



**Summer semester 2021: 12.04.2021 - 17.07.2021**

**Course Title**

**African (ing) while in Berlin: Diversity, Citizenship, and Politics of Belonging**

**Instructor**

Azakiwe Zienna Höhling: [hoehlina@hu-berlin.de](mailto:hoehlina@hu-berlin.de)

**Subject area:**

Migration and Identity

**Schedule**

weekly

**Time and place**

Tuesday 12-14c.t (12:15-13:45)

This course will be held in a digital format with synchronous meetings in Zoom. Excursions and in-class meetings might take place, depending on the circumstances and regulations.

**Course Level & Target Group**

Berlin Perspectives courses are designed for undergraduate students. Master students may participate if their home university agrees.

**Language requirements**

The minimum language requirement for this course is English at B2. The reading materials and discussions will primarily be held in English. When possible, key terms will be gathered to build a growing lexicon of vocabulary. The reading materials, class discussion and written work will primarily be in English.

**ECTS**

5 ECTS

## **Course Description**

What hinders or impacts the integration of settled African migrant groups and individuals in Berlin? How do our unconscious biases impact the way we view people within the African Diaspora?

The course aims to explore intersectional inequalities of citizenship and the politics of Belonging and how our unconscious biases impact the way we view (Black) Africans and people within the African Diaspora. The relationship between migration, social cohesion and national German identity has become an increasingly contentious political issue. Historically, the settlement of migrant groups and the formation of minority ethnic groups have changed the socio-cultural, political and economic fabric of receiving societies. We will explore the relationship between racial and ethnocultural diversity. A focus will be given to narrative and discourses, both as tools for analysis and comprehending society's othering of the black body. Exploring these debates plays an important role in understanding the intricacies of how different forms of citizenship are experienced and negotiated by people within the African diaspora. Berlin will be used as a case study for themes covered, however, students are encouraged to reflect on their own identities and the expressions of various identities around the city. Class sessions will be composed of lectures, online discussions forums and an excursion through Berlin's Black History.

## **Course Objective & Learning Outcomes**

The objective of this Bachelor-level course is to equip students with an in-depth understanding of the complexities of being African while in Berlin. It will enable participants to read, understand and critically reflect on how we view people within the African Diaspora and deepen our understanding of citizenship, diversity, belonging, and diasporic identities.

In order to achieve their academic goals, by the end of the course, students stand to gain:

### Knowledge

- Critically read and reflect on a variety of scholarly books, book chapters, journal articles, blogs and websites relevant to the African Diaspora in Germany
- Understanding the endemic nature of Anti-Black racism in German society
- How citizenship and sense of belonging are experienced differently in Berlin.
- Different intersections of negotiation (One's) German identity
- Reflect on the applicability of Eurocentric categories/concepts for describing Africans
- Introduce students to the different genres and literary themes presented by African women writers.
- The ability to easily and openly discuss issues of race, racism (specifically Anti-Black racism), and Germany's role in colonialism on the African continent.

## Academic/Transferable Skills

- Producing assignments in different forms including presentations, written essays, research proposals, and critical response questions that require students to reflect on assigned readings, lectures, and their lived experience.
- Integrating knowledge from different disciplines in order to develop a new understanding on issues of race, racism, colonialism, intersectionality, inequity and how people within the African diaspora are portrayed within German society.
- Select relevant theories and methods for analyzing people within the African Diaspora
- The ability to read, critique, apply, and understand the theory and content discussed throughout the course.

