AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES (AFAM)

AFAM 501: Seminar in African American Studies
3 Credits
A survey of the academic field of African American Studies.

AFAM 502: Blacks and African Diaspora
3 Credits
Seminar in the theory and history of Blacks in the African Diaspora.

AFAM 503: Sexual and Gender Politics in the African Diaspora
3 Credits
A seminar in the theory and history of sexual and gender politics in the Black Diaspora from the Colonial Era forward.

Prerequisite: AF AM 501

AFAM 553: Comparative Racial and Ethnic Politics
3 Credits
Since its founding, the United States has had to balance the American creed of equality for all, on one hand, with racial inequality, on the other hand. Is this challenge something exclusive to the United States? This course will provide students the opportunity to analyze how race and ethnicity are constructed across the globe as well as how race and politics interact across state borders. Students will examine how race is constructed and racial ideologies are developed in several countries including the U.S., South Africa, France, Australia and Brazil. By the end of the semester, students should be able to fully engage and contribute to broad literatures on the politics and policy of race and racism. They should readily be able to answer questions such as: What role do countries and their institutions play in developing racial ideologies and racial hierarchies? What political purpose do ideologies such as "racial democracy" serve? How might social scientists best compare notions such as U.S.'s "race problem," Latin America's "shade problem" and Europe's "immigrant problem"? What are the perils of cross-border comparisons, and how, if possible, can social scientists account for state differences in their analyses? The major objectives of the course are to: (1) analyze the effects of historical, social, economic, cultural and global forces on the development of racial and ethnic politics in various countries; (2) define and critically analyze concepts relevant to the study of racial and ethnic politics; (3) identify, critique and apply major academic theories and debates regarding issues of race, ethnicity, inequality and reconciliation; (4) build analytical skills so that students will be able to effectively engage and communicate in public and scholarly discourse about race and ethnic politics; (5) improve writing skills, especially as they relate to manuscript and book reviews; (6) become cognizant of the difficulties that scholars must navigate as they approach topics related to the politics, race, ethnicity as well as comparative/cross-state analysis; and (7) develop a series of best practices to address methodological and theoretical challenges to studying race comparatively.

Cross-listed with: PLSC 553, PPOL 553

AFAM 596: Individual Studies
1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9
Creative projects, including nonthesis research, that are supervised on an individual basis and which fall outside the scope of formal courses.

AFAM 597: Special Topics
1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9
Formal courses given on a topical or special interest subject which may be offered infrequently.