

Kusuka “*Kungiyaphila*" kuya “*Kusiyaphila*” Curriculum
(From “*I am well*” to “*We are well*” Curriculum)

Fulbright-Hays Group Project Abroad Program
Re-cognizing African-Centered Epistemologies: Representation, Rupture, and Healing
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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE ZULU-GPA PROGRAM

The four-week Fulbright-Hays GPA program was held in South Africa in the Summer 2025. The Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program (GPA) is a national, federally-funded program by the U.S. Department of Education, with partial support from California State University, Los Angeles. Participants used the resources, instruction, information, experiences, and environments they were exposed to in the Zulu GPA program to produce the curriculum models below. They developed innovative assignments and in-class exercises that made use of indigenous cultural materials. The modules they created were designed to:

- Improve project participants' knowledge of Zulu worldviews and African cultural perspectives.
- Develop social and cultural participation skills and awareness that will help participants of the project engage in effective cross-cultural and cross-ethnic interactions to be better citizens in a culturally plural world.
- Help participants of the project to apply the principles of liberation, freedom, and social justice to address issues of identity, power, and privilege and contribute to the advancement of local communities, nations, or the world.

CURRICULUM PROJECT GOALS

This curriculum project is not about Barack Hussein Obama or so-called "Obama Care," it is about the power and impact of representation and the healing nature of Black Indigenous and African-centered epistemologies. This curriculum project is designed to help participants of the project become familiar with the material and historical bases, as well as, the conditions and consequences of producing and sustaining monolithic representations of Blackness around notions of a human *being*, psychic and symbolic health and illness. The curriculum project challenges white Western notions and representations of health, illness, civilization, savagery, self-care, and self annihilation by examining some of the practices of everyday life in the United States and South Africa. Particular attention is given to indigenous, complementary, and alternative epistemologies to the white Western lens.

The focus of this curriculum project is also the ways in which the media attempts to impact our sense of self, our health and well-being. We will take an interdisciplinary and intersectional approach to issues of race/ethnicity, class, and gender in Popular Culture. This approach will improve project participants' knowledge of different worldviews, particularly worldviews and cultural perspectives observed in the U.S. and one of the largest ethnic groups in South Africa - Zulu. We will also explore relations of power from a broad range of perspectives with a focus on the politics of representation, Blackness, Africanness, and colonization. We will explore how social problems are represented and how marginalized cultures are commodified in the U.S. and South Africa.

We will examine forms of resistance against dominant narratives of the human, Africanness, Blackness, health, illness, civilization, savagery, self-care, and self annihilation. Themes explored in the curriculum project include aesthetics, cultural and symbolic capital, stereotyping, objectification, oppression, patriarchy, misogyny, liberatory practice, temporalities and spatialities of the human, Blackness, and Africanness in popular culture and the news media. We will address the interconnectedness of race, class, gender, and the ways in which intersectionality is represented and understood in our everyday lives.

PAN AFRICAN STUDIES AT CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES

Pan-African Studies (PAS) encompasses the systematic investigation of the History, Culture, Social Relationships, Political Economy, Literature, Arts, and Languages of peoples of African descent and their contribution to world civilization. In order to give participants of the project a unique foundation for critical thinking and socio-cultural analysis, the curriculum combines in-depth and transnational

approaches to the study of the Black experience. In particular, PAS places African American Studies in a larger comparative context of Africa and the African Diaspora—thus the name "Pan-African" Studies. Moreover, the goal of the curriculum is to allow for flexibility in required core and elective courses. This approach maximizes student ability to determine areas of emphasis and, with faculty advisement, to select a creative set of courses that expose majors and minors to the historical context, fundamental concepts, central issues, and methodological evolution of Pan-African Studies.

Although the African-American experience remains central to an understanding of the United States, teaching and research on the African Diaspora has come to include the study of peoples from every continent, language group, and religious faith, and especially Africans in the Americas. The goal of the curriculum is to allow for flexibility in required core and elective courses. This approach maximizes student ability to determine areas of emphasis and, with faculty advisement, to select a creative set of courses that expose majors and minors to the historical context, fundamental concepts, central issues, and methodological evolution of Pan-African Studies (Excerpt from: https://www.calstatela.edu/academic/pas).

MODULE READINGS, VIDEOS, AND WEBSITE REVIEW LINKS ASSIGNMENTS

READINGS

Washington, Harriet A. *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present*, Chapters 8-10, New York: Anchor Books, A Division of Random House, Inc. 2006.

