ANT392R(31505)/AFR381(30455)/LAS391(40644)
AFRICAN DIASPORA ANTHROPOLOGY
SPRING 2013  Wednesdays 9 am – 12 pm; BEL 232

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Almost three decades ago, anthropologist and pioneer of African Diaspora Studies, St. Clair Drake, asserted, “the diaspora analogy…needs constant critical analysis if it is to be a useful guide to research as well as a striking metaphor.” This seminar is designed to introduce students to the variety of ideas that underlie the articulation of the construct of the “African diaspora.” Although structured through the understanding of the African diaspora as an historical formation, the focus is on the African diaspora as a distinct intellectual project as well as a political one. As such, we will explore the ways scholars have conceptualized and theorized the “diasporadic condition” of Black peoples, and how the community is imagined. These questions have undergirded the contemporary struggle over the meanings of race, place, identity, and consciousness within the African diaspora. Thus, their full examination necessitates intensive discussions and explorations of a number of issues.

In our engagement with theorizations of the African diaspora, we will explore, among other things, global/transnational understandings and articulations of Blackness; the (indispensable?) role of Africa in diasporic identity formations; the relationship between politics and Black cultural production and expression; the interrelationship of race, culture, gender, sexuality and ethnicity; notions of “roots” and “routes” in structuring the diasporadic condition; issues of cultural syncretism and hybridity; and the unstable contradiction between notions of “essentialist” origins and social constructions of Black identities.

This seminar meets the Dept. of Anthropology’s core requirement. As a “sixth” core course, it addresses both the anthropology and archaeology of the African Diaspora.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA:

1) **Attendance Policy:** Attendance is required, and roll will be taken. Seminar participants are allowed one absence (excused or unexcused). Each additional (unexcused) absence will result in a 5-point deduction.

2) **Seminar Coordination/Discussion Leading** (10 points each = 20 points): Seminar participants will each lead or co-lead two class discussions and prepare a 1-2 page outline for distribution at the beginning of class. Each outline should briefly summarize key points/arguments for the day’s reading(s) and provide questions/comments for group discussion.

3) **Critical Essays** (15 points each; 30 points total): Each essay must be 3-5 pages, single spaced. The first essay should critically assess the readings for “SECTION I: Framing the Discourse; Foundations.” For the second essay, consider the readings for “Politics of Diaspora Fieldwork” and focus on how you would situate yourself and your research politically. **Please submit both one hard copy and an electronic copy (email to the instructors). DUE DATES: February 27 (Paper 1) and April 3 (Paper 2).**

4) **Conference Paper and Presentation** (50 points): The final assignment consists of a conference paper of 8-9 pp. maximum (15-minute presentation). The paper topic should reflect the themes discussed in this course and its intersection with individual student research interests and the relevant outside readings. Papers will be presented to the class. **Please submit both one hard copy and an electronic copy (email to the instructors). DUE DATES (paper and presentation): April 24, May 1.**

**Policy on late assignments:** A late assignment will only be accepted with prior approval from the instructors. In this case, only a one-week extension of the deadline will be granted and 5 points will be deducted from the assignment grade.

COURSE MATERIALS:

All readings save for the books below will be posted on Blackboard under “Course Documents”.

**Required Texts:**

(The following books will be available at the UT Co-op.)

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

January 16  Introduction; Syllabus Overview

SECTION I  Framing the Discourse; Foundations

January 23  Anthropology and the African Diaspora


January 30  Framing Diaspora; Conceptualizing the African Diaspora


February 6  Ethiopianism, Pan-Africanism, African Nationalism, Negritude


February 13 Syncretism/Cultural Continuities: Creolization


SECTION II Archaeology’s Interventions

February 20 African Diaspora Archaeology


SECTION III Blackness and Global Racial Formations

February 27 Theorizing Blackness (Pt. I): Navigating the “Black Atlantic”


March 6 Theorizing Blackness (Pt. II): Race, Sexuality

Allen, Jafari (2011), Venceremos…

March 13 SPRING BREAK

SECTION IV Fieldwork in the Diaspora

March 20 Politics of Diaspora Fieldwork

http://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/handle/2152/6045

Association of Black Anthropologists, American Anthropological Association, Washington D.C.


http://www.barnard.edu/sfonline/africana/perry_01.htm


March 27
Caldwell (2006), Negras in Brazil...

April 3
Anderson, M. (2009), Black and Indigenous...

April 10

April 17
Burdick, J. (2013), The Color of Sound...

SECTION V
(Re)Envisioning African Diaspora Studies – Our Conference

April 24
Conference Papers – Panel 1

May 1
Conference Papers – Panel 2; course evaluations; final words!