## Competencies

- Apply relevant theories and concepts to engage in self-reflexively with constructs of Citizenship, diversity and the politics of belonging
- Apply relevant theories and concepts in independently in order to engage self-reflexively with constructs of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, nationality

## **Workload and Assignments**

- In order to be granted 5 ECTS, participants will be asked to
- Actively attend all sessions (a minimum of 75% attendance is required for classroom and online sessions), and participate in in-class facilitations (\*Zoom-Meetings) and (online) discussions to further explore issues raised in the assigned readings. Please keep in mind that active and regular participation in the course content is essential for understanding the course objectives, which is the key to successfully completing the course.
- Prepare and revise the classroom/online sessions

## **Hand in the following Assignment**

1. **Positionality Paper:** This short paper asks you to understand your own relationship to the topics that will be covered in this course.
2. **Current Event Analysis:** At the beginning of some classes we will have time to go over some of the current events and media moments that have occurred in the last year in regards to the topics of the course.
3. **Class Excursion:** Reflection paper on the Class Excursion
4. **Interview and Final Essay:** Interview someone who has insight to issues connected to African diaspora in Berlin. Interview must be directly related to the topic related to your final essay. Each participant must submit an essay on a topic related to the topic covered in the seminar. In this essay, you will need to develop

a research question and answer it in a logical structure. This should be between 1000-1500 words. All topics must be approved by the instructor before. Topics should be relevant to the course. Do discuss this with the instructor in advance. Late papers will lose 5% of a grade per day late.

All writing assignments for this course need to follow the Times Roman, 12pt font, double-spaced outline.

Failure to fulfil one of the mentioned components results in failure of the class.

### **Assessment Components**

The final grade will be composed of the above-mentioned assignments.

### **Tools**

**Moodle:** The password of the course for Moodle will be provided before the first session, when you are registered to the course, you will get all of the necessary information. The complete reading list and detailed syllabus will be uploaded to Moodle. Readings for every week will be uploaded as PDF file which you can easily download from Moodle.

**Zoom:** There will be a recurring **\*Zoom-Meeting** and the invitation link will be available on Moodle. However, only joining to Zoom meetings are not enough, you need to take part in the assignment in Moodle. Zoom meetings are only to clarify the texts; the discussion will follow mostly via Moodle.

### **Reading guides**

For some assigned readings, I have created a Critical Response Question that students must complete and submit on the Moodle Platform or prepare for the in-class session. The questions are meant to draw your attention to important aspects of the texts we read. Because many of our sessions will be asynchronous and not held live via Zoom, the reading guides will show me that you have completed the readings.

### **Discussion forums**

Because we cannot engage in group discussions in the classroom and Zoom will only be used for some sessions, you will be asked to engage in Moodle discussion forums with your peers during those weeks when there is no Zoom meeting. In most cases, participants will be provided with critical response question relating to a particular seminar. You will then post your reply to the discussion forum. I will provide a specific start and end dates for each discussion forum. If you have not participated in the discussion forum by the end date, you will not receive any credit for the assignment. Participants are encouraged to keep up-to-date on African current affairs and to bring timely issues and topics to class/forum discussions so that the seminar becomes a dynamic setting for engaging within the African Diaspora's realities.

**Recommended Book:**

Please **do not** purchase the books under 'Recommended Books' for class, these are merely suggestions to further your knowledge and the African perspective beyond the classroom. Many of the themes discussed in the recommended books will be covered in class through other reading lists that will be made available to you.

**NB:** all the material will be available on Moodle, some of the work can be done in your own time, however please note the due dates for the assignments and the Zoom meetings. Since the current situation in regards to the pandemic is still fluid, certain due dates can be postponed, and other changes can be made, based on students' needs, if necessary.

## Course Schedule

### Week 1      13.04.2021      Introduction

**Required Reading:** Ungubani, Who are you?

**Group activity / assignment:**

Part I: Introductions of instructor and students

Part II: review of the syllabus and assignments

**Assignment: Positionality Paper:** You will find the instructions for this on Moodle. Please upload all assignment via Moodle

**Recommended books:**

Mungi Ngomane: I am because you are: Ubuntu

Nompumelelo Mungi Ngomane: Everyday Ubuntu: Living better together, the African way

### Week 2      20.04.2021      Where is the 'African' in African Studies?

"It is clear that those who produce knowledge about something wield considerable power over it. In this vein, African Studies remains a colonized space rife with misrepresentation, homogenization and essentialising about Africa"

(Pailey, 2016).

