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.

Majors and minors in BLST are not allowed to receive departmental credit towards that designation for courses they complete on either a Credit/No Credit, Audit, or Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis. In such cases, students will be asked to add additional BLST coursework to their academic curriculum as surrogates for the number of hour credits earned under such alternative arrangements.

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 or external experiences in course settings like internships, study abroad, and/or community engagement as acceptable for meeting the requirements.

Assessment

As part of its assessment program, the Department requires the following of majors:

- Each major must complete at least one community-based activity consisting of a study abroad, service learning, and/or internship experience under the appropriate department course numbers.
- Each major must select one paper from their 3000 or 4000 level courses as their major departmental project.
- Specifications for all of these assessment requirements are available from the department.

Student Groups

Black Studies student groups cater 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.

Contact Information

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Facebook: facebook.com/unoblackstudies
Twitter: https://twitter.com/unoblackstudies (https://twitter.com/unoblackstudies/)
Website (http://www.unomaha.edu/blst/)

Degrees Offered

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

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 BLST 3700 or another approved course.

Minors Offered

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

The central mission of the Department of Black Studies at the University of Nebraska-Omaha is to prepare students to conduct interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research on topics involving histories, societies, cultures and cultural productions of Africana people (Continental and Diasporic Africans and their descendants); and to employ theoretical and methodological tools drawn out of the Africana experience in addressing relevant natural and social issues across the globe on behalf of humanity.

- Business, Entrepreneurship, Marketing
- Cultural Resources Manager
- Education
- Government
- Law & Criminal Justice
- Literature
- Media & Journalism
- Medicine & Health
- Performing Arts & Entertainment
- Politics
- Professor
- Religion
- Social & Community Services
- Visual & Decorative Arts

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

BLST 1050 CLASSICAL AFRICAN CIVILIZATIONS (3 credits)

Classical African Civilization is an introductory survey of the civilizations of Africa and African people prior to 1500 C.E., with emphasis on the evolution of the peoples and nations, their civilizations, and the rise and fall of indigenous states. In particular, this course will cover the classical civilizations of Kemet (Ancient Egypt), Nubia, Axum, Carthage, Ghana, Mali, and Songhay. Cross-listed with HIST 1050

Distribution: Global Diversity General Education course

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 this 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 the 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)
This course will examine how Black women in America have evolved politically, economically, and socially under oppressive conditions of slavery, the Reconstruction Era, Jim Crow, and through the Civil Rights, Black Lives Matter, and "Me Too" Movements. The underlying themes of this course are the impact of gender and race on Black women, with an emphasis of how gender and race are fueled by white supremacy, patriarchy, colonialism, capitalism, and imperialism. (Cross-listed with WGST 1950)
Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 2100 BLACK AMERICAN CULTURE (3 credits)
The course surveys the cultural forms, expressions, and patterns developed by African Americans, as well as the social contexts of their development. The course will introduce students to the cultural life of African Americans, and how that life has influenced the nature of the community, and its triumphs and tragedies in the larger socio-political context of U.S. American culture.
Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 2110 CRITICAL ISSUES IN BLACK EDUCATION (3 credits)
Critical Issues in Black Education is an undergraduate course which provides students with foundational knowledge of the historical, legal, social, political, and economic conditions influencing pedagogical and epistemological experiences that impact educational opportunities of Black students.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000 or Sophomore standing or permission of the instructor
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 AFRICAN POLITICS (3 credits)
African Politics examines the socio-cultural and economic environments which characterize political life in contemporary Africa. This course examines contemporary African politics and government in post-independence Africa, and the pre-colonial political and economic systems which influence contemporary African politics. The course assesses the various approaches used to study the political development of the African continent; examines the processes, features, and institutions of the African states; addresses key and persistent issues about African politics; and examines dimensions of social change and political reform. (Cross-listed with PSCI 2130).
Distribution: Global Diversity General Education course

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 social science theory.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000.

BLST 2260 BLACK SHORT STORY (3 credits)
A study of short stories written by black American authors as literature and as experience. The course explores 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 AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE 1746-1939 (3 credits)
This course traces the development of black literature from 1746 to 1939. Included will be a study of multiple genres including: poetry, short story, novel, drama, and nonfiction. 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 AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE 1940-PRESENT (3 credits)
This course traces the development of the literary contribution that black Americans have made from 1940 to the present. The course will study multiple genres including: poetry, short story, novel, drama, and nonfiction. Trends to be studied include an evolution in resistance to writing, a movement toward literary assimilation in the 1940s-1950s, and the subsequent movement toward "Black Arts" from the 1960s to the present. (Cross-listed with ENGL 2360).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): ENGL 1160 or instructor permission

BLST 2410 AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY I: 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. (Cross-listed with HIST 2040)
Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course and Humanities and Fine Arts General Education course

BLST 2420 AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY II: 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. (Cross-listed with HIST 2050)
Distribution: Humanities and Fine Arts General Education course and U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 2430 AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY III: FROM CIVIL RIGHTS TO MODERN DAY (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. (Cross-listed with HIST 2060)
Distribution: Humanities and Fine Arts General Education course and U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 2510 MUSIC AND THE BLACK EXPERIENCE (3 credits)
The course will examine the origin and deeper meanings of black music as cultural history of Africans and people of African descent.