Rappert, Brian and Gould, Chandré. *The Dis-Eases Of Secrecy: Tracing history, memory & justice*, pp. 29-51, Cape Town: ABC Press, first published by Jacana Media (Pty) Ltd, 2017.

Ramavhoya, Thifhelimbilu I and Nesengani, Tintswalo V. "Indigenous practices in health care promotion and diseases prevention," *Working with indigenous knowledge: strategies for health professionals*, Edited by Mulaudzi, Mavis and Lebese, Rachel, Cape Town: AOSIS Publishing, 2022.

Louw, P. Eric. "The Growth of Monopoly Control of the South African Press," *South African Media Policy, Debates of the 1990s*, Bellville, South Africa: Anthropos Publishers, 1993.

OPTIONAL TEXTS

Makhanya, Siyabonga Mpendulo *'Traditional Healers' Views on the Role of Zulu medicine on Psychosis*, KwaZulu-Natal / Richards Bay, S. Africa University of Zululand (UNIZULU), 2017. https://uzspace.unizulu.ac.za/browse/author?value=Makhanya,%20Siyabonga%20Mpendulo

Louw, P. Eric. "The National Party and the Media: A Special Kind of Symbiosis," *South African Media Policy, Debates of the 1990s*, Bellville, South Africa: Anthropos Publishers, 1993.

Louw, P. Eric. "Campaign for Independent Broadcasting Declaration," *South African Media Policy, Debates of the 1990s*, Bellville, South Africa: Anthropos Publishers, 1993.

REQUIRED VIDEOS / FILMS

Hall, Stuart. *Representation and the Media*. Milton Keynes, UK: The Open University, produced and directed by Sut Jhally. Sanjay Talreja, ed. Sut Jhally, and Mary Patierno, opening excerpt from "Hollywood Shuffle," written and directed by Robert Townsend, excerpts from Marlon Riggs,' "Color

Adjustment." Films courtesy of California Newsreel. Copyright - The Media Education Foundation, 55 minutes, 1997. Available on Canvas.

DuVernay, Ava. *13th*, Sherman Oaks, California: Kandoo Films, Netflix, 2016. Not available on Canvas. Participants of the project are responsible for accessing this film using various streaming services (Netflix, Hulu, HBO, YouTube, etc…), your local library, or other means.

AfricanArchives. "African and Black History on Instagram: 'Difference Between How the East and The West Depicted Black People in Animation History'." *TikTok*, 15/07/25, https://www.instagram.com/reel/DMlcBKpCh-s/?igsh=MXJ6ODN6NzJlO-HY3OQ==
(The TikTok post may also be found on this YouTube link: https://www.youtube.com/shorts/q7brekxnHwA)

The Great Griot Channel, January 13, 2015
"Western Medical Doctors or 'Savage' Traditional Healers…Who do YOU choose?"
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4pfgGr1RXU

OPTIONAL VIDEOS / FILMS
VideoSnips Channel, November 15, 2023
"SHAKA ZULU South African TV Miniseries 1986 Promo Commercial with highlights"
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wfu2jwGSue0
NOTE: Be sure to pay attention to what's being reified in the promotion of the film.

Zulu Channel, September 2, 2022
"'Looks Bad in the Newspapers' | Zulu | HD"
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=skq7xYpu6SI
NOTE: This clip speaks to the importance of power and representation.

SABC News Channel, March 26, 2023
"A rite of passage into manhood that went wrong"
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WY12PssIgJ4
NOTE: News stories like this one helps mobilize against initiation rites of passage and other African traditional practices.

WEB LINKS & OTHER RESOURCES
Apartheid Museum, Johannesburg, South Africa
General URL: https://www.apartheidmuseum.org/
Exhibition URL: https://www.apartheidmuseum.org/permanent-exhibition

Constitution Hill, Johannesburg, South Africa
General URL: https://www.constitutionhill.org.za/
Education URL: https://www.constitutionhill.org.za/pages/the-school-on-the-hill

The University of the Witwatersrand (WITS), Origins Center
Origins Center URL: https://www.wits.ac.za/origins/permanent-exhibitions/

Bomani Tyehimba Channel, February 10, 2025
"Zulu Nation at Leased Cultural Village - South Africa Feb 2025 Roots & Culture Journey of a Lifetime"
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CBMvASgbmY
NOTE: This link demonstrates the representation and commodification of Zulu culture.

