

Center for African American Studies

Center Overview

The Center for African American Studies (CAAS) facilitates discourse on race and contextualizes it in the historical, cultural, and community influences that shape the diverse experiences of Blacks in America.

Established August 2012 at the only one of its kind in North Texas (and one of three in the state), CAAS builds on the University of Texas at Arlington's reputation as one of the most diverse institutions in the nation.

We hope to *enlighten, inspire, and empower* student, faculty, and community stakeholders to create progressive, collaborative solutions that drive social change within the Black community specifically and the broader society generally.

Undergraduate Programs (<https://catalog.uta.edu/archives/2025-2026/university-programs/african-american-studies/undergraduate/>)

Contact Information

Center for African American Studies Website (<https://caas.uta.edu/>)

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COURSES

AAST 2300. INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES. 3 Hours.

This course introduces students to the African American experience in the United States, including an interdisciplinary analysis of the African American experience in politics, the arts, folklore, religion, economics, sociology, psychology, and community development; and an examination of local history, contemporary issues, and recent events in the African American community. This course satisfies the University of Texas at Arlington core curriculum requirement in Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AAST 2303. HISTORY AND APPRECIATION OF HIP HOP AND R&B MUSIC. 3 Hours.

Explores the history and evolution of Hip Hop and modern urban music, emphasizing musical style and social context, from rhythm and blues through the present. Offered as AAST 2303 and MUSI 1303; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 2337. ECONOMICS OF SOCIAL ISSUES. 3 Hours.

Economic analysis and application of basic economic principles to a variety of social issues and topics. Students will become familiar with the U.S. economy, its structure, and how economics applies to an assortment of public policy topics such as crime, energy, immigration, drug use, prostitution, minimum wage, our aging population, healthcare, gender driven wages, recycling, and the macro economy, to name a few. In addition, current economic issues and events may be incorporated into the course via lecture and/or class discussions. This is a non-technical course which satisfies the core requirement for social and behavioral studies. Will not serve to meet degree requirements for College of Business Administration majors. Offered as ECON 2337 and AAST 2337; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 2371. LANGUAGE IN A MULTICULTURAL USA. 3 Hours.

The relationship between language in the U.S. and social power. This course explores how negative attitudes toward some language varieties and languages spoken in the U.S. arise from social factors, rather than features of the languages themselves. In addition to studying language varieties, the course shows how American institutions such as the educational system and the media reinforce these negative attitudes and contribute to discrimination. Offered as AAST 2371 and LING 2371; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3300. TOPICS IN GENDER, WOMEN & SEXUALITY STUDIES. 3 Hours.

Special topics of interest in the disciplines of Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies. May be repeated for credit when the topic changes. Offered as GWSS 3300 and AAST 3300; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3301. THEORIES OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR. 3 Hours.

This course explores, within the context of a strengths and empowerment perspective, theories of human behavior. For social work majors, it is strongly recommended that SOCW 2302 be taken before this course. Offered as AAST 3301 and SOCW 3301; credit will be granted in only one department. This course is required for Social Work Field Instruction and Seminar I (SOCW 4951).

AAST 3310. BLACK FAMILIES. 3 Hours.

Course will focus on the historical and cultural development of black families. Topics include slavery, segregation, family structure, and socioeconomic issues. Special attention will be given to people, places, and events that are important for understanding African American family life in the Dallas/Ft Worth area.

AAST 3314. CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION. 3 Hours.

The background and causes of secession and the Civil War, the organization of the Confederate States of America, the progress of the war, and the attempts to solve the racial, social, political, and economic problems of the post-war period. Offered as AAST 3314 and HIST 3314; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3317. DIVERSE POPULATIONS. 3 Hours.

Introduction to theoretical, practical, and policy issues related to diverse populations. Historical, political, and socioeconomic forces are examined that maintain discriminatory and oppressive values, attitudes, and behaviors in society in diverse populations and in all levels of organizational behavior. This course is required for admission to the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program. Offered as AAST 3317, SOCW 3307 and MAS 3319; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3319. U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY AND THE AMERICAN DREAM. 3 Hours.