**Required Reading:**

Oyekan Owomoyela. 1994. "With Friends like These... A Critique of Pervasive Anti-Africanisms in Current African Studies Epistemology and Methodology," African Studies Review. 37(3): 77-101.

Wainaina, Binyavanga. 2005. "How to Write About Africa." Granta. London: Granta Publications. <https://granta.com/how-to-write-about-africa/>

<https://africanarguments.org/2016/06/07/where-is-the-african-in-african-studies/>

<https://africasacountry.com/2019/08/there-is-no-africa-in-african-studies>

<https://africasacountry.com/2015/03/open-letter-to-60-minutes-regarding-its-reporting-on-africa>

<https://africasacountry.com/2012/11/why-does-south-african-history-continue-to-be-written-primarily-by-white-scholars>

**Assignment:** Find the African voices within African studies in the four Alliance University of Berlin. Further instructions are on Moodle. Please upload all assignment via Moodle platform.

**Week 3      27.04.2021      Terms and Conditions**

**\*Zoom-Meeting**

The African continent and the ancestral homeland must be central to any informed analysis and understanding of the dispersal of its people. Africa, in all of its cultural prosperity and diversity, remains alive in the receiving societies as the various ethnic groups created new cultures and recreated their old ways as circumstances allowed.

Scholars engaging with the African diaspora must be wary not to homogenize the experiences of the diverse people within the diaspora. Whilst there are certain commonalities, there are also fundamental differences born of the societal context, the history, the political, economic, and racial circumstances.

In this session, we will identify four main elements that should inform and guide the definition of Terms and Conditions within the African Diaspora. We will comb through specific terms and discuss under which conditions they are used.

**Assignment:** Please find further details on this assignment uploaded on Moodle

***Recommended books:***

Decolonising the Mind by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o

**Week 4      04.05.2021      Colonialism hiding in plain sight**

**\*Zoom-Meeting**

**Required Reading:**

Aitken, Robert/Rosenhaft, Eve (2013): Black Germany. The Making and Unmaking of a Diaspora Community, 1884 – 1960, Cambridge University Press, pp. 1 – 21

Jürgen Zimmerer: Annihilation in Africa: the "race war" in German Southwest Africa (1904–1908) and its significance for a global history of genocide.

Aitken, R., & Aitken, R.J.M. (2007). Exclusion and Inclusion Gradations of Whiteness and Socio-economic Engineering in German Southwest Africa, 1884-1914. Peter Lang.

[https://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledge\\_detail/facing-the-past-to-liberate-the-future-colonial-africa-in-the-german-mind/](https://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledge_detail/facing-the-past-to-liberate-the-future-colonial-africa-in-the-german-mind/)

<https://africasacountry.com/2018/03/what-are-the-politics-of-colonial-memory-in-germany>

**Group activity / assignment:** Critical response questions preparation for this week's class

***Recommended books:***

*Afropean: Notes from Black Europe*, by Johny Pitts

**Week 5      11.05.2021      Berlin's Black History: African or Colonial  
Quarter?**

**\*Class Excursion**

This week, we will meet offline and discover the city's Black History together. In historical terms, we will first deal with Afro-German culture and social history, which includes contributions of Black people during World War I and II. We will then explore the influences/traces of German colonialism on the African continent.

**Group activity / assignment:** Reflection Paper

\*Please fill out the Doodle poll for the Class Excursion date available on Moodle and sent via email

***Recommended books:***

*Mobilizing Black Germany* by Tiffany N. Florvil

**Week 6      18.05.2021      Decolonize Berlin = Individual and Collective  
Action?**

This part of the seminar is designed to be an invitation to participants to develop their knowledge and deepen their understanding of colonialism and the importance of decolonization in Berlin. By focusing on the questions of lived experience, resistance, historical amnesia of Berlin's colonial history and the struggle for alternatives, students are invited to grapple with the associated questions: What are the experiences of Africans and African diasporic people living in Berlin? How do we see and hear their voices in everyday life? What do we do with this knowledge?

