, ethnicity, identity, race, and culture on one hand and the emerging theorizing of the diaspora and transnational networks on the other. Using the African diasporic formations and transnational African subjectivities as case study, the course will introduce students to Africana-centered theoretical frameworks in the humanities and the social sciences as these may relate to migration, identity, race, and multiculturalism, in the global settings. The historical contexts that have defined the African Diaspora and the more recent global transnational networks will be emphasized throughout the course.

This is a core class for the Graduate Certificate in Africana Studies. It is also open to students interested in African and African Diaspora studies; race, migration, transnational, and identity issues in other disciplines.

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 oral and 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 related to identity, 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.

REQUIREMENTS:
1. Attendance and Active Class Participation. 20%
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.

2. Class Quizzes and Short In-Class Concept Essays 30%
This is a student participatory class. Every student must be prepared to take quiz every week based on the assigned readings, lectures, and class discussions. 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 and to pay attention during lectures, presentations, and discussions.

3. Lead Presentation. 10%
Each student will serve as lead discussant at least once during the semester to present the major ideas and debates in the weekly assigned readings. Students will sign up for one of the weekly topics during the first week of class. Otherwise, the instructor will randomly assign students to the weekly schedule. The lead discussant must prepare handout for the whole class and use audiovisual equipment when making presentation. The presentation (oral and handout) will be assessed based on organization, clarity, accuracy, and professionalism.

4. America I Am Exhibition Project. 10%
at the Harvey B. Gantt Center for American Art and Culture
this week write a five-page paper on this question: To What Extent is the Concept of “Diaspora” Relevant to the African American Experience in the U.S.? (Use materials from the exhibition to illustrate your argument). Due October 1.

5. FINAL PAPER 30%
Each student will write a fifteen-page publishable review essay on a topic that focuses on diaspora and/or transnationalism concept(s). The goal is for the student to demonstrate mastery of the evolution of ideas on the selected topic or question. Hence, this must be an interpretative essay. An abstract (200-300 words) that includes the title and purpose of the proposed paper must be submitted for the review and approval of the instructor not later than October 1.

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.

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 7:45pm 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. One 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 messaging is prohibited during class time.

REQUESTS FOR INCOMPLETE AND LATE PAPERS/ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE GRANTED BY THE INSTRUCTOR EXCEPT IN CASES OF DOCUMENTED EMERGENCIES.
SCHEDULE OF LECTURES

Week 1
August 20
1. INTRODUCTION
Course Information and Review of the Syllabus, Expectations, etc.

WEEK 2
August 27
CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS OF “DIASPORA” AND “TRANSNATIONALISM”
REQUIRED
2. Roger Waldinger and David Fitzgerald, “Transnationalism in Question,” AJS Volume 109 Number 5

GRADUATE PRESENTATION
Luis Eduardo Guarnizo and Michael Peter Smith, “The Locations of Transnationalism”, In M. P. Smith
pp. 3-31.

Question: Discuss the 1) characteristics of (a) Diaspora and (b) Transnationalism; and 2) the similarities
and differences between the two.

WEEK 3
September 3
Labor Day – University Closed
NO CLASS

WEEK 4
September 10
CONCEPTUALIZING THE MODERN AFRICAN DIASPORA: CAPITALISM, SLAVERY,
COLONIALISM, AND POSTCOLONIALITY
REQUIRED
Tiffany R. Patterson and Robin Kelley, "Unfinished Migrations: Reflections on the African Diaspora and

GRADUATE PRESENTATION

Question: Discuss the impacts of capitalism, slavery, and colonialism on the creation of the modern
African Diaspora.

Week 5
September 17
CITIZENSHIP AND IDENTITY: DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS, HYBRIDITY,
MULTICULTURALISM, POST-RACIAL AND NOTHINGNESS
REQUIRED

**GRADUATE PRESENTATION**


*Question: Use the concepts of Hybirit and Multiculturalism to analyze the meanings of DuBois’ Double Consciousness and Herskovits’ Africanism.*

**Week 6**

**September 24**

**OFF-CAMPUS PROJECT**

Visit the “America I Am” Exhibition at the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African American Arts and Culture between September 18 and 30. For Office Hours: www.ganttcenter.org/ ($10.00 admission fees with student ID) 551 South Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC.

Write a five-page paper on this question: To What Extent is the Concept of Diaspora Relevant to the African American Experience in the U.S.? (Use materials from the exhibition to illustrate your argument). Due October 1.

**WEEK 7**

**October 1**

**RACE/RACIALIZATION/RACISM: THE CONCEPT AND ORIGIN OF A PROBLEM**

**REQUIRED**

2. The American Anthropological Association (AAA)’s statement on “race”
   http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/racepp.htm

**GRADUATE PRESENTATION**


*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.*

**WEEK 8**

**October 8**

**STUDENT RECESS – NO CLASS**

**WEEK 9**

**October 15**

**POSTCOLONIALITY AND CULTURE IN AFRICA**

**REQUIRED:**


**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.

WEEK 10
October 22
SPECIAL EVENT
“All Politics is Local”: Perspectives on Community Engagement and Citizen Empowerment in Africa and the African Diaspora: A Symposium in Honor of Professor Oladimeji Aborisade at 80 Student Union Bldg.
REQUIRED:
http://africana.uncc.edu/sites/africana.uncc.edu/files/media/Aborisade_at_80.pdf

WEEK 11
October 29
PAN-AFRICANISM AS A THEORY OF BLACK TRANSNATIONALISM
REQUIRED
2. PAN-AFRICAN THOUGHT AND PRACTICE

GRADUATE PRESENTATION:

**Question:** What are the political goals and accomplishments of Pan-Africanism?

WEEK 12
November 5
RASTAFARIANISM AS A THEORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF LIBERATION

REQUIRED

GRADUATE PRESENTATION

**Question:** Discuss the contributions of Rastafarianism to the critique of the post-colonial nation state, capitalism, and the denial of African humanity.

WEEK 13
November 12
HIP HOP AND RAP AS A POST-MODERN POLITICAL THEORY?: BLACK NATIONALISM, CONSCIOUSNESS, AND CONSUMERISM
REQUIRED

Question: What are the strengths and limitations of Hip Hop and Rap as a discourse for social change and social justice?

WEEK 14
November 19
GLOBALIZATION AND NEW AFRICAN/CARIBBEAN MIGRATIONS
REQUIRED

Question: Identity and discuss the characteristics of post-colonial African and Caribbean migrations.

WEEK 15
November 26
NEO-GLOBAL CAPITALISM, NEO-PANAFRICANISM, TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS AND DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES
REQUIRED

GRADUATE PRESENTATION:
Paul G. Adogamhe, PAN-AFRICANISM Revisited: Vision and Reality of African Unity and Development

Question: Critically comment on the relevance of Pan-Africanism framework for economic development of the African World especially in the face of neo-global capitalism new transnational networks.

WEEK 16
DECEMBER 3
SUM-UP AND REVIEW OF THE CLASS

WEEK 17
DECEMBER 7
FINAL PAPER IS DUE IN INSTRUCTOR’S OFFICE BY 12:00 PM.