This course focuses on diverse ethnic and racial identities in America through the examination of immigration to the United States, past and present, and the evolution of U.S. immigration policy. Topics include U.S. attitudes and policy responses to European, Asian, and Latin American immigration and to the incorporation of the descendants of African slaves and Native Americans. Emphasis on the decline of the melting pot idea and the incorporation of recent immigrants. Offered as MAS 3320, AAST 3319, and SOCW 3320. Credit will be granted only once.

AAST 3320. BLACK WOMEN IN SOCIETY. 3 Hours.

Course provides an overview of historical and current issues facing African American women. Topics include racism, sexism, political involvement, education, religion, family, and comparisons with the experiences of black men.

AAST 3321. THE LATINA EXPERIENCE. 3 Hours.

A course on the social, cultural, and economic experiences of Latina and Latin American origin women in the United States. Offered as MAS 3314, SOCI 3314, SOCW 3314, GWSS 3314, and AAST 3321. Credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3322. AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY TO 1863. 3 Hours.

History of blacks in America from their African origins to 1863. Emphasis on early African society, American slavery, and the development of black institutions and culture in the U.S. Offered as AAST 3322 and HIST 3322; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3323. AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY SINCE EMANCIPATION. 3 Hours.

Emphasis on the transition from slavery to freedom and the political, social, and economic status of blacks in the late 19th century, 20th century black institutions and culture, and the evolution of the civil rights movements. Offered as AAST 3323 and HIST 3323; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3328. RACE, REPRESENTATION, AND THE MOVIES. 3 Hours.

This course examines the history of race and representation among black Americans in the United States through films, short clips, and documentaries. Offered as HIST 3328 and AAST 3328; credit will be granted only once.

AAST 3329. CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN CULTURES. 3 Hours.

A comparative study of African communities with an emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa. Covers regional cultural geography and history as well as ethnography of specific communities. Explores both the challenges facing contemporary African nations as well as emerging solutions. Includes exposure to African art, literature, music, cinema, and food. Offered as AAST 3329 and ANTH 3329; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3330. CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND IDENTITY. 3 Hours.

The ways identity is constructed in contemporary societies in an increasingly complex and multicultural world. Ethnic, racial, gender, and class identities. How and when identity is asserted and assigned, and how it can both draw boundaries and forge ties between peoples. Formerly listed as ANTH 2350. Credit cannot be given for both ANTH 2350 and ANTH 3330. Also listed as MAS 3330; credit cannot be granted for both ANTH 3330 and MAS 3330. Offered as AAST 3330 and ANTH 3330; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3332. COMPARATIVE KINSHIP AND FAMILY SYSTEMS. 3 Hours.

Variation in kinship and family systems from crosscultural and evolutionary perspectives. Structure, function, and dynamics of kinship and family systems as adaptations to diverse ecological, social, and historical circumstances. Implications of this approach for understanding kinship and family in American society also addressed. Formerly listed as ANTH 4338. Credit cannot be given for both ANTH 3338 and ANTH 4338. Also offered as GWSS 3338; credit will be granted only once. Offered as AAST 3332 and ANTH 3338; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3336. SOCIAL INEQUALITY. 3 Hours.

Examines the processes, characteristics, and consequences of social inequality in society. Topics include the social class structure, status groups, and elite power structure as they influence people's life chances. Offered as AAST 3336 and SOCI 3336; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3337. RACIAL & ETHNIC GROUPS IN US. 3 Hours.

Compares the immigration, acculturation, and adjustment processes of various racial/ethnic groups in the U.S. Examines historical and contemporary discrimination in relation to the social conditions of racial/ethnic minority groups in the U. S. Topics include classical and contemporary theory; individualistic, cultural, and structural arguments about social arrangements; and conflict among majority and minority groups. Offered as AAST 3337, MAS 3337, and SOCI 3337; credit will be granted in only one department. Credit will not be granted for both SOCI 3337 and SOCI 4310 or for MAS 3337 and MAS 4310.

AAST 3338. CONTEMPORARY BLACK EXPERIENCE. 3 Hours.

An overview of recent research concerning the African American experience in the post-civil rights era. Topics include explanations for racial differences across spheres of society such as income, education, and occupation; the debate over race versus social class; the persistence of racial discrimination; and emerging disputes within the black community regarding "what it means to be black." Offered as AAST 3338 and SOCI 3338; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3339. RACE, SPORT AND MEDIA. 3 Hours.

The media, including television, film, print, audio, and online outlets, influence how we view the world. This course analyzes overt, subtle and subliminal messages about culture, race, ethnicity, and sport as presented to us through various forms of the media. Through examinations of media portrayals of race, both past and present, students will analyze media artifacts, identify recurring themes, and examine research focused on the societal effects of stereotypical media portrayals. Offered as AAST 3339 and SOCI 3339; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3341. THE OLD SOUTH, 1607-1863. 3 Hours.

Colonial origins of plantation agriculture, slavery, economics, King Cotton, politics and secession. Other topics include slave cultures, religion, slave insurrections, plantation lifestyle, honor, dueling and southern belles. Offered as AAST 3341 and HIST 3342; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3342. RELIGION IN MODERN AMERICA. 3 Hours.

This course provides an overview of the scientific study of religion from a sociological perspective. The focus is on theories, research and trends relevant to religion in the contemporary United States. Topics include, but are not limited to, religious traditions, practices, and beliefs; declining religious participation; and religion and social change. The relationship between religion, politics, race relations, sex and gender will also be examined. Offered as SOCI 3343 and AAST 3342; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3343. THE NEW SOUTH, 1863-PRESENT. 3 Hours.

From military defeat to Sun Belt growth. Topics include Reconstruction, segregation, migration of Southerners to the North and West, depressions, reforms, Civil Rights, Moral Majority, cultural expressions in literature and music. Offered as AAST 3343 and HIST 3343; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3344. SOCIOLOGY OF THE 1960S. 3 Hours.

This course presents a sociological analysis of the sixties, stressing the connection between grassroots mobilization and large structures of power, war, race and gender. The legacy of the sixties is examined through stories told by and about activists of the period. Parallels between the sixties and the present are identified. Movements covered may include civil rights, black power, anti-war and women's rights. Offered as AAST 3344 and SOCI 3345; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3345. AFRICAN-AMERICAN LITERATURE. 3 Hours.

Examines African-American literature in its various traditions, forms, and cultural and historical contexts. Offered as AAST 3345 and ENGL 3345; credit will be granted in only one department. Prerequisite: English majors must have earned a C or better in ENGL 3350 and in one literature survey course (ENGL 3340, ENGL 3341, ENGL 3351, ENGL 3352, ENGL 3361, or ENGL 3362). Non-majors must have earned a C or better in 3 hours of sophomore literature (ENGL 2303, ENGL 2309, ENGL 2319, ENGL 2329).

AAST 3347. TOPICS IN MULTICULTURAL AMERICAN LITERATURES. 3 Hours.

Focuses on literature produced within one or more ethnic communities in the U.S. in order to trace a theme or to explore issues such as intersectionality, hybridity/mestizaje, diaspora, or immigrant experiences. Topics may include Afro-Latino poetry, third-world feminist writing, multicultural literature of the Southwest, cultural memory and the Jewish literary tradition, or Asian-American fiction. Offered as ENGL 3347, AAST 3347, and MAS 3347; credit will be granted in only one department, and credit for MAS 3347 will be granted only once. Prerequisite: English majors must have earned a C or better in ENGL 3350 and in one literature survey course (ENGL 3340, ENGL 3341, ENGL 3351, ENGL 3352, ENGL 3361, or ENGL 3362). Non-majors must have earned a C or better in 3 hours of sophomore literature (ENGL 2303, ENGL 2309, ENGL 2319, ENGL 2329).

AAST 3350. BLACK POLITICAL AND SOCIAL THOUGHT. 3 Hours.

Course examines goals, viewpoints, and strategies of African American political and social movements. Topics include Black Nationalism, Inter-racial Integration, tensions between major historic leaders, reparations, the emergence of "race-neutral" politicians, and changing commitments to liberal and conservative causes.

AAST 3353. SOCIAL CLIMATE OF CITIES. 3 Hours.

