

Eastern Illinois University
African American Studies 3200/4100: Identity in the Context Negritude & Afrocentricity
3:30-4:45pm (Tuesdays and Thursdays)
3103 Blair Hall

Instructor: Gregory Wilson
Office: 3165 Blair Hall
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 2-3pm
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Required Course Texts

Akbar, N. (1996). *Breaking the Chains of Psychological Slavery*. Tallahassee, FL: Mind

Asante, M. K. (1992). *Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press

McCall, N. (1994). *Makes Me Wanna Holler*. New York: Vintage

Molifi, K. A and Aberry, A.S. (1996). *African Intellectual Heritage*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press

Course Description

Identity represents one of the unique ways in which we define people. There is little doubt that society plays a pivotal role in the construction of identity. Equally as important is garnering an understanding of how identity manifests itself, from a particular racial or ethnic perspective, within intimate and broad societal contexts.

This is a course that is fundamentally concerned with the question of identity in the context of African American ideology. More specifically, this course takes a closer look at African American identity and how it shapes the notion of negritude and afrocentricity. It is through the complicating of negritude and afrocentricity that we begin to understand identity formation. Thus, we will approach this course with an understanding these concepts work both independently and in concert with one another.

This course approaches intellectual inquiry from a multi-disciplinary perspective. We will make use of literature from a range of social science disciplines in an effort to fully understand the course's main themes.

Course Requirements and Policies

The essay and response papers must be typed, double-spaced in 12-point font, Times New Roman with standard 1.25 inch margins. More specifically, the Essay and Research

Paper must conform to the APA guidelines. Any assignment that does not meet the aforementioned standards will not be accepted. Rather, assignment will be returned and must be resubmitted while conforming to the specified guidelines and will be counted as late (You should refer to the policy governing late assignments). Additional instructions will be provided at a later date in an effort to provide even further clarity to the guidelines.

Late Policy

All assignments are expected to be turned in at the appropriate due date at the beginning of class. Late response papers will not be accepted. The students who turn in Essays late will lose one-third of a letter grade for each day. Following the seven days, Essay will not be accepted under any circumstances. There are some instances in which concessions will be made for individuals who have legitimate excuses. You should contact me immediately if you need to turn an assignment in late, provided you have a legitimate excuse.

Attendance Policy

Attendance in this course is VERY important and you are expected to attend each class session, on time! I will take attendance daily at the beginning of class. If you enter class tardy, it is your responsibility to make sure, at the end of class, that you were counted as present. Tardiness of more than 15 minutes will be counted as a regular absence. If you miss class your participation grade will be adversely affected.

Should you have questions concerning attendance, you should refer to university policy governing excessive absences and the penalties which may result.

Course Grading

The final grade in this course will be based on the completion of Response Papers, Critical Essay, Class Participation, and Research Paper

Response Papers

You will write five response papers during the semester. They will be evaluated as check (3pts), check (2pts), and check minus (1pt). Additional instructions on how to complete response papers will be provided at a later date.

Critical Essay

During the semester, you will write a critical essay that interrogates *Makes Me Wanna Holler*

Class Participation

In this course, extraordinary value is placed on the sharing of ideas as we approach learning as a collaborative intellectual process. To that end, it is very important that you actively participate in class. Active participation is characterized as, but not limited to, contributing on a regular basis to class discussion. Such contribution will be measured from both an oral and written perspective. You should also be able to show a command of the readings as we discuss them in class.

Since class participation is such a vital part of the course, it will be very difficult to earn a high course grade if students do not engage in regular participation. Simply stated, class attendance is extremely important as credit cannot be earned for class participation if you are absent. If you have specific questions about effective and meaningful class participation you should raise them as you deem necessary.

Research Paper

At the end of the semester, you will complete a research paper that deals with one of the courses' main themes. A more in-depth breakdown of this particular assignment will be provided prior to the due date.