MODULE EXERCISE, INSTRUCTION, AND RATIONALE

Exercise Title
Re-cognizing African-Centered Epistemologies: Representation, Rupture, and Healing
Topics
African-Centered ways of knowing; Representation; Monolithicizing race/ethnicity; Healing
Module Exercise Instructions
This assignment is designed to help participants of the project develop social and cultural participation skills and awareness in order to engage in effective cross-cultural and cross-ethnic interactions, ultimately, to be better citizens in a culturally plural world. We will do this by interrogating how different cultures are represented. We will explore representations of Blackness, Africanness, and the Human. The project uses theories and concepts from some of the leading raced Black scholars to unpack signifying practices of raced Black cultures in the African Diaspora. The theories and concepts will be used to explore representations of the white Western-centered medical industry compared to our lived experiences and innerstandings. The theories and concepts will also be used to explore representations of raced Black practitioners of alternative medicine as depicted in white Western culture compared to our lived experiences with raced Black practitioners of alternative medicine in South Africa with particular attention to Zulu culture.

Participants of the project are expected to apply to their assignments and exercises key terms and quotes from the assigned readings. Be sure to watch the *four* videos listed below, view the *three* images (TBD) on the next page, connect the videos and images (TBD) to information found in the readings assigned in the Module, and write 10-pages discussing the connections made *including* connections made with: 1) theories and concepts offered in the Stuart Hall film and Module Lecture; 2) DuVernay's historical context of the raced Black experience in the U.S.; 3) The African Archives video showing how Blackness and Africanness were depicted in children's cartoons; and 4) The Great Griot Channel's discussion of how hierarchies of medicinal knowledge operate.

This exercise brings a better innerstanding of cross-cultural and cross-ethnic interactions, and some of the barriers to those interactions. Participants of the project will apply what they have learned and include the principles of liberation that connect to and address issues of power, representation, and identity. Be sure to also include, fully engage, and underline the *five* topics listed below where they are used within the assignment:

1) biowarfare under S. African Apartheid

2) U.S. Medical Apartheid

3) the notion of "protection" in a patriarchal society

4) the media's role in promoting stereotypes of Africanness, Blackness, and the human

5) forms of resistance against state sanctioned violence under the guise of healthcare, protection, and safety.

Video 1:
Hall, Stuart. *Representation and the Media*.

Video 2:
DuVernay, Ava. *13th.*

Video 3:
AfricanArchives. "African and Black History on Instagram: 'Difference Between How the East and The West Depicted Black People in Animation History'."

Video 4:
The Great Griot Channel, January 13, 2015
"Western Medical Doctors or 'Savage' Traditional Healers…Who do YOU choose?"
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4pfgGr1RXU

When we expand our worldview, we can better innerstand how the media manipulates and depicts the African Diaspora as a monolith, we also open ourselves up to more expansive considerations of our culturally plural world. Let's pay particular attention to how representation is deployed to control narratives, perspectives, and intersectional approaches against the socio-cultural norm. This assignment is designed to get participants of the project to consider how the fight over representation is mobilized throughout the African Diaspora. This assignment also asks us to consider just how similar white so-called supremacists' strategies and tactics are against centering raced Black epistemologies in the U.S. and South Africa.

Please also consider that despite the diabolical nature of oppression and white violence, there are raced Black people living in South Africa, the U.S., and more broadly, the African Diaspora, who engage various forms of resistance. More importantly, we must examine how raced Black people of the African Diaspora nurture, support, and create their own ideas of what selfhood, self-care, health, healing, positive representation, and success means outside of white Western notions of what a human, *being*, is in other and othered cultures. An African-centered approach that de-centers the dominant culture order (Wynter, 2006) and offers counter narratives to the individualistic representation and notions of self is mobilized within Zulu language and culture.

