

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR INCLUSION OF A COURSE IN THE
GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM:
EDUCATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL: AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES COLLEGE: ARTS & SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT CONTACT: VICTOR O. OKAFOR CONTACT PHONE: 7-3460
CONTACT EMAIL: VICTOR.OKAFOR@EMICH.EDU

1. Subject Code, Number, and Title: AAS 232 Politics in the African American Experience (03 hrs)

2. **CREDIT HOURS** 03 HRS

3. Course Description

AAS 232 Politics in the African American Experience is a study of Black political behavior in the United States and its evolution from protest to institutional, electoral politics. It examines the functioning and dynamics of the American political system as they relate to African Americans, from historical and contemporary perspectives.

4. This course is (check one):

- an existing course with no revisions (need not go through the input system)
- an existing course with revisions (attach this form to Request for Course Revision form)
- a new course (attach this form to Request for New Course form)

5. Check the General Education requirement this course is intended to meet. If the course is to be proposed for more than one requirement, submit a separate form for each one.

- Effective Communication**
- Quantitative Reasoning (*QR designation*)**
- Writing Intensive (*WI designation*)**

X Perspectives on a Diverse World

- Global Awareness
- U.S. Diversity
- Knowledge of the Disciplines**
 - Arts
 - Humanities

- Science Social Science

Learning Beyond the Classroom (*LBC designation*)

- Self and Well Being
- Community Service, Citizenship, and Leadership
- Cultural and Academic Activities and Events
- Career and Professional Development
- International and Multicultural Experience
- Undergraduate Research

6. Rationale. Provide a concise, clear, jargon-free explanation of why this is a General Education course and how it fits into this specific area of the program. (The rationale should explain to students why they are taking the course. It should address both why it is part of the General Education program and why it fits into the particular category.) This rationale should appear on the general course syllabus provided here and should be included in specific course syllabi given to students.

AAS 232 Politics in the African American Experience is a study of black political behavior in the United States and its evolution from protest to institutional, electoral politics. In examining the functioning and dynamics of the American political system from historical and contemporary perspectives, the course also compares and contrasts the black political experience with other minority group politics in the United States.

AAS 232 meets the U.S. diversity requirement of general education because it uses the African American political experience and the transformative contributions that African American historic political struggles and minority group politics have made to the expansion and public appreciation of democratic principles, values, and practices in the United States as a means of not only providing students with a multicultural perspective on the evolution and functioning of the American political system, but also exposing them to the diversity that characterizes "issues and perspectives"¹ in the American political experience.

7. Clearly and concisely explain how this course meets each of the General Education outcomes for the requirement checked in number five (all outcomes should be addressed). To do this, (a) list the General Education outcomes for the requirement and explain how the course meets each outcome; and (b) explain, in general terms, the method(s) of evaluation to be used in the course and how these methods assess the degree to which students have met the General Education outcomes for this requirement.

a. In the U.S. Diversity course, students will..

1. Examine the complexity of their own cultural identities and how these relate to the cultural identities of others in the U.S.
2. Explore the causes and consequences of social intolerance in the U.S.
3. Examine the differences between social intolerance and institutionalized racism, ethnocentrism, and exclusion in the U.S.

¹ General Education Reform Committee, p. 5.

4. Explore how diversity has affected and continues to affect income distribution, economic mobility, political access, and the democratic process in the U.S.
5. Develop an awareness of alternative values, views, and communication styles in the U.S.

Expected Learning Outcomes of AAS 232 & Their Evaluation Methods

Learning Outcome 7a(1). AAS 232 students will explore the complexity of their own cultural identities and how they relate to the cultural identities of others in the U.S. by comparing and contrasting the assimilationist and multicultural perspectives of race relations. While the assimilationist perspective defines the American experience as a melting pot of cultures that pivots around the Anglo-American cultural heritage, the multiculturalists contend that the United States ought to be viewed and experienced as a plural and culturally and racially diverse society. AAS 232 students will examine critically both visions of the American society in order to determine to what degree and how each one allows for or fails to allow for the germination and fertilization of distinct cultural identities within the American majority-minority national fabric. They will also examine how historically and theoretically the majority group cultural identities relate to those of the minority groups and vice-versa either under an assimilationist or a multicultural framework. AAS 232 students will further explore their cultural identities and the nature of the interaction between majority group and minority group politics by comparatively examining two additional models for studying majority-minority group politics in the United States, namely the ethnic group model (which emphasizes the prime role of ethnic identity politics), and the internal colonialism model (which stresses the impact of the majority group's domination of the politics, economics and cultures of minority groups).