Grading

Grade Breakdown

Response Papers (5) 25%
Critical Essay 20%
Class Participation 15%
Research Paper 40%

Grading Scale

A (93-100)
B (83-87)
C (73-77)
D (63-67)
F (59 and Below)
(+/-scale will be

Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism, defined as, "representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic endeavor," is a serious offense in any academic setting. We will discuss proper use of sources this semester and I expect that you will employ the strategies we discuss. If I find evidence that you have deliberately committed any form of plagiarism, including but not limited to, obtaining a paper from an online paper mill or fraternity file, having someone else write a paper for you, or paraphrasing or copying from an outside source without acknowledging the source, I will penalize you consistent with University Policy, which usually means a failing grade for either the assignment or the course. Please keep this in mind as you complete assignments in this course.

Classroom Conduct

Many ideas will be shared in our classroom and I want each person to feel that his/her contribution is respected and valued. Therefore, disruptive and inconsiderate behavior

will not be tolerated, especially language or behavior exhibiting prejudice – racism, and sexism. Our class will have lively discussions, and we should be prepared for the fact that we will not always agree. However, make sure that you are prepared to stand behind any statement you make. Personal bigotry and careless insults have no place in a college classroom.

Additionally, use of any sort of mobile device during class is not permitted as they may distract others while simultaneously disrupting the intellectual process. If you violate this policy your participation and overall course grade will be adversely affected. You should also be aware that I will not formally address violations of this policy. Rather, should you not comply with our code of conduct the penalty will be automatically assessed.

Daily Schedule

Week 1

1//8 – Late Start

1/10 – Late Start

Unit One: Theoretical Underpinnings of Identity

Week 2

1/15 – The Cross Model of Identity Development

1/17 – Course Overview

- What does this course seek to advance?
- A Duality of Negritude and Afrocentricity in the context of Identity

Week 3

1/22 – Identity: A Sociological Perspective

- **Read:** Stets and Burke, (p. 224-237)
- **Read:** Stryker and Burke, (p. 284-297)
- **Response Paper #1 Due**

1/24 – Group Assignment

Unit Two: Identity in the Context of Slavery

Week 4

1/29 – Understanding Slavery

- **Reading will be handed out on 1/24**

1/31 – Slavery and the Mind

- **Read:** Akbar, (p. 2-25)
- **Response Paper #2 Due**

Week 5

2/5 – Ideology and Emancipation of Identity

- **Read:** Akbar, (p. 27-47)

2/7 – Race, Religion and Identity

- **Read:** Akbar, (p. 51-68)
- **Response Paper #3 Due**

Unit Three: Identity in a Cultural Context

Week 6

2/12 – Culture and Identity

- **Read:** Asante and Aberry (p. 189-192)
- **Read:** Asante and Aberry (p. 193-201)
- **Read:** Asante and Aberry (p. 243-247)

2/14 – Practical Underpinnings of Identity

- **Read:** McCall, (p. 3-73)

Week 7

2/19 – Identity and McCall

- **Read:** McCall, (p. 74-145)

2/21 – Identity and McCall Cont'd

- **Read:** McCall, (p. 149-224)

Week 8

2/26 – Identity and McCall Cont'd

- **Read:** 227-309

2/28 – Concluding Identity from the Perspective of McCall

- **Read:** McCall, (p. 310-416)

Week 9

3/4 – **Peer Review of McCall Essay**

3/6 – **McCall Essay Due**

Spring Break: Take a trip to a warm climate and have fun!

Unit Four: Towards an Understanding of Negritude

Week 11

3/18 – Conceptualizing Negritude

- **Reading will be sent via email as PDF Document**

3/20 – Philosophy and Negritude

- **Read:** Asante and Aberry, (p. 287-307)

Week 12

3/25 – Booker T. Washington, WEB DuBois and Negritude

- **Read:** Asante and Aberry, (p. 483-499)

3/27 – TBA

- **Response Paper #4 Due**

Week 13

4/1 – TBA

4/3 – TBA

Unit Five: Afrocentricity and Beyond

Week 14

4/8 – Asante, (p. 3-40)

4/10 – Asante, (p. 40-80)

- **Response Paper #5 Due**

Week 15

4/15 – Asante, (p. 81-120)

4/17 – Asante, (p. 121-158)

Week 16

4/22 – Asante, (p. 161-193)

4/24 – **Research Paper Due**