A comparative study of urban communities and metropolitan areas in terms of their distinctive social life and culture. Topics touching on power and urban politics, race and ethnic relations, poverty, and leisure and lifestyles will be examined in terms of their contribution to the unique social climate of cities. Offered as AAST 3353 and SOCI 3353; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3373. ARCHAEOLOGY OF EGYPT. 3 Hours.

The culture of ancient Egypt from its earliest occupation until the Arab invasion (7th century A.C.), with emphasis on the first 20 pharaonic dynasties (third and second millennia B.C.). Egyptian social, religious, economic and political development traced through the surviving material culture (architecture, art, industries, artifacts of daily life, funerary remains, etc.) supplemented by historical and literary evidence as pertinent. Egypt's relations with neighboring regions (Crete, Anatolia, Palestine, Nubia and Libya) considered. Offered as AAST 3373 and ANTH 3373; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3378. HISTORY OF THE CARIBBEAN. 3 Hours.

A comparative history of the different societies in the Caribbean (including Cuba, Jamaica, and Haiti) with emphasis on the coming of slavery and the consequences of emancipation. Traces the development of emerging new societies from intermingling of Amerindian, African and European elements. Offered as AAST 3378 and HIST 3378; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3380. RACE, CRIME, AND JUSTICE. 3 Hours.

An examination of race in the context of the criminal justice system. Emphasis is on social construction of crime; and the treatment of racial minorities as victims and offenders by law enforcement, courts, and corrections. Offered as CRCJ 3380 and MAS 3380; credit will be granted only once. Offered as AAST 3380 and CRCJ 3380; credit will be granted in only one department. Prerequisite: CRCJ 2334.

AAST 3385. AFRICAN HISTORY I. 3 Hours.

Examines African prehistory, ancient civilizations, religion, gender issues, slavery, and commerce in precolonial Africa. Offered as AAST 3385 and HIST 3385; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 3386. AFRICAN HISTORY II. 3 Hours.

Africa from the "Scramble for Africa" through the establishment of the various colonial systems, through the beginnings of African nationalism, to the contemporary period. The African Revolution and the development of the independent African states. Offered as AAST 3386 and HIST 3386; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 4317. ETHNIC GROUP POLITICS IN THE UNITED STATES. 3 Hours.

The influence of selected major ethnic groups with special attention given to organizational development, participation in political parties, leadership, ideology, immigration policy, current issues, and relations with the dominant culture and other ethnic groups. Offered as AAST 4317 and POLS 4317; credit will be granted in only one department. Prerequisite: POLS 2311 and POLS 2312.

AAST 4318. POLITICS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS. 3 Hours.

The influence of African-American politics on United States government and policies with special attention given to organizational development, participation in political parties, leadership, ideology, the Civil Rights movement, current issues, and relations with other ethnic groups. Offered as AAST 4318 and POLS 4318; credit will be granted in only one department. Prerequisite: POLS 2311 and POLS 2312.

AAST 4325. HISTORY OF HIP HOP. 3 Hours.

Focused study of the origins and development of Hip Hop as an artistic genre and political and cultural movement. Topics include deejaying, emceeing, sampling and other musical techniques as well as issues of ethnic and other identities, commercialism, capitalism, cultural appropriation, and authenticity. Offered as HIST 4325 and AAST 4325; credit will be granted only once.

AAST 4326. DIVERSITY IN ORGANIZATIONS. 3 Hours.

This course examines the implications of employee diversity in organizations, an issue of increasing importance. It includes study of the changing demographics of workers, including multiple demographic groups and areas of difference important to organizational treatment and outcomes. This course examines research on treatment, access, and customer discrimination. Legislation related to diversity is also reviewed. This course also provides suggestions for individuals and organizations to increase opportunities and outcomes for workers of all backgrounds. Offered as MANA 4326, AAST 4326 and GWSS 4326; credit will be granted in only one department. Prerequisite: Junior standing.

AAST 4331. RACE, ETHNICITY & FAMILY FORMATION. 3 Hours.

Investigates the ways in which cultural understandings of race and ethnicity have shaped historical and contemporary variations in family structure, familial experiences, and the legal possibilities for family formation. Junior standing (60 hours) or permission of the instructor required to enroll in this course. Offered as AAST 4331 and SOCI 4331; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 4333. COMPARATIVE CIVIL RIGHTS HISTORY. 3 Hours.

Explores the U.S. civil rights movement from a comparative perspective, exploring the African American civil rights movement, Chicano movement, women's liberation movement, gay liberation, and disability rights movement. Offered as AAST 4333 and HIST 4333; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 4339. TOPICS IN AFRICAN-AMERICAN LITERATURE. 3 Hours.

Concentrates on a topic or theme within the canon of African-American literature, such as a particular genre or era, significant authors, or a philosophical movement. Examples include the Harlem Renaissance, the Civil-Rights/Black-Power era, African-American autobiography, short fiction, and Afrofuturism. Offered as AAST 4339 and ENGL 4339; credit will be granted in only one department. May be repeated for credit as course content changes. Prerequisite: English majors must have earned a C or better in ENGL 3350 and in one literature survey course (ENGL 3340, ENGL 3341, ENGL 3351, ENGL 3352, ENGL 3361, or ENGL 3362). Non-majors must have earned a C or better in 3 hours of sophomore literature (ENGL 2303, ENGL 2309, ENGL 2319, ENGL 2329).

AAST 4341. INEQUALITIES IN PUBLIC EDUCATION. 3 Hours.

This course examines the manner in which race, ethnicity, and class affect the quality of education in the public schools. Topics include the resegregation of schools, class and race based achievement and funding gaps, and the role the schools play in reproducing inequality. This course has a service learning component and requires volunteering in programs designed to reduce inequality in the schools. Offered as AAST 4341 and SOCI 4341; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 4342. TOPICS IN CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY. 3 Hours.

Selected topics, to include anthropological theory, population and cultural ecology, semiotics, and humanistic anthropology. May be repeated for credit with departmental permission. Also offered as ANTH 4342. Credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 4350. SPECIAL TOPICS IN AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES. 3 Hours.

Special topics related to African American studies. May be repeated for credit when the topic changes.

AAST 4376. AFRICAN DIASPORA I. 3 Hours.

The major developments which have shaped the history of Africans and their descendants in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Indian Ocean areas from the earliest times to 1800. Emphasis on the comparative history of Black Diasporic communities; linkages between Africans and their descendants in the Diaspora. Offered as AAST 4376 and HIST 4376; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 4377. AFRICAN DIASPORA II. 3 Hours.

The major developments which have shaped the history of Africans and their descendants in Latin America, the Caribbean, and North America since 1800. Emphasis on the comparative history of Black Diasporic communities; linkages between Africans and their descendants in the Atlantic Diaspora. Offered as AAST 4377 and HIST 4377; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 4378. WEST AFRICA AND THE ATLANTIC DIASPORA. 3 Hours.

This course examines the history of West Africa and how this region was integrated into the Atlantic world through the Atlantic slave trade. The course adopts an interdisciplinary approach that integrates traditional classroom instruction with field-based learning in West Africa. This learning method, combined with cultural immersion, challenges students to develop their academic and cross-cultural knowledge and skills. Offered as AAST 4378 and HIST 4378; credit will be granted in only one department.

AAST 4391. CONFERENCE COURSE. 3 Hours.

Directed independent study for the advanced undergraduate. A close examination of a chosen topic through research and/or reading; format designed by instructor and student. May be repeated for a maximum six credit hours when the subject matter varies. Prerequisite: Departmental permission.

AAST 4399. CAPSTONE AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES. 3 Hours.

In consultation with the course instructor, students will design a research project or an internship that will integrate their previous course work into a capstone experience in either the applied or the cultural studies stream of the African American Studies minor. Prerequisite: AAST 2300 and departmental permission.

AAST 6391. CONFERENCE COURSE. 3 Hours.

Directed independent study for a masters-level or doctoral student. A close examination of a chosen topic through research and/or reading; format designed by instructor and student. May be repeated for maximum six credit hours when the subject matter varies. Prerequisite: Permission from CAAS Director.