

American Studies 101:
Introduction to American Studies
4 Week Summer Module 1
May 16 – June 10, 2022

“What we do is more important than what we say or what we say we believe.”

“Hip-Hop is diverse. But the white, capitalist producers and distributors of Hip-Hop are most interested in the Hip-Hop that is misogynist, that is Black-hating, that is pugilistic, that is to say all about fighting and war and killing and gangsterism.”

- bell hooks

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Office Hours: By appointment

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Introductory Zoom Meeting to discuss the syllabus and answer questions will be on Monday May 16, 2022 at 10 AM. I will email you the link to the meeting soon. A recording of this meeting will be posted to Brightspace following the end of the meeting.

Course Description

In this interdisciplinary seminar, we will explore the political and cultural histories of the Americas. We will investigate the basic concepts and theories for analyzing race relations in the United States. This course surveys literature from ethnic studies, political science, sociology, anthropology, history, and other disciplines to explore how race and racialization processes have been articulated over the course of time for all groups. We will also excavate artifacts from popular culture in the form of novels, songs, films, paintings, poems, and more to understand America and to answer the question: What is American Studies?

Our course materials aid us in thinking through this question through a political and historical lens, covering the origins of the American Studies discipline, the push for Ethnic Studies with the Third World Liberation Front, and where American Cultural Studies is today. By taking this course, students will be exposed to intersectional, comparative, and emergent approaches to the study of race, culture, diaspora, and politics that can inform contemporary racial justice movements.

This class is entirely asynchronous. There will be no lectures and students will be responsible for engaging with the materials that are assigned to them via Brightspace modules on their own time. There are three main criteria that inform your final grade: Discussion Boards via Brightspace Modules, Participation, and your Final Project. Information regarding these assignments is below.

Learning outcomes

At the end of the course, students will:

- acquire the knowledge and critical skills pertinent to examine American Studies issues
- be able to identify and summarize the key historical and contemporary issues relevant to American history.
- be able to compose and present a report on a relevant American Studies issue.

Suggested Texts/Readings

- Gloria Anzaldua and Cherrie Moraga, *This Bridge Called My Back*
- James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*
- Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz, *An Indigenous People's History of the United States*
- Erika Lee, *The Making of Asian America: A History*
- Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*

All assignments will be submitted via Brightspace

Additional Resources

- Word processor software: A reminder that [MS Office is free for all students](https://www.itap.purdue.edu/shopping/software/product/office365.html) (<https://www.itap.purdue.edu/shopping/software/product/office365.html>)
- Writing support is available via Purdue OWL: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html

Course Assignments, Exams and Grading

- (10%) Participation: Participation will be graded through your interactions with Brightspace. In addition to your assignment submissions, I will be monitoring your interaction with the course. Brightspace takes account of how many of the modules you have clicked through. With that said, you are expected to be engaged with all assigned readings, tasks, and submissions.
- (35%) Discussion Boards: Due Weekly. Your critical response is due Thursday by 11:59 PM. Your responses to your peers' work are due Friday by 11:59 PM. Details below.
- (15%) Midterm Project Proposal: Due Sunday May 29, 2022 (end of week 2). Details below.
- (40%) Final Assignment: Friday June 10, 2022 (end of week 4). Three-part assignment. All parts are due at the same time. Details below.

Grades

In this class grades reflect the sum of your achievement throughout the semester. You will accumulate points as described in the assignments portion above, with each assignment graded according to a rubric. At the end of the semester, final grades will be calculated by adding the total points earned and translating those numbers into the following letters.

97 = A+ 87 = B+ 77 = C+ 67 = D+ 59 and below = F
 93 = A 83 = B 73 = C 63 = D
 90 = A- 80 = B- 70 = C- 60 = D-

ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

DISCUSSION BOARD ASSIGNMENT

You are required to submit a 250 word minimum critical response directly related to what you have learned from this week's materials (readings + media). You must post this response in the module that correlates to the week of the class we're in, e.g. Module 1 = Week 1. Also, you are responsible for responding to AT LEAST two of your classmates' posts.

