

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Overview

Housed in the Multicultural Studies program, the African American Studies minor addresses issues surrounding race, class, and gender, focusing on the specific history and obstacles associated with the unique experiences of African Americans in the United States. The coursework draws from many disciplines, including history, sociology, political science, literature, culture, and American studies, providing a broad range of ideas and information.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completing the minor in African and African American Studies, students will be able to:

1. Describe major social, cultural, and political events in the African and African American experience.
2. Explore and analyze the African and African American experience through the lens of different disciplines.
3. Compare and contrast the different experiences of African descent peoples within the United States and across the African diaspora.
4. Identify major figures in African and African American history and understand their impact on global and American society.

Minor Offered

- Minor in African American Studies

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Related Programs:

- Gender and Sexuality Studies (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/gender-sexuality-studies/>)
- History (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/history/>)
- Multicultural Studies (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/multicultural-studies/>)
- Psychology (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/psychology/>)
- Social Work (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/social-work/>)
- Social Justice through Civic Engagement (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/social-justice-civic-engage-minor/>)
- Sociology (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/sociology/>)

Minor Requirements

(18 credits)

Code	Title	Credits
Core Courses (Required):		9
MCS 110	Race, Class and Gender in Contemporary American Society	
MCS 210	Power and Privilege in a Multicultural Society	
HIS 201	African American History	
Select three of the following:		9
AMS 212	Multicultural America	
AMS 227	Martin Luther King Jr's America	
AMS 307	Depictions of Racism in American Literature, Music, and Film	
AMS 313	Black American Thought	
ENG 228	Black American Lit	
ENG 229	Multi-Ethnic Literature in America	
ENG 366	Black and Multi-Ethnic Literature	
MUS 225	Hip Hop and American Culture	
POL 235	Race and Ethnicity in American Politics	
POL 365	Politics of the Developing World	
SOC 207	Racial and Ethnic Relations	
SOC 345	Race and Crime	
Total Credits		18

Courses and Descriptions

MCS 110 Race, Class and Gender in Contemporary American Society 3 Credits

This interdisciplinary course analyzes the ways in which race, class, gender and ethnic relationships shape the experience of all persons in this society. It examines the categories of race, class and gender as social constructs that have been historically developed and sustained by economic, social, political, and cultural factors. Note: This course is cross-listed with GSS 110. Students may only get credit for one course: MCS 110 or GSS 110.

MCS 210 Power and Privilege in a Multicultural Society 3 Credits

This course will examine how the intersection of power and privilege shapes race, gender and class relationships in the United States. Analyses will show how the legal, economic, political and social manifestations of power influence the assignments and distribution of privilege in the United States, both in historical and contemporary contexts. The impositions of power on identity in the social assignment of privilege will be an important component of the course. The two "big questions" to be examined in this course are: How do issues of race, ethnicity, class, age, religion, gender, and sexual orientation interact with privilege? How do the tensions between power, privilege, oppression and inequality lead to movements for social justice? Various interlocking systems of privileges—justice system, educational system, medical system, political system, economic system, etc.—will be examined, using the theoretical frameworks of inequality, oppression and dependency. Prominent public policies and social movements that have challenged the notions of power and privilege, both historically and contemporarily, will be examined: civil rights, women's suffrage, affirmative action, Occupy Wall Street, LGBT rights, Metoo movement, Equal Rights Amendment, Title IX, Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, etc.

HIS 201 African American History 3 Credits

Examines the actions and thought of peoples of African ancestry in the United States. Briefly considers Africa before the Atlantic slave trade, then concentrates on major themes in African-American history—the slave trade, slavery, and the genesis of African American society, emancipation and its consequences, urbanization and industrialization, Black Nationalism, the Civil Rights Movement, and African Americans today. Emphasizes African Americans' dynamic and creative role both in shaping their society and establishing their place in United States society. The on-going struggle for freedom and equality provides thematic continuity for analyzing nearly 400 years of African-American history.

