

BLACK STUDIES (BLST)

Black Studies Undergraduate Courses

BLST 1000 INTRODUCTION TO BLACK STUDIES (3 credits)

BLST 1000 provides students with an overview of African culture and history and the black Diaspora. A key component of this course is to interrogate the meanings and dimensions of slavery and colonialism, and their continuing political, social and cultural implications. Approaches essentially include historical examination of African and African American societies and cultures from pre-colonial and slavery periods to the present.

Distribution: Social Science General Education course and U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 1050 CLASSICAL AFRICAN CIVILIZATIONS (3 credits)

Classical African Civilization is an introductory survey of the civilizations of Africa and African people prior to 1500 C.E., with emphasis on the evolution of the peoples and nations, their civilizations, and the rise and fall of indigenous states. In particular, this course will cover the classical civilizations of Kemet (Ancient Egypt), Nubia, Axum, Carthage, Ghana, Mali, and Songhay. (Cross-listed with HIST 1050)

Distribution: Global Diversity General Education course

BLST 1950 BLACK WOMEN IN AMERICA (3 credits)

This course will examine how Black women in America have evolved politically, economically, and socially under oppressive conditions of slavery, the Reconstruction Era, Jim Crow, and through the Civil Rights, Black Lives Matter, and "Me Too" Movements. The underlying themes of this course are the impact of gender and race on Black women, with an emphasis of how gender and race are fueled by white supremacy, patriarchy, colonialism, capitalism, and imperialism. (Cross-listed with WGST 1950)

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 2100 EXPERIENCES IN BLACK STUDIES (3 credits)

Experiences in Black Studies is an undergraduate course that provides students with foundational knowledge and key concepts of the study of African populations throughout time and across space. Students will critically examine and discuss historical, geographical, cultural, social, psychological, legal, political, and economic conditions that influence and impact Black populations and shape the interdisciplinary dimensions of Black Studies.

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 2120 HISTORY OF MODERN AFRICA (3 credits)

This course covers the era of the beginning, development and decline of European colonialism in Africa. The movement for decolonization, the emergence of independent sovereign nations and the strategic role that Africa plays in the forum of industrialized and developed nations is investigated. It examines the impact of European cultures and forced labor on traditional Africa, and the struggle for a resolution of the conflict between the three major traditions on the continent - Western and Indigenous. Religious indigenous practices are also considered, along with Christian and Islamic cultures. (Cross-listed with HIST 2920).

BLST 2130 AFRICAN POLITICS (3 credits)

African Politics examines the socio-cultural and economic environments which characterize political life in contemporary Africa. This course examines contemporary African politics and government in post-independence Africa, and the pre-colonial political and economic systems which influence contemporary African politics. The course assesses the various approaches used to study the political development of the African continent; examines the processes, features, and institutions of the African states; addresses key and persistent issues about African politics; and examines dimensions of social change and political reform. (Cross-listed with PSCI 2130).

Distribution: Global Diversity General Education course

BLST 2240 READINGS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WRITERS (3 credits)

Readings of African American Writers will cover an anthology of writings by African American authors from poetry to novels. This course seeks to improve students' abilities to read critically, to write analytically, and to substantially increase student knowledge of Black literary traditions and authors. Students taking this course will examine more than two centuries of writings by Black authors, from the colonial era to contemporary times, and will learn about the African experience in America through literature.

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 1150 or permission of Instructor

BLST 2260 BLACK SHORT STORY (3 credits)

A study of short stories written by black American authors as literature and as experience. The course explains and defines cultural terms and practices, and attempts to prepare students for multicultural living. (Cross-listed with ENGL 2260.)

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 1150, ENGL 1154, or permission of instructor.

Distribution: Humanities and Fine Arts General Education course and U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 2350 AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE 1746-1939 (3 credits)

This course traces the development of black literature from 1746 to 1939. Included will be a study of multiple genres including: poetry, short story, novel, drama, and nonfiction. Trends to be studied will include early black writers, neoclassic and romantic traditions, and the Harlem Renaissance and Depression era schools of thought. (Cross-listed with ENGL 2350).

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 1160 or permission.

