

## History 327

# Racism and Resistance in Southern Africa and the United States

*"Racism, xenophobia and unfair discrimination have spawned slavery, when human beings have bought and sold and owned and branded fellow human beings as if they were so many beasts of burden."*

- Desmond Tutu

**Instructor:** Albertina Shifotoka

### **Augsburg General Education Requirements**

This course fulfills a Humanities LAF (Liberal Arts Foundation) general education requirement at Augsburg College.

### **Humanities Liberal Arts Foundation Statement**

This Humanities Liberal Arts Foundation will help you explore the range and possibilities of human experience. Depending on the course, you may investigate the diversity of human nature and culture, our forms of communication and persuasion, our powers of reason, sympathy, and imagination, our needs as individuals and roles as citizens, and our relationship to the beautiful, the transcendent, and the divine. As the philosopher Martha Nussbaum has written, however, all Humanities disciplines have something in common: they help students use reason and imagination to enter broader worlds of cultures, groups, and ideas.

Augsburg's Humanities departments are Communication Studies, English, History, Modern Languages,

Philosophy, and Religion. These six disciplines engage human experience from different perspectives using different modes of discourse, but they share a common goal of rigorous inquiry into the ways written and spoken language can record, discover, and creatively express the truths of human experience.

### **Purpose of the Course**

Southern Africa (Namibia and South Africa) and USA all experience a history of apartheid and racism. In Southern Africa, this came to an end with Namibian independence and the democratization of South Africa in the early 1990s. In the U.S. the racist legislation came off the books as a result of the African American Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. Yet, all these societies both in the USA and southern Africa are being haunted by the legacies of this history. These societies (especially in southern Africa) are faced with the challenges posed by the rapid and unequal process of globalization in today's world; the challenges posed by under and unequal development; and the long-term project of decolonizing the mind.

This course offers the opportunity to compare and contrast the southern African region with the United States. During this course, students will have the opportunity to directly see the legacies of colonialism and apartheid. Students will explore these crucial issues by meeting and interacting with leaders of government and civil society, as well as seeing and experiencing the concrete results of these realities at the community level. A crucial part of the program will be exploring the parallels between these societies and the United States.

Students will participate in a travel seminar in the Republic of South Africa. In addition, students will participate in a 5-day urban home stay in either the former black township of Katutura or the coloured community of Khomasdal followed by an 5-day rural home stay in the north-western Namibia. In addition, Southern Africa thus can be seen as a social laboratory to view effects of the very recent dismantling of racist legislation along with current challenges due to the legacies of colonialism and apartheid. Students will truly be witness to historical transitions.

### **Course Description**

This course explores historical parallels of the development in southern Africa and in the United States, strategies of resistance, the successes and limitations of political victories over apartheid and racism, and the lingering economic, social, political, and psychological effects of racism.

### **Required Readings**

Barndt, Joseph. *Understanding and Dismantling Racism: the Twenty-first Century Challenge to White America*. Fortress Press, 2007.

Fredrickson, George M. *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History*. Oxford University Press, 1996.

Hoyt Jr., Carlos. *The Pedagogy of the Meaning of Racism: Reconciling a Discordant Discourse*. National Association of Social Workers, 2012.

Leys, Colin and John S. Saul, eds. *Namibia's Liberation Struggle: The Two-edged Sword*. Ohio University Press, 1995.

Nerburn, Kent. *Neither Wolf nor Dog: On Forgotten Roads with an Indian Elder*. New World Library, 2002.

### **Supplemental Reading**

Boahen, Adu. *African Perspectives on Colonialism*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.

Loewen, James W. *Lies my Teacher Told Me: Everything your American History Textbook Got Wrong*. Simon and Schuster, 1995.

Munslow, Alun. *Deconstructing History*. Routledge, 1997.

Minnow, Martha. *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence*, Beacon Press, 1998.

Sakai, J. *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat*. Morningstar Press, 1989.

Van Rooyen P. and A. Du Pisani A. "Literature as Colonizing and Decolonizing Agent: The Case of Namibian Racial Imagery" in *Select Afrikaans and English Novels*. Prepared for the Conference "1904-2004—Decontaminating the Namibian Past," University of Namibia, Windhoek Campus, 2004.

### **Overarching Goals**

1. You will compare and contrast the history of racism in southern Africa and in the U.S.A.
2. You will develop a basic understanding of the contemporary history of resistance to colonialism, apartheid, and segregation in southern Africa and the United States.
3. You will deepen your understanding of the legacies arising from the history of apartheid and racism.
4. You will explore the impact of racism on your life and society.
5. You will reflect upon your role in perpetuating or confronting racism.