Evaluation Method 7b(1). This outcome is measured through critical and reflective writing that is carried out on my web caucus conference and through take-home essay examination questions that require the students to demonstrate an understanding of the assimilationist theory, the multicultural perspective, the ethnic group model and the internal colonialism model of race relations in terms of how they impact upon the black cultural identity relative to the cultural identities of others.

Learning outcome 7a(2). AAS 232 students will explore the roles that the white supremacist ideology, racism, racial prejudice, racial stereotypes and ethnophaulism (a racial or ethnic group's derogation of another) have played as causes of social intolerance in the United States and also explore their consequences, such as (i) the historic disenfranchisement of African Americans in the United States, particularly in the South, and (ii) the social, racially segregationist system of Jim Crow. In examining those consequences of social intolerance, AAS 232 students will study and understand key minority counteractive measures, such as a) the modern black civil rights movement, (b) the Hispanic (Latino) protest movement, and (c) the Native American protest movement and how those movements have impacted the evolution of African American politics.

Evaluation Method 7b(2). Specifically, this outcome is measured through critical and reflective writing assignment on the web caucus and through take-home essay examination questions that require the students to demonstrate an understanding of the white supremacist ideology, racism, racial prejudice, racial stereotypes and ethnophaulism as causes of social intolerance in the United States. Such essays also challenge the students' understanding of the consequences of the afore-mentioned factors, such as the historic disenfranchisement of African Americans in the South and the social, racially segregationist system of Jim Crow.

Learning outcome 7a(3). As an avenue for examining the differences between social intolerance (as delineated in the preceding outcome #2) and institutionalized racism, ethnocentrism, and exclusion in the U.S., AAS 232 will expose its students to the checkered evolution of the American political system from an

ideology and practice of exclusion of the *Cultural Other* (that is, cultural groups different from the majority culture) to measured inclusion. Specifically, AAS 232 students will learn about how African Americans were legally enslaved for 250 years in the United States as a form of institutionalized racism; they will also learn about how Southern States used constitutional provisions and legislation, such as the Grand father clause (which required a voter to prove that his/her grandfathers voted on or before January 1, 1865), literacy tests and character tests as institutionally racist instruments to disenfranchise African Americans; and they will learn about the Supreme Court's decision of *Plessy vs. Ferguson* (1896) that institutionalized the racially segregationist practice of Jim Crow as yet another form of institutionalized racism and exclusion. AAS 232 students will also learn about the political system's transformation from a practice of exclusion of the cultural other to gradual inclusion, as demonstrated by such inclusive instruments as the 13th amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1865 (which extended formal freedom to the previously enslaved Africans), the 14th amendment of 1868 (which extended the equal protection clause of the Constitution to African Americans), and the 15th amendment of 1870 (which extended the right to vote to African American males). The students will also learn about inclusive legal reforms, such as the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Evaluation method 7b(3). In order to specifically measure the students' understanding of the meaning of institutional racism and its distinctions from social intolerance (that is, outcome 7a(3)), AAS 232 students are given a take-home essay examination through which they examine the nature and effects of such examples of institutional racism as the Grand father clause, Supreme court annulments of Reconstruction civil rights Acts & *Plessy vs. Ferguson* (1896)'s affirmation of the social system of Jim Crow. The exam will also test their understanding of the nature of ethnocentrism, such as White Supremacism, and the nature of exclusion of the cultural other, such as the widespread lynchings of African Americans in the South, housing discrimination and job discrimination. In addition, the students engage in web caucus-based reflective and critical writing related to this outcome.

