BLACK STUDIES

The central mission of the Black Studies program is to prepare students to critically understand, conduct research concerning, and interpret the complex histories, societies, and cultures of people of African descent in the United States, Africa, and the Diaspora. We situate this knowledge within a general discourse concerning what it teaches us about the totality of the human experience.

Other Information

All coursework taken for the Black Studies major or minor must be completed with a grade of "C-" or better.

Student Groups

The Black Studies Student Association (BSSA) caters to the interests of majors and minors as well as other students interested in the field of Black Studies and membership is open to all students.

Upper Division Course Contingency

In the event that an insufficient number of courses are available at the upper division level for a student to complete a major or minor, the chair of the department may, at his or her discretion, accept alternative departmental courses, external courses dealing with subject matter related to the major or minor external experiences in course settings like internships, study abroad, and/or community engagement as acceptable for meeting the requirements.

Contact Information

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Writing in the Discipline

All students are required to take a writing in the discipline course within their major. For the Black Studies major, this is ENGL 2400 or another approved course.

Degrees Offered

- Black Studies, Bachelor of Science (http://catalog.unomaha.edu/undergraduate/college-arts-sciences/black-studies/black-studies-bs)

Minors Offered

- Black Studies Minor (http://catalog.unomaha.edu/undergraduate/college-arts-sciences/black-studies/black-studies-minor)

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 ANCIENT AFRICAN CIVILIZATION (3 credits)
Investigates the development of the civilization of ancient Egypt and its influences on the cultural development of other African and Mediterranean states, including ancient Greece. Emphasis is on religion/philosophy, archaeology, art and history. (Cross-listed with HIST 1050)

BLST 1220 LAW IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY (3 credits)
Justice relative to the black community experience; the sociology of crime, enforcement and penology, including attention to the political prisoner.

BLST 1260 SURVEY OF BLACK LITERATURE (3 credits)
This course will give students a general background in black literature and will encourage them to take advanced courses in the field. It consists of black literature not only in the U.S. but also in the West Indies and Africa. The main themes common to the black experience will be analyzed through an interesting study of some of the major works of some important black writers.

BLST 1340 INTRODUCTION TO CONTEMPORARY AFRICA (3 credits)
A survey of the geography, population and cultural traditions of contemporary Africa. Economic, political, cultural and social changes in the second half of the 20th century, including the problems and the struggle for national integration and economic adjustments will also be examined.

BLST 1950 BLACK WOMEN IN AMERICA (3 credits)
Examines the evolution of the social, economic, and political status of the black woman in this society, with special emphasis on her struggle for freedom and equality. (Cross-listed with WGST 1950)

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000.

BLST 2000 THE BLACK EXPERIENCE IN SOCIETY (3 credits)
Review, analysis and evaluation of the research literature oriented toward the field of black studies. Special attention will be given to historical, theoretical and methodological considerations.

BLST 2100 BLACK AMERICAN CULTURE (3 credits)
This course surveys the cultural forms, expressions, and patterns developed by African Americans as well as the social contexts of their development. Literature, music, drama, visual arts, psychology, black popular culture and media among other forms will be studied, with an emphasis on the twentieth century.

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 alien cultures on traditional Africa, and the struggle for a resolution of the conflict between the three major traditions on the continent - the Islamic, Western and Indigenous. (Cross-listed with HIST 2920).

BLST 2130 PATTERNS OF AFRICAN GOVERNMENT (3 credits)
The course will deal with the profiles of selected African social formations, political parties, ethnic groupings, and leaders, their backgrounds, ideologies and political strategies for ruling their countries or movements.

BLST 2210 THE BLACK FAMILY IN THE UNITED STATES (3 credits)
Analysis of historical, social, and institutional and comparative elements of family life in the United States with particular emphasis on black women.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000.