## Course Requirements (100%)

- **Class Participation (10%)** Effective class participation includes regular attendance, completion of assigned readings before class sessions, participation in class sessions, and a demonstrated effort to dialogue with speakers, ask probing questions, and relate assigned readings to class discussion topics. Please note that class participation is required for a passing grade. Absences for travel or visitors are not excused absences. Students are also responsible for getting notes, handouts and information regarding announcements from other students if they arrive late to class or miss a class session.
- **Urban Homestay Synthesis-1 (15%)** After the completion of the urban homestay, you will write one analytical essays (3-4 pages) reflecting on your experiences and exchanges with homestay families and other contacts on historical, political and all related social issues.
- **Rural Homestay Synthesis-2 (15%)** After the completion of the rural homestay, you will write one analytical essays (3-4 pages) reflecting on your experiences and exchanges with homestay families and other contacts on historical, political and all related social issues.
- **Creative Project (25%)**
  - **Autobiography (10%)** - Prepare a 10 min. presentation (you choose the creative format!) and write autobiographical essay (approx. 3-4 pages) describing the development and evolution of your own understanding of race and racism through the study of Namibian history. After placing yourself in the context of your own history and socio-economic position, you may choose to speculate what your position would have been during a particular period of/event in Namibian history. You may also speculate where you see, or would like to see your autobiography heading in the future, as a result of this new understanding. You must also submit a detailed bibliography
  - **Historical comparisons (15%)** - Prepare a 20 min. group presentation (you choose the creative format!) Students will analyse an aspect of the histories of racism and the resistance to racism in the United States and southern Africa, as well as analyse the aspect of apartheid and segregation. This assignment should look at the gap between the formal victories over apartheid and racist legislation and the lingering economic, social, political and psychological effects of racism.
- **Interdisciplinary Blog Assignment (5%)**: All students will be responsible for preparing two blog entries complete with photos during the semester. During this first week of the semester there will be a sign-up sheet posted, along with information about probable course content for the rest of the semester so that you can choose themes that most interest you and times of the semester that work best for you. The blogs will usually be written in groups of three (except a few groups of four). A week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday. Length of Blog Entries: Approximately one page per group
- **Final Integrative Project (30%)**: Final projects will address the Development Process, Religion, Political Science, History and Internship courses: This project can be done individually or in groups of up to three students. Projects should be creative (a play, a calendar, musical piece, etc.), and should: 1) be rooted in critical analysis of issues important to Namibia and/or South Africa, 2) draw upon your own experiences, and 3) be a synthesis of your learning that can be used to educate others on key issues facing Namibia and/or South Africa. Although this is an integrative project, each instructor will grade the final projects separately.

## Course Design

Sessions	Topic
Session 1	Introduction, Namibian people and culture
Session 2	Pre and post-colonial Namibia; Anti-racism and Diversity
Session 3	German Colonialism and Early Resistance
Session 4	The Liberation Struggle (Formation of Political Parties, the Exile Story)
Session 5	Apartheid and Segregation (Institutionalized Racism)
Session 6	Legacies of Apartheid and Segregation (Identity, Human Development, Land)
Session 7	Legacies of Apartheid and Segregation (Group Presentation)
Session 8	Wrap up

## Teaching Methodology

The instructor uses a student-centered methodology. Teaching strategies include lectures by instructors; small and large group discussions of required readings and experiences; films and videos; journaling exercises; interviews, and guest lectures by members of parliament, liberation struggle veterans and local historians.

## Additional Comments

### Explanation of Grades

Augsburg's grading system uses the following definitions:

Grade	Grade Points	Description
A	4.00	Excellent
A-	3.67	
B+	3.33	
B	3.00	Good
B-	2.67	
C+	2.33	
C	2.00	Satisfactory
C-	1.67	
D+	1.33	
D	1.00	Poor
D-	0.67	
F	0.00	Failure

A "Pass" grade is 2.0 or above.

### Grading Policy and Late Assignments

You must submit assignments on time. If you need an extension, you must talk to the Instructor in advance to negotiate a new deadline. If you have not been given an extension in advance and you turn in a late assignment, you will be docked half a grade (from a 4.0 to a 3.5 or 3.5 to a 3.0, 3.0 to a 2.5, 2.5 to a 2.0, etc.) If you are more than one week late, you will be docked a full grade. No assignments will be accepted more than two weeks after the original deadline; a "0" will be given after that. Assignments due near the end of the semester will not be accepted after the last day of the semester.

**Augsburg Honesty Policy**

You are expected to follow the Augsburg Honesty Policy. We assume that you will read the honesty policy, understand it, and will follow it. Except when the assignment expressly encourages group work, it is assumed that all course work will be your own. You may not copy other students' work. The first occurrence of plagiarism will result in the failure of the assignment. A student who commits plagiarism a second time will fail the course.

**Students' Rights and Responsibilities**

Students with formally diagnosed learning or physical differences have legal rights to course modifications. Those who qualify should identify themselves to the instructor as soon as possible in order to obtain extra assistance.