Learning outcome 7a(4). AAS 232 students will explore how diversity has affected and continues to affect income distribution, economic mobility, political access, and the democratic process in the U.S. by examining comparatively and understanding as follows:

- Early discriminatory acts that were instituted against African Americans and other minorities, such as the exclusion of African Americans from jobs by Jim Crow laws, the restriction of the Chinese and Japanese from certain occupations by the California Alien Land Act of 1913 and similar laws enacted in Arizona, Idaho, Louisiana, Montana and New Mexico & the reservation policy of the 1870s that imposed occupational restrictions on Native Americans;
- Ghettoization of housing patterns and how the lack of equal educational opportunities continues to affect the income, economic mobility, and political access of minorities
- Job discrimination based on gender, age and sexual preference;
- Relationships between discrimination in educational opportunity and poor educational outcomes for the minority, which, in turn, affect income opportunities, economic mobility, quality of housing, and political access;
- Job discrimination practices, such as last hired, first fired & informal hiring practices of majority member employers
- Differences in the median income of families by race, ethnicity and gender
- How Jim Crow laws & practices restricted the political access of African Americans (regressive constitutional reforms by Southern states, the grand-father clause, poll tax & white primaries)

Evaluation method 7b(4). Specifically, this outcome is measured through examination questions and web-caucus based reflective and critical writing assignments. In addition, students are required to research, generate and submit written discussions of longitudinal and latest census and statistical information on

income distribution, home ownership, business ownership and educational attainments as indicators of economic mobility by race, gender, and ethnicity. In order to measure political access, students are required to research, generate and critically examine statistics pertaining to voter participation rates by race, gender and ethnicity.

Learning outcome 7a(5). AAS 232 will help its students to develop an awareness of alternative values, views, and communication styles in the United States by having them examine and understand a set of coping and political communication strategies that African American and other minority groups politics have employed, historically and contemporaneously, in their efforts to advance their political interests in the United States. These strategies are known as accommodation, separatism, and radicalism, and they embody values, views and communication styles that tend to differ from those of majority group politics. For instance, as a communication style, African American politics employs religious sermons to communicate political messages--a practice that is diametrically opposed to the majority culture's institutional insistence on the separation of church and state. Furthermore, African American diplomats tend to use what's known in the literature as back-channel avenues to alert leading community leaders of pending foreign policies that may hurt African American interests.

-Accommodation involves acceptance of the value system of the dominant culture through an economic or a political route (e.g. Booker T. Washington's leadership in the African American experience; the use of this strategy by Asian Americans, Chinese Americans, and Japanese Americans, Korean Americans, Chicano Americans, Greeks, and East European Jewish immigrants)

-Separatism involves the rejection of the value system of the majority society such as Marcus Garvey's Back to Africa movement, the Nation of Islam, the Amish and Mennonites, Native Americans, Hasidic Jews, Ghettos, Barrios and Chinatowns

-Radicalism involves attempts to alter the value system of the majority society, and it includes old-style radicalism and new-style radicalism

Evaluation method 7b(5). This outcome is measured through a book review that students must turn in before the end of the semester in which they must identify and discuss three "Strategies for Coping with Minority Status" in the United States, which Michael C. Lemay analyzes in his book, The Perennial Struggle, Race, Ethnicity, and Minority Politics in the United States. The strategies are accommodation, separatism and radicalism, which embody alternative values, views and communication styles. In section II of the book review, the students must discuss the book's illustrations of how the African American community has applied each of those three strategies; and in section III, the student must compare and contrast the African American experience in employing those strategies with that of one of the minority groups discussed by Lemay.

8. Attach a syllabus (1-inch margins and 10-12 pt. font). The syllabus must include the rationale from #6 above and clearly reflect the outcomes and methods of evaluation detailed in #7 above.

Please submit all materials in electronic form.

Action of the Department/College

1. Department

Vote of department faculty: For _____ Against _____ Abstentions _____

Department Head

Date

2. College

College Dean

Date

Action of General Education Advisory Committee

Vote of General Education Committee: For _____ Against _____ Abstentions _____

Chairperson, General Education Advisory Committee

Date

Approval

Associate Vice-President for Undergraduate Studies and Curriculum

Date