

African American Studies Courses

Fall 2023

AAS 200-001/82871/ Introduction to African American Studies/ MWF 9:00-9:50/HUMHAL 208

Instructor: Dr. M. Maxine Williams

Course Description:

This course will provide students with the foundational knowledge needed to thoughtfully engage with the field of Black/African American Studies as well as chronicle and explore African American history and culture by examining the following topics: African American Studies as a Discipline, Historical Movements, Cultural Practices and Development, the African Diaspora, and Modern Challenges and Issues relative to African American experiences and the field. By covering such topics and a series of theories, methods, and cultural practices and customs, students will be introduced to a comprehensive analysis of lived Black experiences both locally and globally, as well as, encouraged to think critically about the effects of dominant cultural narratives on various readings and understandings of our experiences. This course is organized chronologically, with an emphasis on the ideas of black social thought, political protest, and efforts to initiate social change.

Approved Electives for the AAS Minor:

ENG 457-001 /84301/ Professional&Technical Writing/ MWF 01:00 pm-01:50 pm/ HUMHAL 208/ Mwenja C

ENG 557-001 /84302/ Professional&Technical Writing/ MWF 01:00 pm-01:50 pm/ HUMHAL 208/ Mwenja C

(Cross-listed with PJS 470)

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Technical Communication

This class interrogates whose voices are represented in the field of Technical Communication, whose are left out, and how technical writing can account for a wider array of authors and audience members. Course texts include pieces taken from *Technical Communication Quarterly's* special issue on Black Technical Writing, *Communication Design Quarterly's* special issue on disability in technical communication, and scholar Cana Uluak Itchuaqiyaq's Decolonial Methods in Technical and Professional Communication course.

Using a DEI lens, students in this class examine and create a variety of conventional technical and professional writing texts, including instructions, emails, memos, surveys, reports, and proposals. Students may also produce infographics, public service announcements, bulletins, and a survival guide. Class content includes developing writing processes, attending to ethical considerations, finding and using credible source material, creating texts for specific rhetorical situations, and gathering and reporting data.

Students who successfully complete this course will

- Devise a comprehensive definition of inclusive technical writing
- Define and apply concepts of audience, context, and rhetorical situation while composing technical documents
- Apply principles of visual and textual document design
- Develop texts that meet expectations for various technical and professional document genres
- Complete comprehensive editing and proofreading of technical documents
- Evaluate a variety of ethical issues involved in writing inclusively for professional and technical audiences
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This course fulfills one requirement for the Professional and Technical Writing Minor or one elective for the English Major.

ENG 471-001 /84635/ African-American Literature/ MWF 11:00 am-11:50 am/ HUMHAL 208/ Williams M
ENG 571-001 /84636/ African-American Literature/ MWF 11:00 am-11:50 am/ HUMHAL 208/ Williams M

Soul Food Lit: The Intersections of African American Literature and Foodways

In this course, we will read a variety of African American literature, and through close reading, interpret what food in these literatures reveals and reflects about the dynamism of Black peoples, identity, and culture. We will read novels, short stories, excerpts, and poetry alongside cookbooks, and recipes to consider how the foods and practices of cooking and eating therein locate Black literary, aesthetic, and culinary traditions. Engaging Black feminist literary criticism, African American literary theory, and scholarship on African American foodways, we critically examine the meaning and utility of food in African American literature to question and defend how these foods have been shaped by and reflect African diasporic experiences and culinary histories. Using a chronological approach, we will invest time in the soul (1960-1975) and post-soul (1975-present) eras to define and discuss soul food as an African diasporic cuisine and its significance in African American literature. We will extensively engage and discuss scholarship and artifacts (artwork, music, performance, fashion, etc.) of these eras to understand the contours of their defining and their aesthetic contributions to conceptualize if, how, and through what cultural context the foods present in our texts are soul foods. Using our cultural texts as a frame and food—particularly soul food—as a lens, we will interrogate the intersections of race, gender, class, region, sexuality, and ability and explore constructions of Blackness, selfhood, community, and agency in African American literature.