BLST 2530 BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS IN AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES (3 credits)
This course traces the evolution of African American business and economic development systems in the U.S. and will examine historical economic and political influences which impact African American business communities. Students will be exposed to various aspects of African American business and economics, including Black entrepreneurship and Black owned businesses before, during, and after slavery; an analysis of the role of Black churches in African-American communities; and the impact of modern economic and political systems on African American business communities. (Cross-listed with ENTR 2550).
Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

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 elements of the Africana worldview, which focuses on African centered theories of knowledge and ways of being. Africana theories are contrasted with classical Eurocentric theories of knowledge and being, with the focus on explaining why these differences are significant to the discipline of Black Studies.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000 or permission of the instructor.

BLST 2730 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 AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN POLITICS (3 credits)
This course will provide a historical and contemporary survey of the African American political experience in the United States, from the passage of the 15th Amendment in the late 1800s, to the 1965 Voting Rights Act, and continuing into the 21st century. Students will examine the evolution of the Black political experience, with emphasis on the fight against enslavement, segregation, lynching and mass incarceration, and the long struggle of African Americans against institutional and structural racism in the American political system. (Cross-listed with PSCI 3120).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000
Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

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 3410 LAW AND THE BLACK COMMUNITY (3 credits)
Law and the Black Community provides an in-depth examination of the racialized American legal process as it pertains to and affects African Americans in the U.S. From the formation of the U.S. Constitution to present day, this course analyzes intersections of race, law, politics and culture, and explores the administration of justice and Black experiences through a critical legal perspective. (Cross-listed with CRCJ 3410, PSCI 3410).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000 OR CRCJ 1010 OR Junior standing OR instructor permission.
Distribution: 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 movies 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): Sophomore standing and a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.25. Not open to non-degree graduate students.
Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 3700 CRITICAL WRITING FOR CULTURAL STUDIES (3 credits)
Critical Writing for Cultural Studies (BLST 3700) is a Writing in the Disciplines (WID) course that prepares undergraduate students, whose fields of interest include any area of humanities and/or social sciences, for the specific writing styles and research methodologies expected in cultural studies disciplines. This preparation includes instruction in resource evaluation, organization strategies, sentence style and vocabulary, documentation styles, and revision strategies.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): ENGL 1164 or by permission of the instructor.
Distribution: Writing in the Discipline Single Course

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 4030 AFRICANA RELIGIONS (3 credits)
An introduction to religions in Africa and the diaspora, including African Traditional Religions, Christianity, Islam, and Afro-Caribbean religious traditions, using anthropological, historical, and other academic approaches to the study of religious and spiritual traditions. In particular, students will learn about the role of spirits, ancestors, witches, and other invisible agents in ideas and practices regarding health and healing. Finally, the class will examine the complex inter-relationships between religious ideas and practices and contemporary post-colonial political-economic realities, including the consequences of genocide and other human rights violations and the role of religious communities in social and economic development. (Cross-listed with RELI 8036, RELI 4030, BLST 8036).

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. Special 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 4150 AFRICAN AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGY (3 credits)
African American Psychology traces the psychological history of Africans and African Americans from self-attributes and identity, through race and racism, to cognition, learning, and language. This course will review concepts relevant to understanding the psychology of African Americans, methodological and research issues, and best practices. (Cross-listed with BLST 8156, PSYC 4150, PSYC 8156).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000 and Junior standing or Instructor permission

BLST 4260 WOMEN OF COLOR WRITERS (3 credits)
Women of Color Writers is designed to introduce students to the multicultural, literary experience 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 woman. 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 4590 AFRICAN-AMERICAN POPULAR MUSIC FROM BEBOP TO HIP-HOP (3 credits)
This course is intended for music majors who wish to undertake a comprehensive survey of African-American popular music literature from c. 1900-present. The objective will be to provide the student with a broad overview with special attention given to musicians and individual works which typify a style or form. Listening assignments will be an integral part of the course, and attendance at live performances will supplement the lectures, discussions and readings. (Cross-listed with MUS 8596, MUS 4590, BLST 8596).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Music major standing or permission of instructor.

BLST 4650 SLAVERY AND RACE RELATIONS IN THE AMERICAS (3 credits)
Slavery and Race Relations in the Americas examines the historical relationship between the trans-Atlantic slave trade and American race relations, connecting the enslavement of Africans in the Americas to race relations in the Caribbean, Latin America, and the United States. (Cross-listed with BLST 8656, HIST 4070, HIST 8076, LLS 8656).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): BLST 1000 and junior standing or permission of instructor
Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course

BLST 4710 BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION (3 credits)
Brown v. Board of Education traces the educational history of African Americans from segregation to desegregation to re-segregation. This course will review the legal cases before and after the Supreme Court’s Brown decision, their aftermath, and the effects on educational policies and practices. (Cross-listed with BLST 8716).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): For undergrad/grad, ONE or ALL of the following courses must be taken as prerequisite: BLST 1000, CRCJ 1010, BLST/CRCJ 3410. Must have Junior standing OR permission of instructor.
Distribution: U.S. Diversity General Education course
BLST 4750 CRITICAL QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS (3 credits)
This online undergraduate/graduate course is a comprehensive source for foundational concepts in quantitative behavioral research. The course is designed to expose students to the role and importance of critical quantitative research of marginalized and underrepresented groups. Students will examine and gain definition and empirical knowledge about conducting culturally relevant quantitative research and will learn both the logic behind and procedures for critical quantitative research, including research ethics, correlational and experimental designs, data collection, sampling, analysis, and reporting. (Cross-listed with BLST 8756).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): PSYC 3140 or Junior standing or instructor permission.

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.