For example, within Zulu language, culture, and representation, a mere greeting of "Sawubona" affirms "I see you." Furthermore, moving "Kusuka Kungiyaphila kuya Kusiyaphila" in response to one person asking how another person is doing affirms that we are never alone in our worldview of ourselves as individuals and as individuals who are indelibly linked to a collective. This is powerful, affirming, and one of the many healing aspects of Zulu language and culture that is built within everyday language interactions. The response "Siyaphila" ("We are well") transmutes us into another dimension of innerstanding from where and when we enter into a knowledge of "self" that runs counter to Western notions and representations of "self." Moving "Kusuka Kungiyaphila kuya Kusiyaphila" ("From "*I am well*" to "*We are well*") along with its interchangeability is a healing point of departure toward navigating negative representations of "Blackness" (Lewis, 2017) and Africanness because it acknowledges that we are not in this struggle alone, hence, "we" are indeed well. Such an approach to critical pedagogy creates an environment and curriculum that affirms to participants of the project that we - which would include our ancestors, our families, our communities, etc… - are engaging the teaching/learning process together. The logic follows that if "I am well" then "we are well" which makes the response that includes the pronoun "we" from one person to another, appropriate. Outside of gender identity claims, white Western logic may likely place this particularized use of a pronoun to mental illness - a split of personalities in referring to oneself as "we." Furthermore, this marginalized and more expansive use of pronouns that are not in reference to gender identity claims, would challenge the current norms and therefore may not be acceptable in supposed spaces of "diversity." Therefore, this type of pronoun usage is not engaged or welcomed within the current dominant culture order (Wynter, 2006). In English and other Western language and knowledge systems some may enter these spaces of language (Hall, 1997) and cultural exchange full bodied, while others, particularly exercising Zulu language and cultural practices, remain marginalized having to check their difference at the door. The project more broadly, and the assignment more specifically posits that an African-centered approach is needed to heal these ruptures in the face of negative representations, stereotypes, and other approaches that amputate (Fanon, 1967), rather than acknowledge the totality of a human, *being* part of a collective, an ancestral bloodline, and surrounding communities. The project also calls attention to racialized stereotypes, the historical contexts, and the 'clap back' of various forms of resistance.

MODULE EXERCISE 1 GRADING RUBRIC

Connections Discussed: Videos & Images (TBD) to Readings	10%
At least 10-pages written	5%
Discussed Prompt 1	5%
Discussed Prompt 2	5%
Discussed Prompt 3	5%
Discussed Prompt 4	5%
Discussed Prompt 5	5%

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Assignments demonstrate understanding of theoretical and practical factors of racial, ethnic, class, and gender representation and inequality using Pan African and sociological theories and methods. (GE Block D Outcome #1; GE Diversity Outcome #1)
Use Pan African and sociological inquiry, including quantitative and qualitative reasoning, to engage with contemporary and enduring questions of social inequality and connect that knowledge to civic participation in the community. (GE Block D Outcome #2; Civic Learning Outcome #1)
Assignments demonstrate understanding of the interwoven social, political, cultural, and economic contexts impacting racial, ethnic, class, and gender inequality. (GE Block D Outcome #3)
Assignments demonstrate understanding of the diversity of cultures and communities both in South Africa and the United States and how those communities are interconnected. (GE Block D Outcome #4; GE Block D Outcome #5)
Assignments demonstrate understanding of the interconnectedness of individuals, communities, and society. (GE Block D Outcome #5)
Assignments demonstrate understanding of the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic class. (GE Diversity Outcome #2)
Assignments demonstrate understanding of the diversity both within and between races, ethnicities, classes, and genders. (GE Diversity Outcome #3)
The curriculum project demonstrates civic literacy and knowledge of ways to make change in local and global communities that would enable effective participation in a diverse society. (GE Diversity Outcome #4; Civic Learning Outcome #3)
Assignments demonstrate understanding of their impact on their respective physical, social and cultural environments and how such environments impact them. (Civic Learning Outcome #2)
The curriculum project demonstrate the ability to collaborate in order to develop and implement an approach to addressing an aspect of social inequality. (Civic Learning Outcome #4)

<u>ATTITUDE</u>
Value for critical thinking
Valuing of diverse perspectives

An appreciation for scholarship and the importance of ideas for personal and community advancement
Value for diversity as a positive attribute of humanity
Value for the interconnections between scholarship and effective social action
Value for lifelong learning
KNOWLEDGE
Understanding of diversity within different race/ethnic communities (in terms of gender, class, national, and international origin, etc.)
General grasp of Sociological and Pan African theories.
Understanding of shared experience and contemporary interconnections among race/ethnic identities throughout the world.
Basic knowledge of Black Indigenous, American ,and South African histories, cultures and politics, including colonialism, African-centered epistemologies, and contemporary period
Basic Understanding of the intellectual tradition and seminal thinkers associated with social problems in South Africa and its global impact.
SKILLS
Ability to critically engage in analyses from an African-centered approach, Black Indigenous-centered approach, Pan African Studies and Sociology perspective
Ability to engage in scholarly research, including the gathering of appropriate sources and employment of suitable methodologies.
Skilled presentation of research findings through written and oral means.
Ability to historicize and compare contemporary conditions of our world.
Ability to examine intersectional oppressions simultaneously (race/ethnicity, gender, class, etc.)
Ability to relate formal instruction in Pan African Studies and Sociology to practical arenas of endeavor, e.g., career, activism, entrepreneurial, and others.

