The ways in which to teach a course on African Diaspora Studies is almost as diverse as the Diaspora itself. This interdisciplinary field can be approached from a variety of perspectives. Although literary scholars, historians, and social scientists all have important contributions to Diaspora Studies, most courses in this area primarily reflect the disciplinary training of the professor as well as her or his research interests. As such, this course will primarily examine the African Diaspora from a sociological and social science perspective, with a focus on the ways in which the Diaspora intersects with gender and sexuality. Nonetheless, the course will underscore how other perspectives compliment and amend social science inquiry. And while we will acknowledge the historical foundations for many of the contemporary issues now facing the African Diaspora, we will primarily focus on topical issues and modern-day dynamics in the U.S. and across the globe. This course will center on the following guiding questions:

- What is African Diaspora Studies?  How has global racism impacted people of African descent around the world?  How does socio-economic class, sexuality and/or gender influence individual and group experiences of being “Black”?  How has society shaped the African Diaspora?  And conversely, how has the African Diaspora shaped particular societies and the world?

To help tackle these questions, this reading and participation intensive seminar will not assume a uniform “Black” experience and will analyze family dynamics from a critical race feminist perspective. Four central themes of critical race feminism (CRF) are:

1) Social identities are historically and culturally specific and change over time.
2) Race, class, gender, and sexuality are not separate identities that are easily distinguishable from one another. These social identities intersect and reinforce each other. For example, one cannot talk about race without examining its implications for gender and vice versa.
3) CRF acknowledges the importance of laws, policies, and institutions in the perpetuation of inequalities.
4) Finally, CRF is skeptical of concepts such as objectivity, neutrality, and meritocracy. Therefore, ideas of equality must be critically examined.

**Course Expectations and Evaluation:**
1) This is a reading and participation intensive course. Readings are due on the date they are listed. Come to class ready to discuss them.

2) If you miss class, you are responsible for getting notes from a classmate. A doctor, school administrator, or other certified official must verify an absence in order for it to be excused.
Notes from parents or legal guardians will not be accepted.

3) You will be evaluated in three areas.

*Class Participation (30%):* This includes contributing to class discussions, current events, in-class writing assignments, and pop quizzes. In-class texting is strictly prohibited and will negatively impact your participation grade. Other class disruptions and tardiness will also have a negative impact on your class participation. *Do not* come to class if you are more than five minutes late unless you have permission from the professor. After the class has been in session for five minutes the door will be shut. *Do not enter if the door is closed.* You cannot make up in-class assignments or pop-quizzes if you are not present unless you have an excused absence.

Discussions will focus on the readings and pertinent current event. Students are encouraged to critique all the assigned readings, to dissect the debates within them, and to speak at least twice per class period. Also, the guiding questions posed in the first paragraph of this syllabus should be addressed, in one form or another, in every class discussion.

Further, students are *required* to send the professor two questions per reading by 11:59 p.m. on *Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays* to help structure class discussions. Questions should demonstrate that you have done the reading, but should not be so particular that it stifles conversation. Questions that connect readings from previous sections of the course are highly encouraged.

Here are examples of **good** questions for the reading “Egypt in America: *Black Athena*, Racism and Colonial Discourse.”

⇒ How did *Black Athena* challenge the idea of objective scholarship?
⇒ How has Egypt come to symbolize the tensions between Europe and Africa?
⇒ How does Tugrul Keskin’s discussion of Orientalism in “Sociology of Africa” differ from Robert Young’s in “Egypt in America”?

Here are **bad** examples for questions about “Egypt in America: *Black Athena*, Racism and Colonial Discourse.”

⇒ What is *Black Athena*?
⇒ Why is Egypt important?
⇒ What is Orientalism?

*Short Statements (50%):* Short, two page statements will be due via email by the start of class on the assigned dates. There are ten assigned statements. These statements should be focused on the assigned readings and address one or more of the guiding questions in the first paragraph of the syllabus. Although it is not imperative to directly mention each reading, statements should at least tackle the ideas presented in all of them.

Statements will be evaluated based on the following criteria: (a) an introduction that distinctly states your topic and why it is important; (b) responses should have a logical flow with supporting evidence from the readings and lecture; (c) a succinct critique of the pertinent issues; (d) and all papers should be typed, double spaced, and NO MORE than two pages. Each of the two page statements are worth ten points each, for a total of 100. The topic and due dates for the statements are below:
Paper 1: Covers sections one and two, and is due on Sept. 20th
Paper 2: Complicating Identity, Experiencing the Diaspora, due on Sept. 25th
Paper 3: Black Women and U.S. Citizenship, due on Oct. 2nd
Paper 4: Colorism, due on Oct. 11th
Paper 5: Genocide, due on Oct. 23rd
Paper 6: Religion and Morality, due on Oct. 31st
Paper 7: The Politics of Sex, due on Nov. 8th
Paper 8: HIV & AIDS in the Diaspora, due on Nov. 15th
Paper 9: Interpersonal Violence, due on Nov. 22nd
Paper 10: Hip Hop Nation or Hip Hop Diaspora?, due on Dec. 6th

c. Final Exam (20%): The last fraction of your final grade will consist of an in-class, 5 - 7 page written exam.

Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>94-100= A</th>
<th>70-73= C</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90-93= A-</td>
<td>66-69= C-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86-89= B+</td>
<td>62-65= D+</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82-85= B</td>
<td>58-61= D</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78-81= B-</td>
<td>54-57= D-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>74-77= C+</td>
<td>53-00= F</td>
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Academic Integrity
Academic integrity is a standard of utmost importance in this course. Guidelines for academic integrity in written work are posted on the Boston College website at:

www.bc.edu/integrity

If you have any questions pertaining to the academic integrity guidelines, please come and talk with me for more clarification. If you are caught violating Boston College’s policies on academic integrity, you will receive a failing grade for the assignment and the appropriate Dean will be notified in accordance to the rules set forth by Boston College.

Required Readings:
Book:


Readings marked with an (*) indicates that they are from one of these two books.

Ereserve Readings: To access e-reserve readings (a) go to the libraries home page; (b) click on “more catalog search options;” (c) click on “Course/On-line Reserves;” and (d) Search by my last name, McGuffey.

The professor reserves the right to incorporate additional readings throughout the course.
Reading Schedule:

**What is African/Africana/Black/Diaspora Studies?**

**Sept. 4:** First Day of Class – No Readings


AND


AND


**Thinking About “Blackness,” Thinking About Race**

**The Work of Du Bois**


AND


AND


**Africa in the Western Imagination**


**Sept. 20: PAPER 1 is DUE!**

Complicating Identity, Experiencing the Diaspora
AND
AND

Sept. 25: PAPER 2 is DUE!
AND

Black Women & U.S. Citizenship

*Sept. 30: Harris-Perry, Melissa V. 2011. Sister Citizen. Chapters 2 and 3.

*Oct. 2: PAPER 3 is DUE!

Colorism
AND
In Class Video Clips: CNN & Dateline discuss colorism

AND
In Class Video Clip: Colorism in Africa (from the Grio)


Oct. 11: PAPER 4 is DUE!

Oct. 14: NO CLASS – Enjoy Your Break!
**Genocide**


AND

Oct. 23: PAPER 5 IS DUE!

**Religion & Morality**


Oct. 30: PAPER 6 IS DUE!

AND

**The Politics of Sex**


AND
Nov. 8: PAPER 7 is DUE!

AND

HIV & AIDS in the Diaspora

AND

AND


Nov. 15: PAPER 8 is DUE!

AND

Interpersonal Violence

Nov. 22:  PAPER 9 is DUE!

AND

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**Hip Hop Nation or Hip Hop Diaspora?**


AND

AND
In Class Video Clip: Dream Worlds

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Nov. 27 – 29: NO CLASS!!! Have a Great Break!!!


AND


AND
Fatima El-Tayeb. 2003. “‘If You Can’t Pronounce My Name, You Can Just Call Me Pride’: Afro-German Activism, Gender and Hip Hop.” *Gender & History* 15(3): 460-486.

AND
In Class Video Clip: German Hip Hop

Dec. 6: PAPER 10 is DUE!

AND

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Dec 9: No Assigned Readings (Last day of regularly scheduled class)

LAST EXAM will be given during finals week (TBA)
Health Service Resources

**Boston College Resources**

**Health Services**, 119 Cushing Hall
552-3225
Emergency (24 hours): 552-3227

**Counseling Services**, 108 Gasson Hall
552-3310

**Women’s Resource Center**, 213 McElroy Hall
552-3489

**Sexual Assault Network**
552-BC11 (24 hour hotline)

**BC Police Dept.**
Emergency: 552-4444
Non-emergency: 552-3475

**Office of Health Promotion**
552-990

**Boston Area Resources**

**Boston Area Rape Crisis Center**
617-492-7273

**Battered Women’s Hotline**
617-661-7203

**Casa Myrna Vazque**
English/Spanish Hotline
617-521-0100

**GLBTQ Domestic Violence Project**
Hotline: 1-800-832-1901
Office: 617-354-6056

**Mass. Coalition for Battered Women**
1-800-799-SAFE
617-248-0922

**The Network/ La Red**
English/Spanish Hotline
Serves lesbians and bisexual women, women involved with other women, and transgendered individuals (MTF & FTM)
Hotline/Linea de Crisis: 617-742-4911
TTY: 617-227-4911

**Victim Rights Law Center**
617-399-6720

**Hispanic Black Gay Coalition**
617-487-HBGC (4242)
Services: New Leadership Institute, LGBTQ Mentorship, Domestic Violence, LGBTQ Christian Worship