You will be graded on the following items:

- 1) You must make a clear argument in the form of a well-articulated thesis statement.
- 2) The presence of themes/concepts that demonstrate connections between your own ideas and the source materials
- 3) You need to directly cite at least **two** class readings in the response and make the connection explicit. Provide proper citations to the references used. Please note that any direct quote used and not properly cited is plagiarism. The paper is required to have proper citation. The formatting style (e.g., MLA, APA) is your choice. Please refer to Purdue OWL for additional information on how to properly cite work (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html).
- 4) You must respond to two of your classmates discussion posts. Your responses to your peers only need to be a few sentences. I am looking for brevity here, while still being able to articulate a well thought out idea related to our course materials.

Due dates: Your critical response and discussions are due weekly on **Thursdays by 11:59 PM**. Your responses to your peers' submissions are due on **Fridays by 11:59 PM**.

MIDTERM PROJECT PROPOSAL

You are required to submit a 1-page maximum paper that may build upon ideas presented in your critical responses, although it is not necessarily limited to this topic. You are encouraged to incorporate ideas from our text and course materials to articulate your thesis. This paper proposal must directly cite at least **two** class readings in the paper and please be sure to make the connection explicit. Provide proper citations to the references used. Please note that any direct quote used and not properly cited is plagiarism. The paper is required to have proper citation. The formatting style (e.g., MLA, APA) is your choice. Please refer to Purdue OWL for additional information on how to properly cite work (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html).

Due date: The midterm project proposal paper is due on **Sunday May 29, 2022 (end week 2) by 11:59pm via Brightspace**. No late submissions will be accepted. There are no exceptions.

FINAL ASSIGNMENT

The final is cumulative and is made up of three parts—(a) digital poster, (b) written paper portion, (c) oral presentation. You are being asked to answer the question: **What is American Studies?**

- **Digital poster (33%):** Each student will create a poster, that is in digital format, answering the question: What is the study of America? In other words, what are some words or imagery that you would associate with American Cultural Studies. What have you learned in this class? Please save this image as a JPEG or PDF.
- **Written paper portion (33%):** Explain your image in 800-1000 words or less (max 3 pages long). Why did you choose the words and/or images? How do they represent American Studies?

Your paper should be approximately 1200 words or less (max 3 pages long), double-spaced, typed, with 12-point Times New Roman font, and 1-inch margins all around. In your paper, you are expected to apply what you have learned throughout the course of the semester to contextualize your argument. The paper must reference at least 3 terms that you've learned in class, and it must cite at least 3 course readings. The paper is required to have proper citation. The formatting style (e.g., MLA, APA) is your choice. Please refer to Purdue OWL for additional information on how to properly cite work:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html.

You will be graded on the references to materials that you have learned in class. In summary, your grade will be based on the inclusion of the following:

- Paper making a clear argument and substantiating it with course material
- Paper citing at least 3 course readings
- Paper referencing to at least 3 terms that you've learned in class
- Paper bringing in one outside academic sources (e.g., book or article)

(Note: When working on your final assignment, think of themes associated with Africana/Asian America, such as: American History, Ideas of Power Relations Among Racial/Ethnic Groups, Black Identity, Resistance, Social Movements, Model Minorities; Internalized Racial Oppression; Acculturation and Identity; Political Behavior; Portrayal in Popular Culture. I also encourage you to think about African Americans and Asian Americans in relations to other marginalized communities.)

- **Oral Presentation (34%):** Record your presentation via zoom (Tutorial: <https://youtu.be/P6cTbnUPwfY>). You may use PowerPoint, or simply have your digital poster projected. Please take 5-7 minutes to discuss both your digital poster and your paper. Please talk about your takeaways from the course materials.

Due Dates:

- The digital poster, written paper, and recorded oral presentation are all due on **Friday, June 10, 2022 (end week 4) by 11:59pm EST via Brightspace**. No late submissions will be accepted. There are no exceptions.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

For students physically in the classroom:

Cell phone, texting, and laptops: Silence all cell phones and put them away at the beginning of class. If you need to make an emergency phone call, please do so outside. Do not text or surf the web in class, as it is disrespectful/a distraction to the class environment. If you become a distraction in class, you will be asked to leave. If you need to use a laptop in class, please come speak to me in advance.

