**Course Name**  
Black Feminist Thought

**Contact Hours**  
Thursdays 11am-2.30pm

**Course Description**

With its focus on the ways in which black communities navigate and resist practices of racism in slave and post-slave North American contexts, this course explores black feminism, black studies, and black creative works, with an emphasis on how the history of transatlantic slavery impacts upon contemporary practices of marginalization and resistance. The central argument is that histories of racial violence—specifically plantocratic violences—shape how black feminist thought is engendered. With this, discussions will also address how fostering anti-oppression strategies, and collectively resisting racist violence in the present, must involve engaging the historically present workings of black politics.

It is recommended that incoming students have a strong knowledge of key debates in feminist studies, gender studies, and studies of anti-racism and/or race.

**Topics in Course Outline**

- black feminism and black feminist thought; diaspora; transatlantic slavery; neo-slave narratives; black masculinities; black queer cultures; black cultural production; black popular culture; memory.

**Course Objectives**

Students in this course will demonstrate their ability to:

- critically analyze race as a historical and contemporary social construct and its relationship to blackness, sexuality, gender, class, and other identity categories
- assemble critical tools and theoretical concepts, and develop interdisciplinary methodological skills, in the areas of black feminist studies and feminist theories of race
- develop written and conversational skills that address the complexities of black social justice movements
- explain the ways in which slave, post-slave and colonial histories impact contemporary racial representations and stereotypes
- compose, critique, and critically engage materials that attend to equity, multiculturalism, diversity, and identity politics
- compose, critique and critically engage online materials (blogs, social networks) as sites of racial struggle

**Course Evaluation**

- participation/in class commentaries: 10%
- film commentaries: 10%
- group presentations: 15%
- short paper: 25%
- take home exam: 40%

**Course Instructor**  
Katherine McKittrick

**Required Course Materials**

- Pratibha Parmar, dir., *A Place of Rage*.
- Julie Dash, dir., *Daughters of the Dust*.
- Sean S. Baker, dir., *Tangerine*.
- Beyoncé, dir. *Homecoming*.
- bell hooks. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*.
- Octavia Butler, *Kindred*.
- Mia McKenzie, *Black Girl Dangerous: On Race, Queerness, Class and Gender*.
- Ntozake Shange, *If I Can Cook/You Know God Can*.