AMS 212 Multicultural America 3 Credits

Focusing primarily on the new century, this course explores the experiences of the remarkably diverse range of ethnic groups who have come to the U.S. in recent years, including Hispanics, Europeans, Asians and Africans. How these groups have impacted the communities where they have settled, how they have interacted with other ethnic groups, and how they have assimilated (or not) and prospered (or not) are among the issues examined and discussed.

AMS 227 Martin Luther King Jr's America 3 Credits

This course studies Martin Luther King Jr's writings, speeches, and sermons, the context of the America he saw in his lifetime, and the implications of his message for today's America and its place in the world. King envisioned a wholly democratic America free of racism, poverty, and military aggression. Students will critically assess the political, economic, and religious thought at the root of his call for change.

AMS 307 Depictions of Racism in American Literature, Music, and Film 3 Credits

Depictions of Racism in American Literature, Music, and Film will study representations of racism in the American arts in historical context. Students will examine artistic representations of practices that disadvantage and disenfranchise non-white Americans, with an eye toward understanding the ways America's history of racist practices has prompted responses from American writers, musicians, and filmmakers.

Prerequisites: CMP 125 or CMP 203 or BHP 150.

AMS 313 Black American Thought 3 Credits

This course introduces students to the critical and constructive nature of Black social and political thought through a survey of Black American leaders, with a focus on ideology, society and politics. Through readings and discussions, students will assess the complexities of various Black leaders and their ideological positions, often comparing and contrasting the attitudes, values and beliefs of Black thought leaders. Through the study of Black American leaders, students will gain an appreciation for the impact of Black history on the past and present of American public life. As we focus our attention on Black leaders of the 19th and 20th century, we will be mindful of the complex ways in which these leaders have agreed and disagreed on themes such as, but not limited to: achievement of Black liberation, direct action versus armed protests, the role of historical memory in modern political life, the economic and political significance of Black culture, and the tensions between Black segregation versus integration, as well as the defining of such core political concepts as citizenship, freedom, equality, progress, power, and justice.

ENG 228 Black American Lit 3 Credits

A survey of writings by black Americans, presented historically from early slave narratives through emancipation, reconstruction, the Harlem Renaissance, and literature from the 1930s to the present. This course counts towards the fulfillment of the Disciplinary Perspectives element of the CLAS general education curriculum.

ENG 229 Multi-Ethnic Literature in America 3 Credits

Surveys the literature of various ethnic groups including African Americans, American Indians, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, Jewish Americans and European Americans. This course counts towards the fulfillment of the Disciplinary Perspectives element of the CLAS general education curriculum.

ENG 366 Black and Multi-Ethnic Literature 3 Credits

A Survey of the literary writings of selected writers of Black and Multi-Ethnic America. Writers may include Zora Neale Hurston, Dorothy West, Maxine Hong Kingston, Anzia Yezierska, Louise Erdrich, Don Lee and Amy Tan.

POL 235 Race and Ethnicity in American Politics 3 Credits

Examines the changing political, economic, and social situation of racial and ethnic groups in American politics since the 1950s. Topics include the relationship between race/ethnicity and voting behavior, political parties, and election results. Includes an analysis of specific areas of contemporary racial and ethnic conflict, such as voting rights, immigration, and affirmative action.

POL 365 Politics of the Developing World 3 Credits

Studies the major political issues of the so-called "developing" world. Particular reference to political systems of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East according to the relevance of the examples to large conceptual issues, and according to the major interests of the instructor. Typical issues include neocolonial dependency, the role of the state in newly developed countries, military rule and democratization.

SOC 207 Racial and Ethnic Relations 3 Credits

Examines the social origins of prejudice and discrimination, and analyzes intergroup trends in conflict, competition, and cooperation. Considers issues of immigration, economic and political power, and ethnic, racial, and religious pluralism.

SOC 345 Race and Crime 3 Credits

Examines the impact of crime policy on minority communities in the United States, with particular attention to the impact of "The War on Drugs", three-strike laws, and mandatory sentencing on minorities and minority communities. Drawing on sociological research, the course explores myths and realities concerning the relationship between race and crime. The relationship between racial attitudes, historical race relations, and mass incarceration are discussed.

Prerequisite(s): SOC 101.