BLST 2360 AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE 1940-PRESENT (3 credits)

This course traces the development of the literary contribution that black Americans have made from 1940 to the present. The course will study multiple genres including: poetry, short story, novel, drama, and nonfiction. Trends to be studied include an evolution in resistance in writing, a movement toward literary assimilation in the 1940s-1950s, and the subsequent movement toward "Black Arts" from the 1960s to the present. (Cross-listed with ENGL 2360).

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 1160 or instructor permission

BLST 2410 AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY I: 1619-1865 (3 credits)

The course examines the history of the earliest Africans in the Americas and briefly examines traditional African societies. It covers the transatlantic slave trade and its effects on Europe, Africa and the Americas, and analyzes the development of Afro-American culture and the struggle for freedom. (Cross-listed with HIST 2040)

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course and Humanities and Fine Arts General Education course

BLST 2420 AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY II: 1865-1954 (3 credits)

A survey of Afro-American history from the Civil War to the present. Covers Reconstruction and its overthrow, including the new methods of control which replaced slavery. Discusses the development of black ideologies and institutions. Traces urban migration and its impact on black society and culture. Follows black progress through World War II, the 1954 Supreme Court Decision, and rising militancy. (Cross-listed with HIST 2050)

Distribution: Humanities and Fine Arts General Education course and U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 2430 AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY III: 1954-PRESENT DAY (3 credits)

This course is divided into three main parts: the Civil Rights Phase (1954-1963), during which the dominant mood was optimism over the possibilities of integration; the Black Power Phase (1963-1974), and the Pragmatist Phase (1972-present), characterized by attempts to preserve and maintain gains already won. (Cross-listed with HIST 2060)

Distribution: Humanities and Fine Arts General Education course and U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 2510 MUSIC AND THE BLACK EXPERIENCE (3 credits)

Music and the Black Experience will provide students with historical and cultural knowledge of African Americans in the American music entertainment industry; the cultural influences of West African music traditions in African American music; and the American socio-political experiences that influenced music genres unique to Black people. Students will explore how West African music traditions survived and evolved through American slavery, reconstruction, the Civil Rights era, and into the 21st century; and how Black musical artists challenged racial discrimination in the music industry to create distinct music genres culturally unique to Black people. Overall, students taking this course will gain an understanding of the cultural role of music throughout the Black experience in America, and an appreciation for African American musical artists and composers who influenced all popular American music genres, from Spirituals to Broadway. (Cross-listed with MUS 2510).

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course and Humanities and Fine Arts General Education course

BLST 2520 HIP HOP MUSIC & AFRICAN AMERICAN URBAN CULTURE (3 credits)

Hip-Hop Music and African American Urban Culture will provide students with a survey of the relationship between African Americans, music, and pop culture. In this course, students will discuss the historical role of African American musicians from the early 1900s that directly influenced contemporary Rap & Hip Hop genres; they will explore the politics of Rap and the links between incarceration and Hip Hop culture; and they will gain an overall understanding of the influence of African American culture on Rap and all other American music genres.

BLST 2540 INTRODUCTION TO EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHS (3 credits)

Introduction to Egyptian Hieroglyphics will provide students with fundamental elements of Kemetic (ancient Egyptian) grammar, vocabulary, transliteration, and translation. Egyptian hieroglyphs, classically referred to as the "medu netcher," is the oldest written language on the African continent. Students will embark on an examination of primary texts which reveal important features of classical Egyptian culture and civilization. By studying this ancient African language, students will gain historical knowledge of the ancient cultures of Kemet and other classical Nile Valley civilizations. (Cross-listed with HIST 2540).

BLST 2550 AFRICAN AMERICAN ECONOMICS AND CONSUMERISM (3 credits)

This course traces the evolution of African American business and economic development systems in the U.S. and will examine historical economic and political influences which impact African American business communities. Students will be exposed to various aspects of African American business and economics, including Black entrepreneurship and Black owned businesses before, during, and after slavery; an analysis of the role of Black churches in African-American communities; and the impact of modern economic and political systems on African American business communities. (Cross-listed with ENTR 2550).

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 2700 AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY (3 credits)

This course explores ancient, traditional and contemporary philosophical/theological concepts and doctrines of Africans through an investigation of their cosmological, metaphysical, ontological and ethical world views.