**Required Reading:**

Steve Biko: Black Consciousness in South Africa; Biko's Last Public Statement and Political Testament

Fanon, F., 2008. Black skin, white masks. Grove press. Only read Chapter 4 *The So-Called Dependency Complex of Colonized Peoples* (61-81)

Thomas K. Ranuga. Frantz Fanon and Black Consciousness in Azania (South Africa)

W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)

**Group activity / assignment:** Reflecting on the concept of Decolonization and examples of decolonization

***Recommended books:***

*My Black Skin: Schwarz. Erfolgreich. Deutsch.* by Dayan Kodua



**Week 7      25.05.2021      Intersections of German Identity: Citizenship and Belonging in the African Diaspora in Berlin**

What makes up German identity? Can Black/African people be German? How often is your nationality questioned? How often do you have to defend your nationality to others (Personally)? When you think of a 'German person' what comes to mind? The negotiation of citizenship.

**Required Reading:**

Plantation Memories Episodes of Everyday Racism Grada Kilomba, Chapter 5

<https://africasacountry.com/2015/04/the-postcolonial-problem>

<https://www.dw.com/en/whats-life-really-like-for-black-people-in-germany/a-53159443>

**Assignment:** To be announced on Moodle, Group Discussion on notions of identity, citizenship and the politics of belonging

**Week 8      01.06.2021      Reading week**

\*During this week our class will be doing a social take-over.

**Week 9      08.06.2021      Feminist (ing) while African**

**\*Guest Lecture on Zoom**

The following Session will address the ways in which global feminism provides a space for women to describe their conditions from their own cultural and historical contexts and strengthens the foundation and development of a global intersectional feminist community. For African (Black) women writers around the world, and for women who tell their own stories, the engagement with Blackness, Germaness and feminism adds to a culture of survival and resistance. This will show that Africans are not a homogenous group hence the development of African feminism discourse needs to be contextualized to track the impact, development and identification of areas of conflict.

**Required Reading:** These will be made available to students

**Group activity / assignment:** African Feminist Guest Lecture

**Week 10    15.06.2021            (Anti-) Racism in Germany**

Many of people in Europe belonging to the African Diaspora (Black Europeans and People of African Descent) face specific forms of racism - Afrophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and xenophobia. These forms of racism have also been shaped by Europe's history of colonial and repeated persecutions against minorities within Germany. Racism and its specific forms continue to be prevalent, ranging from very brutal acts of violence or harassment to extremely sophisticated forms of discrimination, instrumentalising Fundamental Rights to exclude minorities.

**Required Reading:** To be announced in due time

**Week 11    22.06.2021            Activism in Berlin**

\*To be announced on Moodle

**Week 12    29.06.2021            Final Essay Topic Approval**

**\*Zoom-Meeting**

Students are encouraged to explore a range of different topics, balancing them so that they are both relevant to your interests and also span the subject. During this week students will meet in smaller groups with me to discuss the content of their final essay and approval of essay topic. The final essay and interview account for 40% of your final grade. Each student must submit an essay on a topic related to a topic covered in the seminar. In this essay, you will need to develop a research question and answer it in a logical structure. The full details of the Final Essay can found on Moodle under the section titled: **Final Essay**. Students will find all the necessary details concerning the Final Essay.

**Due:** 16th July 2021 16:00pm (Berlin time)

**Week 13    06.07.2021            Presentation of Final Essay Topic**

**\*Zoom-Meeting**

**Week 14    13.07.2021            Conclusion of Course**

**\*Zoom-Meeting**

## **Expectations & Policies**

Preparation for lively discussions in the classroom: Be on time, have at least the required readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification.

Assignments: Complete all assignments according to the specified requirements on schedule including handing over to the lecturer.

Commitment in class: Pay particular attention to the lecturer and respect differences of opinions (classmates', lecturers, locals engaged with on the visits).

Academic guidelines: Comply with academic integrity policies (such as no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).

Attendance policy: 75% class attendance are required. Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work.

Field trips: If classes involve a field trip or other external visits, these require attendance as well as appearance in time.