For all students (in-person and online remote)

Audio and video recording (or any type of recording in the classroom or via online platform such as Brightspace) of course material and of instructor(s), without permission of the instructor(s), **IS NOT ALLOWED**. Notes are "considered to be 'derivative works' of the instructor's presentations and materials, and they are thus subject to the instructor's copyright in such presentations and materials." As such, they cannot be sold or bartered without the instructor's written permission. For further information, [see part J of the Purdue student miscellaneous conduct regulations](#).

- To be clear, ALL materials posted or given during live lectures are considered to be property of the instructor(s). ***Recordings of any type, without permission, are not allowed.***

The [Protect Purdue Plan](#), which includes the [Protect Purdue Pledge](#), is campus policy and as such all members of the Purdue community must comply with the required health and safety guidelines. Required behaviors in this class include: staying home and contacting the Protect Purdue Health Center (496-INFO) if you feel ill or know you have been exposed to the virus, wearing a mask [in classrooms and campus building](#), at all times (e.g., no eating/drinking in the classroom), disinfecting desk/workspace prior to and after use, maintaining proper social distancing with peers and instructors (including when entering/exiting classrooms), refraining from moving furniture, avoiding shared use of personal items,

maintaining robust hygiene (e.g., handwashing, disposal of tissues) prior to, during and after class, and following all safety directions from the instructor.

Students who are not engaging in these behaviors (e.g., wearing a mask) will be offered the opportunity to comply. If non-compliance continues, possible results include instructors asking the student to leave class and instructors dismissing the whole class. Students who do not comply with the required health behaviors are violating the University Code of Conduct and will be reported to the Dean of Students Office with sanctions ranging from educational requirements to dismissal from the university.

Any student who has substantial reason to believe that another person in a campus room (e.g., classroom) is threatening the safety of others by not complying (e.g., not wearing a mask) may leave the room without consequence. The student is encouraged to report the behavior to and discuss next steps with their instructor. Students also have the option of reporting the behavior to the [Office of the Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). See also [Purdue University Bill of Student Rights](#).

PURDUE POLICIES

Academic Guidance in the Event a Student is Quarantined/Isolated

If you become quarantined or isolated at any point in time during the semester, in addition to support from the Protect Purdue Health Center, you will also have access to an Academic Case Manager who can provide you academic support during this time. Your Academic Case Manager can be reached at acmq@purdue.edu and will provide you with general guidelines/resources around communicating with your instructors, be available for academic support, and offer suggestions for how to be successful when learning remotely. Importantly, if you find yourself too sick to progress in the course, notify your academic case manager and notify me via email. We will make arrangements based on your particular situation. The Office of the Dean of Students (odos@purdue.edu) is also available to support you should this situation occur.

Attendance Policy during COVID-19

Students should stay home and contact the Protect Purdue Health Center (496-INFO) if they feel ill, have any symptoms associated with COVID-19, or suspect they have been exposed to the virus. In the current context of COVID-19, in-person attendance will not be a factor in the final grades, but the student still needs to inform the instructor of any conflict that can be anticipated and will affect the submission of an assignment or the ability to take an exam. Only the instructor can excuse a student from a course requirement or responsibility. When conflicts can be anticipated, such as for many University-sponsored activities and religious observations, the student should inform the instructor of the situation as far in advance as possible. For unanticipated or emergency conflict, when advance notification to an instructor is not possible, the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible by email, through Brightspace, or by phone. When the student is unable to make direct contact with the instructor and is unable to leave word with the instructor's department because of circumstances beyond the student's control, and in cases of bereavement, quarantine, or isolation, the student or the student's representative should contact the Office of the Dean of Students via [email](#) or phone at 765-494-1747. Our course Brightspace includes a link on Attendance and Grief Absence policies under the University Policies menu.

Accommodations for Disabilities:

If you have any type of disability, whether apparent or non-apparent, learning, emotional, physical, or cognitive, and you need some accommodations or alternatives to lectures, assignments, or exams, please feel free to contact me to discuss accommodations for your access needs. Please remember that it is important that we talk about this at the beginning of the semester. Also note that students are encouraged to notify the Disability Resource Center (<http://www.purdue.edu/drc> or drc@purdue.edu or

by phone: 765-494-1247) of an impairment/condition that may require accommodations and/or classroom modifications.

Nondiscrimination

Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. More details are available on our course Brightspace table of contents, under University Policies.

Purdue University prohibits discrimination against any member of the University community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, disability, or status as a veteran. The University will conduct its programs, services and activities consistent with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and orders and in conformance with the procedures and limitations as set forth in Executive Memorandum No. D-1, which provides specific contractual rights and remedies. Purdue's nondiscrimination policy can be found at: http://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea_eou_statement.html.

Mental Health Statement

If you find yourself beginning to feel some stress, anxiety and/or feeling slightly overwhelmed, try [WellTrack](#). Sign in and find information and tools at your fingertips, available to you at any time.

If you need support and information about options and resources, please contact or see the [Office of the Dean of Students](#). Call 765-494-1747. Hours of operation are M-F, 8 am- 5 pm.

If you find yourself struggling to find a healthy balance between academics, social life, stress, etc. sign up for free one-on-one virtual or in-person sessions with a [Purdue Wellness Coach at RecWell](#). Student coaches can help you navigate through barriers and challenges toward your goals throughout the semester. Sign up is completely free and can be done on BoilerConnect. If you have any questions, please contact Purdue Wellness at evans240@purdue.edu.

If you're struggling and need mental health services: Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, services are available. For help, such individuals should contact [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) at 765-494-6995 during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or by going to the CAPS office of the second floor of the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours.

Grief Absence Policy for Students

Purdue University recognizes that a time of bereavement is very difficult for a student. The University therefore provides the following rights to students facing the loss of a family member through the Grief Absence Policy for Students (GAPS). GAPS Policy: Students will be excused for funeral leave and given the opportunity to earn equivalent credit and to demonstrate evidence of meeting the learning outcomes for missed assignments in the event of the death of a member of the student's family.

Academic Dishonesty

Purdue prohibits "dishonesty in connection with any University activity. Cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are examples of dishonesty." [Part 5, Section III-B-2-a, University Regulations] Furthermore, the University Senate has stipulated, "the commitment of

acts of cheating, lying, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest and must not be tolerated. Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest." [University Senate Doc 72-18, December 15, 1972]

Academic integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breeches of this value by either emailing integrity@purdue.edu or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted anonymously, the more information that is submitted provides the greatest opportunity for the university to investigate the concern.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can result in failure of the class. All work needs to be properly cited. For more information, please refer to:

<http://www.purdue.edu/odos/aboutodos/academicintegrity.php>

Violent Behavior Policy

Purdue University is committed to providing a safe and secure campus environment for members of the university community. Purdue strives to create an educational environment for students and a work environment for employees that promote educational and career goals. Violent Behavior impedes such goals. Therefore, violent behavior is prohibited in or on any University Facility or while participating in any university activity. For more information, please refer to:

http://www.purdue.edu/policies/pages/facilities_lands/i_2_3.shtml

Emergency Preparation

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted onto the course website or can be obtained by contacting the instructors or TAs via email or phone. You are expected to read your @purdue.edu email on a frequent basis. For more information, please refer to:

https://www.purdue.edu/ehps/emergency_preparedness/staff.html

This syllabus is subject to change.

Week	Topic	Assignments & Exercises	Readings
1	Syllabus + Box Orientation, bell hooks, Dunbar-Ortiz		Bell hooks, <i>Love is the Practice of Freedom</i> Dunbar-Ortiz, author's note – Ch. 4 (xi – 77) Dunbar-Ortiz, Ch. 9 – end (162 – end)
2	The Fire Next Time	Midterm project proposal due	Baldwin
3	The Making of Asian America		Lee, Introduction – Ch. 4 (1 – 108) Lee, Ch 14 – end (314 – end)
4	1992 LA Riots and Black/Asian Relations	Presentations Week/Final Assignments Due	Kim, "Violence and trauma as constitutive elements in Korean American racial identity formation: the 1992 L.A. riots/insurrection/saigu" and Viesca, "Native Guns and Stray Bullets: Cultural Activism and Filipino American Rap Music in Post-Riot Los Angeles"