BLST 2730 THE BLACK SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE (3 credits)

The Black Spiritual Experience course examines the trajectory of early African religions and philosophies, and their syncretization with European settler religions in America that have been practiced and embraced by Blacks in the U.S. since slavery. Students will survey the historical development of the Black church in America, and the emergence of liberation and Black theologies to combat white supremacy, oppression, and exploitation. This course will explore the cultural importance of music, dance, and art in worship and Black spiritual expressions; the role of religion and theology in empowering and uplifting African Americans, particularly during the Black Power and Civil Rights movements; the political impact of Black religious institutions in the long fight against systemic racism, racial violence, police brutality, and voter suppression in America; and the challenges of inclusion, equity, and intersectionality within the Black church around issues of gender, class, and sexual orientation. (Cross-listed with RELI 2730).

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 3030 GEOGRAPHY OF AFRICA (3 credits)

This course is about the human geography of Africa. It offers an overview of the geography, economics, politics, history, oral and written literature, art, anthropology and sociology of the African continent, with particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa. The course attempts to dispel myths and stereotypes about the African continent and facilitates an understanding of the dynamics that shaped and continue to shape African systems and people. Students taking Geography of Africa will engage in a comprehensive and systematic survey of the environments, natural resources, populations, their cultures, and histories of the geographic regions of Africa and their development. (Cross-listed with GEOG 3030).

Prerequisite(s): Junior Standing or Instructor Permission

BLST 3120 THE AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN POLITICS (3 credits)

This course will provide a historical and contemporary survey of the African American political experience in the United States, from the passage of the 15th Amendment in the late 1800s, to the 1965 Voting Rights Act, and continuing into the 21st century. Students will examine the evolution of the Black political experience, with emphasis on the fight against enslavement, segregation, lynchings and mass incarceration, and the long struggle of African Americans against institutional and structural racism in the American political system. (Cross-listed with PSCI 3120).

Prerequisite(s): BLST 1000

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 3250 RACE, PSYCHOLOGY & CULTURAL DIFFERENCE (3 credits)

Race, Psychology & Cultural Difference is an introductory course that teaches students the psychology behind prejudice, stereotyping, and implicit bias when encountering racial and cultural difference, with particular focus on African Americans. In this course, students will explore concepts of racial and cultural difference, examine fundamental psychological concepts relative to racial and cultural prejudice and stigmas, and discuss cognitive processes of categorization and stereotyping that shape perceptions of racial and cultural difference. Overall, students will explore a conceptual framework for understanding race, psychology, and cultural difference and will learn psychological well-being strategies and approaches for mindfulness, self-regulation, and self-affirmation as challenges to racial and cultural prejudice, stereotyping, and implicit bias. (Cross-listed with PSYC 3250).

Prerequisite(s): Sophomore standing or permission of instructor

BLST 3410 LAW AND THE BLACK COMMUNITY (3 credits)

Law and the Black Community provides an in-depth examination of the racialized American legal process as it pertains to and affects African Americans in the U.S. From the formation of the U.S. Constitution to present day, this course analyzes intersections of race, law, politics and culture, and explores the administration of justice and Black experiences through a critical legal perspective. (Cross-listed with CRCJ 3410, PSCI 3410).

Prerequisite(s): BLST 1000 OR CRCJ 1010 OR Junior standing OR instructor permission.

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 3450 AFRICAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (3 credits)

African Economic Development critically examines historical, political, and socioeconomic forces that have shaped African economies. Students taking this course will learn about the evolution of the modern economic systems, methods of production, distribution and exchange which affect African economies. The course examines the historical impact of colonialism, capitalism, and imperialism on the displacement of ancient trade routes and markets throughout the African continent; the historical impact of these foreign colonial states and tools on the development of contemporary African private sectors, economic institutions, and global competition; and contemporary strategies of economic development, regional cooperation, and international trade, particularly as they affect Sub-Saharan Africa. (Cross-listed with PSCI 3450).

Prerequisite(s): junior standing or permission of instructor

BLST 3510 CULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN AFRICAN-AMERICAN CINEMA (3 credits)

This course examines ways in which cultural identity is communicated through African-American cinema, defined as movies with predominantly African American filmmakers, producers, and/or actors. Cultural communication is integrated with historical, political, and social motivation for African-American cinema. (Cross-listed with JMC 3510)

Prerequisite(s): Not open to non-degree graduate students.

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 3990 COMMUNITY STUDY PROJECT (3 credits)

The Community Study Project course is designed to teach interdisciplinary students to synthesize, apply, and integrate Black Studies research methods and tools with compatible disciplines and research areas to develop local, community-based research projects. Students taking this course will learn to identify and assess a local community's needs and assets; to collect, analyze, and present data about that community that is both participatory and inclusive of the community; and to identify strengths, limitations, and challenges when conducting research in local, urban communities. Research projects may be individual or in groups and may involve public or private community service organizations.

Prerequisite(s): Junior or senior standing or permission of instructor.

BLST 4030 AFRICANA RELIGIONS (3 credits)

An introduction to religions in Africa and the diaspora, including African Traditional Religions, Christianity, Islam, and Afro-Caribbean religious traditions, using anthropological, historical, and other academic approaches to the study of religious and spiritual traditions. In particular, students will learn about the role of spirits, ancestors, witches, and other invisible agents in ideas and practices regarding health and healing. Finally, the class will examine the complex inter-relationships between religious ideas and practices and contemporary post-colonial political-economic realities, including the consequences of genocide and other human rights violations and the role of religious communities in social and economic development. (Cross-listed with RELI 8036, RELI 4030, BLST 8036).

BLST 4120 BLACK WOMEN LEADERS IN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS (3 credits)

This course studies scholarship on race, gender, and leadership with a specific focus on African and African descended women's roles in liberation movements in the U.S. and worldwide. Especial focus will be on the use of their personal narratives to analyze the wide range of ideas in the conception and execution of leadership. (Cross-listed with WGST 4120, BLST 8126).

Prerequisite(s): Junior standing or permission of instructor.

BLST 4150 AFRICAN AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGY (3 credits)

African American Psychology traces the psychological history of Africans and African Americans from self-attributes and identity, through race and racism, to cognition, learning, and language. This course will review concepts relevant to understanding the psychology of African Americans, methodological and research issues, and best practices. (Cross-listed with BLST 8156, PSYC 4150, PSYC 8156).

Prerequisite(s): BLST 1000 and Junior standing or Instructor permission

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 4210 THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE (3 credits)

"The Harlem Renaissance" was the name given to the explosion in cultural, artistic, and social awareness that occurred primarily in Harlem, an area of New York City, between the end of World War I and the middle of the 1930s. This course will familiarize students with the general characteristics of African American literature produced during this period and its relation to African American literature and American literature writ large. The selected texts and writers will provide particular insight into the historical experiences of African Americans in the U.S. primarily between the two world wars and inform the subsequent cultural production of African Americans in later years. (Cross-listed with ENGL 8216, ENGL 4210, BLST 8216).

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 1150 or ENGL 1160, ENGL 2410 recommended

BLST 4220 PAN AFRICANISM & BLACK LIBERATION (3 credits)

The Pan-Africanism and Black Liberation course will expose students to the historical origins and development of Pan-Africanism, and the connection to global Black liberation movements. In this course, students will learn about the origin of Pan-Africanism, including major Pan-African leaders and historical events; the definitions of Pan-Africanism, Black Nationalism, Ethiopianism, and Negritude; and the commonalities and linkages between African continental and diasporic Pan-African liberation movements. Students will critically examine the differences between Pan-Africanism as an ideological, political, and cultural movement, and will explore the evolution of Pan-African ideology and philosophy in the 21st century. (Cross-listed with BLST 8226)

Prerequisite(s): Junior or senior standing or permission of instructor

BLST 4260 WOMEN OF COLOR WRITERS (3 credits)

Women of Color Writers is designed to introduce students to the multicultural, literary experience and contributions of women of color writers. The course will elucidate the multi-ethnic and feminist/womanist perspectives reflected in literary works by examining the themes, motifs and idioms used to portray woman. The course examines critically the implications and conceptual grounds of literary study which have been based almost entirely on male literary experiences. (Cross-listed with BLST 8266)

Prerequisite(s): Black studies major or permission of instructor.

BLST 4350 THE BLACK ATLANTIC (3 credits)

This course examines the cultural and ethnic history of Black people who comprised "The Black Atlantic." The course is organized historically and begins with a brief overview of the European slave trade on the West African Coast in the 15th century. From there, we look critically at the arrival of Africans to the New World, examine varieties of slavery and freedom in the Americas, and conclude with slave revolts and emancipation activism in the 18th and 19th century. We will use the Haitian Revolution (in which Haiti became the first country to be founded by formerly enslaved people) as a special case study, a conduit for our exploration of this socio-cultural, economic, and Diasporic space. (Cross-listed with BLST 8356, HIST 4080, HIST 8086).

Prerequisite(s): Junior or senior standing or permission of instructor

BLST 4470 SOUTH AFRICA & THE SOCIO POLITICS OF APARTHEID (3 credits)

South Africa and the Socio Politics of Apartheid examines the lived experiences of South African people under the Apartheid system, and their long struggle against European colonial oppression and racial segregation throughout the 20th century. Students will examine the laws, tools, and strategies that developed and sustained Apartheid, and the anti-Apartheid movements and international pressure that led to its repeal and South African democratic elections. (Cross-listed with BLST 8476, PSCI 8476, PSCI 4470, SOC 8476, SOC 4470).

Prerequisite(s): Junior standing or permission of instructor

Distribution: Global Diversity General Education course

BLST 4580 COMMUNICATING RACE, ETHNICITY & IDENTITY (3 credits)

This is an undergraduate/graduate course that provides students with definitional and experiential knowledge about the origin of racial concepts, theories, and practices, definitions of ethnicity and identity, and the communicative relationship between race, ethnicity, and identity. (Cross-listed with BLST 8586, CMST 4580, CMST 8586)

Prerequisite(s): CMST 4530 or Junior standing or instructor permission; minimum cumulative GPA of 2.25.

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 4590 AFRICAN-AMERICAN POPULAR MUSIC FROM BEBOP TO HIP-HOP (3 credits)

This course is intended for music majors who wish to undertake a comprehensive survey of African-American popular music literature from c. 1900-present. The objective will be to provide the student with a broad overview with special attention given to musicians and individual works which typify a style or form. Listening assignments will be an integral part of the course, and attendance at live performances will supplement the lectures, discussions and readings. (Cross-listed with BLST 8596).

BLST 4650 SLAVERY AND RACE RELATIONS IN THE AMERICAS (3 credits)

Slavery and Race Relations in the Americas examines the historical relationship between the trans-Atlantic slave trade and American race relations, connecting the enslavement of Africans in the Americas to race relations in the Caribbean, Latin America, and the United States. (Cross-listed with BLST 8656, HIST 4070, HIST 8076, LLS 4650, LLS 8656).

Prerequisite(s): BLST 1000 and junior standing or permission of instructor

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 4710 BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION (3 credits)

Brown v. Board of Education traces the educational history of African Americans from segregation to desegregation to re-segregation. This course will review the legal cases before and after the Supreme Court's Brown decision, their aftermath, and the effects on educational policies and practices. (Cross-listed with BLST 8716, PSCI 8136, PSCI 4130).

Prerequisite(s): Junior standing OR senior standing or permission of instructor.

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 4750 CRITICAL QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS (3 credits)

This online undergraduate/graduate course is a comprehensive source for foundational concepts in quantitative behavioral research. The course is designed to expose students to the role and importance of critical quantitative research of marginalized and underrepresented groups. Students will examine and gain definitional and empirical knowledge about conducting culturally relevant quantitative research and will learn both the logic behind and procedures for critical quantitative research, including research ethics, correlational and experimental designs, data collection, sampling, analysis, and reporting. (Cross-listed with BLST 8756).

Prerequisite(s): PSYC 3140 or Junior standing or instructor permission.

BLST 4880 BLACK LEADERSHIP IN AMERICA (3 credits)

Designed as a senior and graduate seminar, Black Leadership in America will examine the meaning and attributes of effective leadership strategies of African Americans, particularly as it relates to Black student leaders. The role of Black leadership will be explored using leadership and community theory, and will highlight the impact of Black culture within the broader American experience. (Cross-listed with BLST 8886).

Prerequisite(s): Senior or graduate student or instructor permission.