BLST 2240 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)/Corequisite(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** BLACK LITERATURE IN AMERICA 1746-1939 (3 credits)
This course traces the development of black literature from 1746 to 1939. Included will be a study of four genres: poetry, short story, novel, and drama. 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)/Corequisite(s): ENGL 1160 or permission.

**BLST 2360** CONTEMPORARY BLACK LITERATURE (3 credits)
This course traces the development of the literary contribution that black Americans have made from 1940 to the present. Included will be a study of four genres: poetry, short story, novel, and drama. Trends to be studied include the movement toward literary assimilation in the 1940s-1950s and the subsequent movement toward black art in the 1960s to the present. (Cross-listed with ENGL 2360).

**BLST 2410** AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY TO 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.

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

**BLST 2420** AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY: EMANCIPATION TO BROWN (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.

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

**BLST 2430** AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY SINCE 1954 (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.

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

**BLST 2510** MUSIC AND THE BLACK EXPERIENCE (3 credits)
The course will examine the origins and development of African music as cultural history of Africans and people of African descent.

**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 2710** AFRICANA WORLDVIEWS (3 credits)
This course presents the basic epistemological and ontological elements of the Africana worldview, explains how that is different from the classical Eurocentric worldview, and why that difference is significant in the pursuit of scientific examination under the rubric of Black Studies.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000 or permission of the instructor.

**BLST 2720** RELIGION AND THEOLOGY IN AFRO-AMERICA (3 credits)
Examines the development of the black church in America from the period of the First Great Awakening and investigates and analyses the theological foundation, the nature and source of Afro-American religious expression.

Distribution: Humanities and Fine Arts General Education course

**BLST 2830** CONTEMPORARY NOVEL (EMPHASIS ON BLACK WRITERS) (3 credits)
A study of some of the most important ideas and techniques of the novel as genre, using primarily the black-authored novel.

**BLST 2900** AFRICAN CIVILIZATION - THE MIDDLE PERIOD (3 credits)
This course traces the development of African history from the beginning of the Civilization of Ghana (800 B.C.) to the period of European exploration of Africa (mid 15th century). It examines the main achievements, events and individuals in the Empires of Ghana, Mali, Songhay, Zimbabwe, etc. (Cross-listed with HIST 2900)

**BLST 3000** SURVEY OF BLACK EDUCATION (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000 or permission of instructor.

**BLST 3030** GEOGRAPHY OF AFRICA (3 credits)
The political, physical, economic and demographic features of Africa with emphasis on the effect of these factors in development. The major features of the broad geographical regions of Africa.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Junior.

**BLST 3120** THE BLACK EXPERIENCE IN AMERICAN POLITICS (3 credits)
A survey of the African-American quest for liberation within and outside the orthodoxy political system of the United States with a focus on the institutional and structural arrangements which have denied liberation and prescriptions for meaningful change. (Cross-listed with PSCI 3120).

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000 or junior.

**BLST 3200** BLACK NATIONALISM AND PAN AFRICANISM (3 credits)
A study of the development of movements for self-determination in Afro-America and an analysis of various nationalistic conceptual frameworks in the Diaspora and on the Continent. (Cross-listed with BLST 8205)

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000, BLST 2410, or permission of instructor.

**BLST 3400** ISSUES IN BLACK COMMUNITIES (3 credits)
Focusing primarily on urban areas, this course will analyze the roles of municipal, state, and federal governments in African American communities. Various political, educational, economic, cultural and social aspects of those communities will be analyzed. Data from specific examples of such communities throughout the U.S. will be examined, and their strategies for engaging the larger social-environmental contexts will be explored.

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

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

**BLST 3500** ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA (3 credits)
This course traces the evolution of modern African economic systems. Methods of production, distribution, and exchange are examined. There will also be a survey of the processes and problems of colonial economic exploitation to post-independence underdevelopment. The nature of economic development, planning, regional cooperation, international trade and foreign aid will be critically analyzed.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 2130 and BLST 3030 or GEOG 3030 or junior.