Curriculum Project Organization

Module	Theme & Reading Assignments	Exercise
	Representations of Blackness & Other Failed Strategies of Containment Reading Assignments Reading 1: Washington, Harriet A. *Medical Apartheid*, "The Black Stork: The Eugenic Control of African American Reproduction," Chapter 8; "Nuclear Winter: Radiation Experiments on African Americans," Chapter 9; and "Caged Subjects: Research on Black Prisoners," Chapter 10. Reading 2: Rappert, Brian and Gould, Chandré. *The Dis-Eases Of Secrecy: Tracing history, memory & justice*, Cape Town: ABC Press, first published by Jacana Media (Pty) Ltd, 2017. Reading 3: Ramavhoya, Thifhelimbilu I and Nesengani, Tintswalo V. "Indigenous practices in health care promotion and diseases prevention," *Working with indigenous knowledge: strategies for health professionals*, Edited by Mulaudzi, Mavis and Lebese, Rachel, Cape Town: AOSIS Publishing, 2022. Video Assignments Hall, Stuart. *Representation and the Media*. DuVernay, Ava. *13th*. AfricanArchives. "African and Black History on Instagram: 'Difference Between How the East and The West Depicted Black People in Animation History'." *TikTok*, 15/07/25, https://www.instagram.com/reel/DMlcBKpCh-s/?igsh=MXJ6ODN6NzJlO-HY3OQ== The Great Griot Channel, January 13, 2015 "Western Medical Doctors or 'Savage' Traditional Healers…Who do YOU choose?" URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4pfgGr1RXU	Write a 10-page analysis that includes the videos, images (TBD), and assigned Module readings. Be sure to follow the instructions under the subheading: "MODULE EXERCISE, INSTRUCTION, AND RATIONALE"

WORKS CITED

AfricanArchives. "African and Black History on Instagram: 'Difference Between How the East and The West Depicted Black People in Animation History'." *TikTok*, 15/07/25, https://www.instagram.com/reel/DMlcBKpCh-s/?igsh=MXJ6ODN6NzJlO-HY3OQ==

DuVernay, Ava. *13th*, Sherman Oaks, California: Kandoo Films, Netflix, 2016

Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin White Masks*. New York: Grove Press, 1967.

Hall, Stuart. *Representation and the Media*. Milton Keynes, UK: The Open University, produced and directed by Sut Jhally. Sanjay Talreja, ed. Sut Jhally, and Mary Patierno, opening excerpt from "Hollywood Shuffle," written and directed by Robert Townsend, excerpts from Marlon Riggs,' "Color Adjustment." Films courtesy of California Newsreel. Copyright - The Media Education Foundation 1997.

Lewis, Libby. *The Myth of Post-racialism in Television News*. New York and London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2017.

Louw, P. Eric. "The Growth of Monopoly Control of the South African Press," *South African Media Policy, Debates of the 1990s*, Bellville, South Africa: Anthropos Publishers, 1993.

Ramavhoya, Thifhelimbilu I and Nesengani, Tintswalo V. "Indigenous practices in health care promotion and diseases prevention," *Working with indigenous knowledge: strategies for health professionals*, Edited by Mulaudzi, Mavis and Lebese, Rachel, Cape Town: AOSIS Publishing, 2022.

Rappert, Brian and Gould, Chandré. *The Dis-Eases Of Secrecy: Tracing history, memory & justice*, pp. 29-51, Cape Town: ABC Press, first published by Jacana Media (Pty) Ltd, 2017.

The Great Griot Channel, January 13, 2015
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URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4pfgGr1RXU

Washington, Harriet A. *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present*, Chapters 8-10, New York: Anchor Books, A Division of Random House, Inc. 2006.

Wynter, Sylvia. "On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory, and Re-Imprisoned Ourselves in Our Unbearable Wrongness of Being, of Désêtre Black Studies Toward the Human Project." *NOT ONLY THE MASTER'S TOOLS African-American Studies in Theory and Practice*. Edited With An Introduction by Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon, Boulder, London: Paradigm Publishers, 2006.