Course Information. You can begin now to explore fall-term courses through Yale Course Search https://courses.yale.edu/ (YCS), Yale’s online course catalog. It allows you to search for courses by department and keyword, as well as by many other attributes, and to create sample course schedule worksheets. Brief video tutorials for making the best use of YCS are available here: https://registrar.yale.edu/students/yale-course-search-resources. After August 1 for first-year seminars, and after August 7 for other courses, the “Syllabus” button on each course description should link to an expanded course description. This is where you will also find the course meeting times.

First-Year Seminar Program. First-year seminars provide an opportunity for a small group of first-year students to enroll in a discussion-based seminar. In most cases, no previous background in the material is expected. Students may apply to up to five first-year seminars, and admission is determined by lottery. Enrollment is limited to 15 students. While many of the seminars are extremely popular and cannot accommodate the many students who apply, students who are flexible about the subject matter and meeting time can usually find a space in one of them. Students must apply by 5 pm on August 5 and will receive notification of admission by 5 pm on August 7. A link to the application site can be found on the Preference Selection and Preregistration page: https://registrar.yale.edu/students/preference-selection-and-preregistration-applications

To make an appointment with Aimee Cox, Director of Undergraduate Studies, email aimee.cox@yale.edu with the subject line "student meeting request."
Literature of the Black South
AFAM 011/ENGL 007
Sarah Maturin
This first-year seminar will examine the enduring and often unanticipated connections between African American and Southern literature, and will consider the ways in which the American South remains a space that simultaneously represents and repels an African American ethos. Through topics and lenses as varied as the Black church, the Great Migration, the Civil Rights Movement, and the rural/urban divide, we will consider the ways in which Black culture and Southern culture continue to intersect and interact – even when the natal (Southern) place has ostensibly been rejected or abandoned.

South African Writing after Apartheid
AFAM 016(AFST 015/ENGL 015
Stephanie Newell
This first-year seminar is an introduction to creative writing published in South Africa from the end of Apartheid in 1994 to the present. Close readings of contemporary fiction with additional material drawn from popular culture, including films, magazines, and music. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.

Significance of American Slavery
AFAM 060/AMST 060/HIST 016
Edward Rugemer
This first-year seminar explores the significance of racial slavery in the history of the Americas during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. We read the work of historians and consider the role of archival collections in the writing and study of history. Taught from the Beinecke Library with the assistance of curators and librarians, most weeks are organized around an archival collection that sheds light on the history of slavery. Student research and writing will also be grounded in archival research in one of the Yale Libraries. Topics include slavery and slaveholding, the transatlantic slave trade, resistance to slavery, the abolitionist movement, the coming of the American Civil War, the process of emancipation, and post-emancipation experiences.

Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.
Afrofuturism
AFAM 090/AMST 035/ER&M 090/THST 090
Tavia Nyong’o

Black people have long responded to racism and structural inequality by imagining other realities: utopian, dystopian, or just plain surreal. Art, literature, and performance have long been central to these radical exercises in Black speculation. This first-year seminar will introduce classic and contemporary afrofuturist texts, media, and cultural criticism. Particular attention will be paid to science fiction, speculative fiction and fantasy as sites for the intersectional critique and displacement of norms of race, gender, sexuality, and even species. Interested students should write to the instructor to express their interest in the class. Enrollment is limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.

We Interrupt this Program: The Multidimensional Histories of Queer and Trans Politics"
AFAM 115/WGSS 125
Roderick Ferguson

In 1991, the arts organizations Visual AIDS and The Kitchen collaborated with video artist and filmmaker Charles Atlas to produce the live television broadcast "We Interrupt this Program." Part educational presentation, part performance piece, the show was aired in millions of homes across the nation. The program, in The Kitchen’s words, "sought to feature voices that had often been marginalized within many discussions of AIDS, in particular people of color and women."This course builds upon and is inspired by this aspect of Atlas’s visionary presentation, an aspect that used the show to produce a critically multicultural platform that could activate cultural histories and critical traditions from various communities. In effect, the course uses this aspect as a metonym for the racial, gender, sexual, and class heterogeneity of queer art and organizing. It conducts its investigation by looking at a variety of primary materials that illustrate the heterogeneous makeup of queer and trans politics. The course also draws on more recent texts and visual works that arose from the earlier contexts that the primary texts helped to illuminate and shape.
The Long Civil Rights Movement
AFAM 125/AMST 125/EDST 130/HIST 136
Crystal Feimster

Political, social, and artistic aspects of the U.S. civil rights movement from the 1920s through the 1980s explored in the context of other organized efforts for social change. Focus on relations between the African American freedom movement and debates about gender, labor, sexuality, and foreign policy. Changing representations of social movements in twentieth-century American culture; the politics of historical analysis.

The Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery
AFAM 160/AFST 184/AMST 160/HIST 184
Edward Rugemer

This lecture surveys the history of peoples of African descent throughout the Americas, from the first African American societies of the sixteenth century through the century-long process of emancipation.

Black Protest Music & the Black Radical Tradition
AFAM 190/AMST 204
Daphne Brooks

This interdisciplinary lecture course charts the evolution of protest music in America as it was originally designed and bravely imagined and deployed by captive peoples of African descent and as it continues to matter in our present day. The course will emphasize an examination of black radical aesthetics in sound alongside key literary and performance texts that dialectically resonate with the resistant musical innovations of a range of black culture workers from the antebellum era through our current 2020 moment of peril and possibility. This course takes seriously the ways in which sound documents, instigates, and prophetically envisions change in American culture. It explores the history, politics, and cultures of U.S. protest music across three centuries as it was radically shaped by dispossessed peoples who invented their own world-making sonic lexicon in a bid to transform the nation as well as their own very conditions of being.

Throughout the semester, we'll explore, among other things, uniquely subversive vocal strategies, lyrical tropes, and instrumental disturbances that generate social justice critical commentary, philosophies and racial, gender, class, sexual identity, and human rights politics. The course will likewise examine key works of African American literature that explore the radical dimensions of black music in the context of captivity (slave narratives, oratory, sacred radical music), the post-Reconstruction era (classic essays, political tracts and fiction), the Jim Crow era (Harlem Renaissance poetry and theater, the experimental novel), the long Civil Rights and Black Power movements (spoken word, drama, oratory) as well as the landmark protest movements emerging across the 20th and 21st centuries led by black feminist, anti-war, and queer liberation agitators. We’ll round out the term by turning our attention in full to the music, literature, and performances of the Black Lives Matter movement. The course will draw on secondary scholarship in black radical tradition theory, history, sound studies, performance studies, women, gender and sexuality studies, queer theory, critical theory, and visual culture studies. Guest speakers and ancillary campus events (e.g. online performances and public lectures) may figure into class activities as well. Ultimately, “People Get Ready” seeks to examine not only the content and form of protest music but, moreover, the complex ways in which acts of protesting hold the potential to yield alternative knowledges, self-making, and self-affirming practices to not only survive dark times but to make our world anew.
Politics of Black Religion
AFAM 201/RLST 101
Nicole Turner
This course explores black religions as sites of political engagement and as the object of political concern in the context of national formation. In particular, the course explores how Africans kidnapped into the transatlantic slave trade, Africans enslaved in the Americas, and their emancipated descendants used religions to resist dehumanization of enslavement and to foster communities of hope and love. Further, this course explores the complications of forming religious community within the confines of race, slavery, colonialism, and freedom including gender, class, and social conflicts. Finally, the course explores how scholars in various disciplines have created black religions as objects of study. Course materials include biographies, autobiographies, primary accounts of religious life and records of religious organizations. Students come away from the course with an enhanced sense of the complexities of black religious life and the evolution of black religions as central social and political agents in black life and the black freedom struggle. Class discussions and analyses will fill your toolbox with both methodological approaches to primary sources and technical tools for writing.

Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass
AFAM 202/HIST 103J
David Blight
The life, times, and works of Frederick Douglass, African American abolitionist and leader of the nineteenth century. Douglass's writings, including autobiographies, oratory, and editorials, and his role as a historical actor in the antislavery and early civil rights movements. Deep inquiry into the craft of biography.
**Family Narratives/Cultural Shifts**

**AFAM 216/FILM 433**

**Thomas Allen Harris**

This course looks at films that are redefining ideas around family and family narratives in relation to larger social movements. We focus on personal films by filmmakers who consider themselves artists, activists, or agents of change but are united in their use of the nonfiction format to speak truth to power. In different ways, these films use media to build community and build family and ultimately, to build family albums and archives that future generations can use to build their own practices. Just as the family album seeks to unite people across time, space, and difference, the films and texts explored in this course are also journeys that culminate in linkages, helping us understand nuances of identity while illuminating personal relationships to larger cultural, social, and historical movements.

**From The Voting Rights Act to #Blacklivesmatter**

**AFAM 227/AMST 227/ER&M 349/HIST 137J**

**Ferentz Lafargue**

This course explores the period beginning from 1964 through the emergence of the #Blacklivesmatter movement in 2013. Key concepts covered in this course include the Black Panther Party and rise of the Black Power movement; political campaigns of Shirley Chisholm, Jesse Jackson, and Barack Obama. The seminar concludes with an examination of the #Blacklivesmatter movement and broader efforts addressing mass incarceration, poverty, and opportunity gaps in education.

**James Baldwin’s American Scene**

**AFAM 228/AMST 213/ENGL 265/HUMS 241**

**Jacqueline Goldsby**

In this seminar, we will study, discuss, and debate Baldwin’s self-declared role as “witness” to America’s struggle to achieve racial justice. Tracing the trajectories of his fiction’s social concerns alongside his emergence as the pre-eminent essayist on American racial politics and culture since the mid-20th century, we will work as critical biographers of Baldwin’s canon—interrogating the relationship of his life as a Black queer man to the larger social/cultural times in which he lived and wrote; studying how his novels, plays, and essays theorize race and racism, citizenship, and American morality; and contemplating the freedoms that his experiments in literary form offer as new ideals for selfhood, community, and history. Main works we’ll study: *No Name in the Street; The Fire Next Time; Go Tell It on the Mountain; Giovanni’s Room; Blues for Mister Charlie; If Beale Street Could Talk.* Film screenings and digital/online archival research will be key for our coursework.
**Identity, Diversity, and Policy in U.S. Education**

**AFAM 239/AMST 461/EDST 209/ER&M 292/WGSS 202**

**Andrew Dowe, Craig Canfield**

Introduction to critical theory (feminism, queer theory, critical race theory, disability studies, trans studies, indigenous studies) as a fundamental tool for understanding and critiquing identity, diversity and policy in U.S. education. Exploration of identity politics and theory, as they figure in education policy. Methods for applying theory and interventions to interrogate issues in education. Application of theory and interventions to policy creation and reform.

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**Introduction to African American Cinema**

**AFAM 246/FILM 246**

**Nicholas Forster**

This course examines the history of African American cinema from the turn of the twentieth century through the present. In recent years, there has been a growing sense that, after decades of unequal hiring practices, Black filmmakers have carved a space for artistic creation within Hollywood. This feeling was emboldened when Ryan Coogler’s *Black Panther* became the highest grossing film of the 2018, seemingly heralding a new age of Black-authored and Black-focused cinema. This course examines the long history of Black cinema that led to the financial and critical success of filmmakers like Coogler, Ava DuVernay, and Jordan Peele. In this course, we survey the expansive work of Black American cinema and ask: is there such a category as Black film/cinema? If so, is that category based on the director, the actor, the subject matter or ideology of the film? What political, aesthetic, social, and personal value does the category of Black film/cinema offer? Some of the filmmakers include Barry Jenkins, Kathleen Collins, Spike Lee, Julie Dash, Oscar Micheaux, Ava DuVernay, and Charles Burnett.

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**Education and Empire**

**AFAM 259/AMST 309/EDST 255**

**Tanya Zemach-Bersin**

Education and Empire offers an introduction to the transnational history of education in relation to the historical development of U.S. empire both at home and abroad. By bringing together topics often approached separately -- immigration, education, race, colonialism, and the history of U.S. empire -- we will interrogate the ways that education has been mobilized to deploy power: controlling knowledge, categorizing and policing difference, administering unequal paths to citizenship/belonging, forcing assimilation, promoting socio-economic divides, and asserting discipline and control.
**Movements for Black Freedom in the Nineteenth-Century Americas**  
**AFAM 306/HIST 175J**  
**Bianca Dang**  
This seminar examines Black freedom in the Americas both as a lived experience and as an idea that moved throughout the region during the long nineteenth century. This course explores the hemispheric impacts and reverberations of multiple, yet connected, movements for Black freedom in the nineteenth-century Americas. It begins with the Haitian Revolution, a revolution enacted and won by enslaved African and Afro-descended people that fundamentally transformed the hemisphere. It concludes with Black people’s resistance to Jim Crow policies in the post-American Civil War era, emphasizing the enduring strength of Black freedom movements. Organized in a series of themes, such as the Law, the Environment, and Indigeneity and Blackness, this seminar highlights the transnational dimensions of movements for Black freedom in the nineteenth century. At the same time, it traces the distinctiveness of each of these movements to provide a broad, yet nuanced, account of the hemispheric and global dynamics of slavery, freedom, race, and gender from the Age of Revolutions to the turn of the twentieth century.

**Embodying Story**  
**AFAM 313/THST 319**  
**Renee Robinson**  
The intersection of storytelling and movement as seen through historical case studies, cross-disciplinary inquiry, and studio practice. Drawing on eclectic source materials from different artistic disciplines, ranging from the repertory of Alvin Ailey to journalism, architectural studies, cartoon animation, and creative processes, students develop the critical, creative, and technical skills through which to tell their own stories in movement. No prior dance experience necessary.
Black Feminist Theory
AFAM 315/WGSS 305
Roderick Ferguson

This course is designed to introduce you to some of the major themes in Black feminist theory. The course does so by presenting classic texts with more recent ones to give you a sense of the vibrancy of Black feminist theory for addressing past and present concerns. Rather than interpret Black feminist theory as a critical formation that simply puts race, gender, sexuality, and class into conversation with one another, the course apprehends that formation as one that produced epistemic shifts in how we understand politics, empire, history, the law, and literature. This is by no means an exhaustive list of the areas into which Black feminism intervened. It is merely a sample of some of the most vibrant ideological and discursive contexts in which Black feminism caused certain epistemic transformations.

Classics in Africa and the Black Diaspora
AFAM 320/CLCV 338/LIT 153
Emily Greenwood

The reception and appropriation of Greco-Roman classics in Africa and the Black diaspora during the twentieth century. The same classical canon that had been used to furnish arguments for colonialism, imperialism, and racism read by Black writers and artists in ways that subverted those arguments. Works include drama from Nigeria and South Africa, Caribbean poetry and autobiography, novels by Ralph Ellison and Toni Morrison, and the Odysseus collages of Romare Bearden.
Postcolonial Cities of the West

AFAM 326/AMST 312/ER&M 310/WGSS 298

Fadila Habchi

This seminar is an examination of various texts and films pertaining to the representation of postcolonial cities in the global north and a range of social, political, and cultural issues that concern those who inhabit these spaces.

Black Experimental and Independent Film

AFAM 335/FILM 335

Nicholas Forster

Since the birth of cinema over a century ago, Black filmmakers have carved out alternative spaces for the production and distribution of cinema. This seminar examines the radical and experimental visions of post war Black directors who have queered the screen, developed new modes of representation, and repeatedly challenged the accepted conventions of Hollywood. Frequently weaving documentary with the fictional, the films selected develop a new language of cinema. The seminar begins with William Greaves’ 1968 psychodrama Symbiopsychotaxiplasm: Take One, a personal film that unsettles as it refuses to clarify whether what we are watching is real or a performance. Together, we examine Melvin Van Peebles Sweet Sweetback’s Baadasssss Song (1971), which revolutionized independent cinema and made an explicit political call for action. The Black feminist visions of Madeleine Anderson, a documentarian, and Jessie Maple, the first Black woman in the cinematographer’s union guide us, before we turn to the work of the L.A. Rebellion. The course finishes in dialogue with the interconnected zones between Hollywood and independent film, focusing on work like Love and Basketball (Gina Prince-Bythewood, 2000), Pariah (Dee Rees, 2011), and An Oversimplification of Her Beauty (Terrence Nance, 2012). Though most films are feature length works, we also turn to shorts and excerpts from television. Inhabiting his cinematic space of the undercommons, where artists have forged new visions of the world, we ask: what makes a work independent? What are the terms of experimental film? How can cinema create the cultural and political conditions for change? How have directors rewritten the possibilities of what it means to be, see, and feel in the world?
Caribbean Diaspora Literature
AFAM 352/AMST 438/ER&M 291/LITR 295/WGSS 343

Fadila Habchi

An examination of contemporary literature written by Caribbean writers who have migrated to, or who journey between, different countries around the Atlantic rim. Focus on literature written in English in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, both fiction and nonfiction. Writers include Caryl Phillips, Nalo Hopkinson, and Jamaica Kincaid.

Ethnography of the African American Community
AFAM 390/ER&M 419/SOCY 319

Elijah Anderson

This course is an ethnographic study of the African American community. Analysis of ethnographic and historical literature, with attention to substantive, conceptual, and methodological issues. Topics include the significance of slavery, the racial ghetto, structural poverty, the middle class, the color line, racial etiquette, and social identity.

Ethnic Studies and the Social Imagination
AFAM 396/AMST 324/ER&M 363

Maryam Parhizkar

Centering the social function of the imagination and its relation to power and culture, this seminar traces poetic creativity as a mode of engaging the political and intellectual labors of ethnic studies. Students are introduced to the creative strategies that scholars, poets, performers, filmmakers, artists, and activists have used to interrogate histories of race, diaspora and dispossession, build collectivity, and re-envision the future. Emphasis on writing, media and performance from the U.S. in the last decade, with transhistorical and transnational links to writings and histories from the twentieth century including: Third World/women of color feminisms, the Black Radical Tradition and abolitionist thought, Caribbean thought, documentary poetics, and queer of color critique. Students study, practice, and apply methods to their own research projects through in-class discussion and writing exercises, reading responses, and assignments that build toward a final project or paper. Prerequisite: ER&M 200, prior course in AFAM, or permission from the instructor.
Black Religions in Slavery and Freedom
AFAM 402/RLST 435
Nicole Turner

This course explores how enslaved and free black people created and sustained religious communities in the United States during the eras of slavery and freedom. It explores the resonances of African traditions, the role of conjure, Islam and Christianity in sustaining Black people through slavery and the transformations that developed after emancipation. The course challenges the paradigm of black religion as always pointing toward freedom while exploring how the transition in status from enslaved to free was reflected in and influenced by black religious practices and communities. This course explores the religious communities of the “slave quarters,” underground railroad, independent black churches on the political landscape of freedom through the end of the 19th century. This course aims to provide participants with a deeper exploration of the developments within the period from the 19th century through 1915 and the advent of Jim Crow and U.S. imperialism.

Race and Comedy
AFAM 412/AMST 408/ER&M 408
Albert Laguna

This course is an Introduction to theories of the ludic and to critical race theory. Ways in which comic modes have been utilized by racialized subjects to represent and issue critiques of the dominant culture. Analysis of stand-up comedy, film, television, and novels.

Challenges to Realism in Contemporary African Fiction
AFAM 449/ ENGL 378/AFST 449
Stephanie Newell

This course is an introduction to experimental African novels that challenge realist and documentary modes of representation. Topics include mythology, gender subversion, politics, the city, migration, and the self. Ways of reading African and postcolonial literature through the lenses of identity, history, and nation.

Independent Study: African American Studies
AFAM 471
Aimee Cox

Independent research under the direction of a member of the department on a special topic in African American studies not covered in other courses. Permission of the director of undergraduate studies and of the instructor directing the research is required. A proposal signed by the instructor must be submitted to the director of undergraduate studies by the end of the second week of classes. The instructor meets with the student regularly, typically for an hour a week, and the student writes.
Senior Colloquium: African American Studies

AFAM 480
Aimee Cox

A seminar on issues and approaches in African American studies. The colloquium offers students practical help in refining their senior essay topics and developing research strategies. Students discuss assigned readings and share their research experiences and findings. During the term, students are expected to make substantial progress on their senior essays; they are required to submit a prospectus, an annotated bibliography, and a draft of one-quarter of the essay. This colloquium is limited to Senior African American Studies majors.

Global Black Aesthetics

AFAM 500
Tavia Nyong’o

Given the planetary scope increasingly implicit in contemporary art practice and the art world, this course asks after the relationship between politics and aesthetics in the current moment of planetary crisis? Critical discussion of the relation between aesthetics and politics is often framed as solely a question of enhancing democratic participation and emancipating publics. However, this approach is limited, and does not sufficiently account for colonial modernity’s role in the construction of the aesthetic, as well as its role in political relegating and regulating populations as dispossessed and disenfranchised. Readings will include contemporary black aesthetic theories of refusal, fabulation, and poetics, and will draw on readings from: Denise Ferreira da Silva, Fred Moten, Tina Campt, Saidiya Hartman, Christina Sharpe, John Keene, Dionne Brand, Edourard Glissant and Sylvia Wynter. Prerequisites: One other graduate African American Studies course, preferably, Theorizing Racial Formations. W 1:30-3:20p

Theorizing Racial Formations

AFAM 505
Aimee Cox

A required course for all first-year students in the combined Ph.D. program in African American Studies; also open to students in American Studies. This interdisciplinary reading seminar focuses on new work that is challenging the temporal, theoretical, and spatial boundaries of the field.

Working Group on Latina/o Studies I

AFAM 716/AMST 910/HIST 764
Stephen Pitti, Alicia Schmidt Camacho

A continuous workshop for graduate students in American Studies, History, African American Studies, and related fields. This group devotes the fall term to intensive reading and discussion of important interdisciplinary texts in Latina/o studies. Students interested in participating should contact stephen.pitti@yale.edu.
Workshop in Urban Ethnography
AFAM 773/SOCY 630
Elijah Anderson
The ethnographic interpretation of urban life and culture. Conceptual and methodological issues are dis-
cussed. Ongoing projects of participants are presented in a workshop format, thus providing participants with
critical feedback as well as the opportunity to learn from and contribute to ethnographic work in progress. Se-
lected ethnographic works are read and assessed.

Musical Afrofuturisms
AFAM 803/AFSTM 828/AMST 831/MUSI 933
Michael Veal
This course is a survey of the Afrofuturist theme as it has been articulated in African American music of the
post-World War II era, with additional references to its concurrent manifestations in film, literature, and visual
arts. The introductory meetings lay historical, political, technological, and cultural foundations, before pro-
ceeding with a series of work-based (i.e., album-based) case studies for the remainder of the term.

Directed Reading
AFAM 880
Daphne Brooks
A noncredit, two-term course, which graduate students in their third year of study must satisfactorily complete.
This workshop is intended to support preparation of the dissertation proposal.

AFAM 895
Dissertation Prospectus Workshop
Daphne Brooks & Crystal Feimster
A noncredit, two-term course, which graduate students in their third year of study must satisfactorily complete.
This workshop is intended to support preparation of the dissertation proposal.
Image Captions/Credit:

(1) John Lewis image: Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee pbs.org

(2) Elizabeth Eckford of Little Rock Nine enters desegregated school. Smithsonian Primary Sources


(4) Beyoncé, still from Formation

(5) Black Church image - Bishop Brian Green at Pentecostal Tabernacle in Cambridge, MA from Associated Press

(6) James Baldwin, Bettman/Getty images

(7) NMAAHC, gift of Elmer J. Whiting, III ©Gertrude Samuels

(8) Nina Simone performing Four Women at the Harlem Cultural Festival in 1969

(9) Young woman dancing, Cheryl L. Guerrero

(10) A Century of Black Cinema, image cover from the documentary, A Century of Black Cinema

(11) West-Indian American Day Carnival in Brooklyn via cisc1970 on Flickr

(12) Audre Lorde collage image on Afropunk.com

(13) Afrofuturism image by Max Löffler