**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 films 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 CMST 3510)

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Junior standing and a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.25. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course
BLST 3650  SLAVERY AND RACE RELATIONS IN AMERICA (3 credits)
This course focuses on the black experience in the Americas outside of the U.S. Four major geographical areas are studied: Canada, Central America, the Caribbean and South America. Black life is considered with regard to historical background and geographical factors, and in comparison to white and Native American experience. An effort is made to trace common themes by using the cross-cultural approach. (Cross-listed with BLST 8655)
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Junior or permission of instructor.

BLST 3750  ISSUES IN BLACK LITERATURE (3 credits)
This course is designed to provide a forum for consideration of critical issues in black literature. An examination of some of the theoretical issues in black aesthetics will be undertaken, including: the role of the black artist as purposeful agent and guardian of image; the role of literature in the black community; and the audience. Recent trends in the black novel will be studied, especially the emergence of contemporary African writers as modern technicians of language and literary form through the development of new forms from old narrative ones.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1260 and BLST 2360 or permission.

BLST 3920  BLACK AESTHETICS (3 credits)
This is a critical study of the theories of artistic beauty and their application in the poetic, fictional and dramatic works of Afro-Americans from the 18th century to the present. Special attention will be paid to the role of the black artist in American society.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1260 or permission of instructor.

BLST 3970  INTERNSHIP IN BLACK STUDIES (1-3 credits)
A department-supervised project involving part-time employment or service with a community agency, business, non-profit organization, university or other educational unit, or another appropriate organization or setting. Students will gain relevant practical experience and will integrate theory, concepts, and empirical knowledge from their classrooms with their work in the internship setting. Permission of department head and/or Internship Coordinator and completion of an internship project form required.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Completion of BLST 1000, enrollment either as a BLST major or minor or as a BGS concentration in BLST, permission of Department Head and/or Internship Coordinator and completion of an internship project form.

BLST 3980  SPECIAL TOPICS IN BLACK STUDIES (3 credits)
Intensive research into specific but unrelated topics germane to the black experience. Since the topics are of a variable nature, this course may be repeated for credit as long as the topics are different.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Junior or permission of instructor.

BLST 3990  COMMUNITY STUDY PROJECT (3 credits)
Designed for the student to do field work in a community-based project in the areas of housing, education or social services.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Junior or above, or permission of instructor.

BLST 4000  SPECIAL TOPICS SEMINARS: HUMANITIES AND THE BLACK EXPERIENCE (3-6 credits)
The special topics: Humanities and the black experience would be a group of seminars presented by scholars of various disciplines related to black studies.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Junior or permission of instructor.

BLST 4090  BLACK STUDIES ORAL HISTORY (3 credits)
The focus of this course is to examine the methods, procedure, transcription and use of oral history in black studies research. Emphasis will be directed toward describing and evaluating the variables of memory, history and cultural authority to produce written source materials collected from oral interviews. (Cross-listed with BLST 8096)
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000, BLST 2100, BLST 2430 or permission of the instructor.

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. Especially 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)
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Junior 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 experiences 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 women. 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)/Corequisite(s): Black studies major or permission of instructor.

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)/Corequisite(s): CMST 4530 or Junior standing or instructor permission; minimum cumulative GPA of 2.25.
Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 4880  SEMINAR ON BLACK LEADERSHIP IN AMERICA (3 credits)
Designed as a senior and graduate seminar, this course will examine the meaning and attributes of effective leadership. The role of black leadership in the African American experience will be examined. Profiles of selected African American leaders and their political strategies also will be analyzed in the seminar. (Cross-listed with BLST 8886).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Senior or graduate student or instructor permission.

BLST 4900  INDEPENDENT STUDY (1-3 credits)
This course is designed for those students who are capable of pursuing, independently, an area of Black Studies that is not covered under the existing curriculum. The student will be supervised by a member of the BLS department. All course assignments, requirements, and expectations will be clearly indicated in advance. May be repeated for credit, up to six hours, under a different topic.