## **Your Instructor**

I am Azakhiwe a (Xhosa) South African doctoral student at the Institute for Asian and African Studies at Humboldt University, Berlin (Germany) in collaboration with the University of Pretoria, South Africa. My Ph.D. research focuses on the intersection of class, race, gender and ethnicity in the Othering of Africans in the context of Migration. I obtained my M.A in Sociology and graduated with Merit from the University of Glasgow (Scotland). In addition, I hold a joint Master of Arts in Social Sciences from the Global Studies Programme at the Institute for Sociology at Albert-Ludwig University of Freiburg (Germany) and the University of Cape Town (South Africa). My research interest includes Black Consciousness, African migration, intersectional inequalities and racial injustices of Africans (the Black body) and cultural relativism.

Please note that the course and its syllabus are subject to change.

Last update: *03.2021*

## **Seminar Policies:**

**Contacting Instructor:** For quick questions or to schedule an appointment, the best way to contact is via email at [hoehlina@hu-berlin.de](mailto:hoehlina@hu-berlin.de) Please contact the instructor in advance when you cannot attend a session. You might be able to complete a make-up task.

**Attendance:** You must notify me via email if you are missing class, and while illness and other unforeseen circumstances occur, every attempt should be made to attend **(assigned \*Zoom-Meetings)** class.

**Class Conduct** A positive learning environment relies upon creating an atmosphere where diverse perspectives can be expressed, particularly in a course that focuses on pressing and controversial social and political issues. Each student is encouraged to take an active part in class/forum discussions and activities. Honest and respectful dialogue is expected.

Disagreement and challenging of ideas in a supportive and sensitive manner is encouraged. Hostility and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.

Just as we expect others to listen attentively to our own views, we must reciprocate and listen to others when they speak, especially when we disagree with them. However, in this class, our emphasis will be on engaging in the mutual exploration of issues as presented in the course readings as scholars.

**Zoom meetings** We will meet in Zoom videoconferences about every other week, but this schedule is only approximate. Please therefore note the specific dates of our Zoom meetings. Zoom fatigue is a phenomenon that we have all experienced by now, so I will try to keep Zoom meetings to a length of 60 minutes per meeting to ensure a focused and productive discussion, unless we have a guest lecture. All meetings will be held when our class would have taken place in person, Mondays at 12:15-13:45. We will utilize the Moodle platform for downloading reading materials, sharing other resources, participating in the discussion, and uploading course assignments.

**Accessibility and Accommodations:** Students gain access to academic learning in a variety of ways. Please inform me early in the semester if you have a disability or other conditions that might require accommodations or modification in any of the course procedures. You may speak with me after class or during office hours. Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact Disability Advisory Service at <https://www.hu-berlin.de/en/studies/behinderte/bewerbung-en/application>. Student/s should then schedule an appointment with me to make appropriate arrangements. It is essential that you address your needs early in the semester, before assignments are due. Students who need to miss class for religious reasons should provide me with an explanation, in writing, during the first week of the seminar.

**Late Submissions:** All assignments have *an automatic one-day grace period*. On time and early papers are always encouraged, but students also have two days to turn in the paper, no questions asked. After that, an automatic one grade (1,0 to 1,3, 1,3 to 1,7 to 2,0 etc) is dropped on the paper or graded assignment and the student will need to meet with instructor to work out a plan going forward. I encourage you all to plan your academic schedules ahead, comparing the syllables and assignment deadlines for your courses now, to see when you have conflicting assignments or difficult academic weeks. If things look impossible, please talk to me well in advance.

**Plagiarism/Academic Honesty:** All students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences. Any breach of academic integrity will not be tolerated and will be reported immediately. Students should refer to the Humboldt Universities Berlin policy.

**Names and Pronouns:** If you go by a different name or gender pronoun than the one under which you are officially enrolled, please inform me. Students are expected to respectfully refer to each other by correct names and pronouns.

**Basic Needs:** Any student who faces any challenges and believe this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the instructor for support if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess.