



## SYLLABUS DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

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# AP<sup>®</sup> African American Studies

The guide contains the following information:

### Curricular Requirements

The curricular requirements are the core elements of the course. A syllabus must provide explicit evidence of each requirement based on the required evidence statement(s).

### Required Evidence

These statements describe the type of evidence and level of detail required in the syllabus to demonstrate how the curricular requirement is met in the course.

Note: Curricular requirements may have more than one required evidence statement. Each statement must be addressed to fulfill the requirement.

### Samples of Evidence

For each curricular requirement, three separate samples of evidence are provided. These samples provide either verbatim evidence or clear descriptions of what acceptable evidence could look like in a syllabus. In some samples, the specific language that addresses the required evidence is highlighted **bold text**.

# Curricular Requirements

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<b>CR1</b>	The teacher and students have access to a college-level African American Studies textbook and/or comparable resources in print or electronic format that support the required content of the AP African American Studies course.	<i>See page:</i> 1
<b>CR2</b>	The course is structured to incorporate all the primary sources for each topic in the <i>AP African American Studies Course and Exam Description (CED)</i> .	<i>See page:</i> 4
<b>CR3</b>	The course provides opportunities for students to analyze and understand Black experiences from interdisciplinary perspectives.	<i>See page:</i> 5
<b>CR4</b>	The course provides opportunities for students to engage directly with secondary sources by African American Studies scholars representing diverse perspectives and disciplines such as literature, visual arts and music, data, and history.	<i>See page:</i> 6
<b>CR5</b>	The course allows students to develop understanding of the required content outlined in each unit as described in the CED.	<i>See page:</i> 9
<b>CR6</b>	The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Skill Category 1: Applying Disciplinary Knowledge.	<i>See page:</i> 10
<b>CR7</b>	The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Skill Category 2: Source Analysis (text, visual, and data sources).	<i>See page:</i> 11
<b>CR8</b>	The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Skill Category 3: Argumentation.	<i>See page:</i> 13
<b>CR9</b>	Students are required to spend at least fifteen 45-minute class periods, or the equivalent thereof, engaging in the Individual Student Project, including research, analysis of multiple sources, and the development and submission of a research project that will culminate in a presentation and oral defense.	<i>See page:</i> 15

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## Curricular Requirement 1

The teacher and students have access to a college-level African American Studies textbook and/or comparable resources in print or electronic format that support the required content of the AP African American Studies course.

### Required Evidence

- The teacher must provide the title and author of a college-level African American Studies textbook or supplemental resource encounters comparable in rigor to a college-level textbook.

**Note:** Teachers must provide the title(s) and source(s) of supplemental materials that support the rigor of a college-level African American Studies course if they are not using a college-level textbook.

### Samples of Evidence

1. The teacher selects a pre-approved college-level textbook.
2. The teacher provides the title and author of a college-level African American Studies textbook or resource.
3. In the absence of a textbook, the teacher explicitly states how the requirement is met through alternate resources that support the required course content.

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## Curricular Requirement 2

The course is structured to incorporate all the primary sources for each topic in the *AP African American Studies Course and Exam Description (CED)*.

### Required Evidence

- The syllabus includes an explicit statement that all primary sources for each topic in the CED will be incorporated in the course.

### Samples of Evidence

1. Students will access and analyze all primary sources listed in the Course & Exam Description.
2. The course will use all the primary sources provided in the CED.
3. Students will examine all primary sources from College Board throughout the course.

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## Curricular Requirement 3

The course provides opportunities for students to analyze and understand Black experiences from interdisciplinary perspectives.

### Required Evidence

- The syllabus includes a brief description of at least one activity or assignment explaining how students will engage with African American Studies scholars and/or materials that represent varied disciplines, including but not limited to history, art, political science, literature, music, and sociology.

### Clarifying Term

- **Interdisciplinary perspectives:** Synthesize approaches from multiple disciplines to evaluate key concepts, historical developments, and processes that have shaped Black experiences and debates within the field of African American Studies.

### Samples of Evidence

1. Topic 4.15, Economic Growth and Black Political Representation  
Students will read, from *Public Papers of the Presidents*, President Lyndon Johnson's Radio and Television Remarks upon Signing the Civil Rights Bill (July 2, 1964) and complete one of the following assignments:
  - Option A: Students will write an in-class essay focusing on how President Johnson uses **historical, legal, and moral** perspectives to justify his signing of the Civil Rights bill.
  - Option B: Students will be divided into three groups. Each group will do research to locate one of three types of evidence (**historical, legal, and moral**) to expand upon Johnson's argument for why the Civil Rights bill must be signed into law.
2. **Unit 3 and 4:** Students should **analyze** a visual work of art that was a significant contribution to the Black Arts movement. Once they complete that task, they should **write a description of two similarities and two differences between the work they chose and** a work of art produced during the Harlem Renaissance. Finally, students should **describe how the similarities and differences** between the two pieces of art and how they demonstrate elements of the New Negro philosophy.
3. Considering the perspectives of **economic, religious, and scientific** stakeholders, **build an oral argument for presentation** supporting equal voting rights for all newly emancipated Afro-descendant people (both men and women) following the Civil War.

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## Curricular Requirement 4

The course provides opportunities for students to engage directly with secondary sources by African American Studies scholars representing diverse perspectives and disciplines such as literature, visual arts and music, data, and history.

### Required Evidence

- The syllabus includes a brief description of an activity or assignment explaining how students will engage with at least two secondary sources per unit (e.g., journal articles, critical reviews, monographs) by African American Studies scholars that represent multiple disciplines or interdisciplinarity including but not limited to history, art, political science, literature, music, and sociology.

### Clarifying Terms

- **Scholarly secondary source:** an analytical account of the past, written after the event, and used to provide insight into the past (e.g., journal articles, critical reviews, monographs, etc.)

### Samples of Evidence

1.
  - Unit 1: “Building intellectual bridges: From African studies and African American studies to Africana studies in the United States,” Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, *Afrika Focus*, Volume 24, Number 2, 2011.
  - Unit 1: “Griottes: Female voices from West Africa,” Thomas A. Hale, *Research in African Literatures*, Volume 25, Number 3, 1994.
  - Unit 1 Assignment (disciplinary expertise): Students will conduct a live interview (face to face or online) with a college professor who teaches one or more African American Studies courses. The interview will focus on the professor’s educational background experiences of teaching in the field, and their plans for future African American Studies work, such as teaching, research, or scholarship and contributing to the field. Students will share interview results through class discussion or an online discussion board.
  - Unit 2: “The Dred Scott Case – Revisited,” Wallace Mendelson, *Louisiana Law Review*, Volume 7, Number 3, March 1947.
  - Unit 2: “The suppression of the African slave-trade to the United States of America 1638–1870,” W.E.B. Du Bois, Volume I, *Harvard Historical Studies*, Longmans, Green and Co., New York, 1896.
  - Unit 2 Assignment (activity): Students will participate in a gallery walk focusing on abolitionism and the Underground Railroad. To complete the gallery walk, students will identify elements of each image focusing on abolitionism and the Underground Railroad after which they will demonstrate how those image elements relate to course concepts in a written response.
  - Unit 3: David Levering Lewis. 1981. *When Harlem Was in Vogue*. New York: Knopf.
  - Unit 3: Murrell, Denise. 2024. *The Harlem Renaissance and Transatlantic Modernism*. Metropolitan Museum of Art.
  - Unit 3 Assignment: Students will develop a defining features matrix focusing on works from the Harlem Renaissance in relation to the aims of the New Negro movement.

- Unit 4: Lewis, John, Quade, Vicki, and Holman III, Charles F. “Where Did the Civil Rights Movement Go Wrong” (Interview with John Lewis). *American Bar Association*, Fall 1988, Volume 15, No.3, pages 18–22 and 43–45
  - Unit 4: *Living for the Revolution: Black Feminist Organizations, 1968–1980*. Kimberly Springer, Duke University Press, Durham, NC, 2005.
  - Unit 4 Assignment (assessment): Students will explore the Academy of Achievement profile of U.S. Representative John Lewis. Students will then write an argumentative essay taking a position on whether Representative Lewis was more effective as a civil rights activist or as a member of Congress.
- 2.
- Unit 1: Lester, Julius. *Black Folktales*, Grove Press, 1992.
  - Unit 1: *Capoeira: The Dance of Freedom* film, 2013.  
**Activity:** Students should read “Stagolee” by Julius Lester (*Black Folktales*) and highlight 2–3 examples of syncretism in the story.
  - Unit 2: *Slave Religion: The “Invisible Institution” in the Antebellum South*, Albert J. Raboteau, Oxford University Press, 2004.
  - Unit 2: *Roots* miniseries, A&E, History Channel, 2016.  
**Activity:** Watch and review the “initiation” clip from *Roots* and highlight three examples of how this process informed rebellion practices. Use Topic 2.4 as a reference point.
  - Unit 3: *Eyes on the Prize*, documentary series, 1987.
  - Unit 3: *Jazz*, Ken Burns documentary series, PBS, 2001.  
**Activity:** Search YouTube and find a clip about Duke Ellington from the Ken Burns documentary series, *Jazz*. Students should write a brief essay about two short-term and two long-term impacts of Duke Ellington’s role in the development and evolution of jazz music.
  - Unit 4: *Jet* and *Ebony* magazines
  - Unit 4: *The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution* documentary film, directed by Stanley Nelson, 2015.  
**Activity:** After viewing excerpts from the documentary film *The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution*, compare how the film portrays the political activity of the Black Panther Party (BPP) and examine how the Black Press portrayed the BPP. Students can use newspaper clippings and/or excerpts including from *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines.
3. **Unit 1 Secondary Sources:**
- Blyden, Nemata Amelia Ibitayo. *African Americans & Africa: A New History* (Yale University Press, 2019).  
Book, African/African American History
  - Floyd Jr., Samuel A. *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States* (Oxford University Press, 1996).  
Book, African American Music
  - **Activity:** Use evidence from Floyd and Blyden to discuss similarities and/or differences between their perspectives on Africa.

### Unit 2 Secondary Sources:

- Curtin, Philip D. *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex Essays in Atlantic History*. (Cambridge University Press, 2010).  
Book, African/African American History
- Lanning, Michael Lee. *African Americans in the Revolutionary War* (Kensington Publishing Corp/Citadel Press, 2000).  
Book, American history with focus on African Americans in American Revolution
- **Activity:** Citing at least one passage from Curtin and one from Lanning, explain how Afro-descendant people were critical to the founding of America.

### Unit 3 Secondary Sources:

- Lewis, David Levering. *When Harlem Was in Vogue* (Oxford University Press, 2007 [digitized edition]).  
Book, African American History
- Reed, Teresa L. *The Holy Profane: Religion in Black Popular Music* (University Press of Kentucky, 2004).  
Book, African American Music and Religion
- **Activity:** Use evidence from Lewis and Reed to describe how music was central to African American expression in the 20th century.

### Unit 4 Secondary and Other Sources:

- Giddings, Paula J. *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America* (Morrow, 1984).  
Book, Black Feminist History
- Lewis, John, and Michael D'Orso. *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* (Simon & Schuster, 2015).  
Memoir, African American History
- Obama, Barack. *Dreams From My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance* (Crown, 2004).  
Memoir, African American History, Politics
- "Faith Ringold" (video) from the PBS series *Craft in America* (2012).  
Video, Art, with focus on African American quilting
- **Activity:** Cite evidence from Giddings and Ringold to discuss the role of women in elevating Black people.



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## Curricular Requirement 5

The course allows students to develop understanding of the required content outlined in each unit as described in the CED.

### Required Evidence

- The syllabus includes an outline of course content by unit title or topic using any organizational approach to demonstrate the inclusion of required course content in CED.

**Note:** If the syllabus demonstrates a different approach than the units outlined in the CED, the teacher must indicate where the content of each unit in the CED will be taught.

### Samples of Evidence

1. The course is organized around four units:

- Unit 1, Origins of the African Diaspora
- Unit 2, Freedom, Enslavement, and Resistance
- Unit 3, The Practice of Freedom
- Unit 4, Movements and Debates

The required course project will incorporate and build upon content introduced in one or more of Units 1–4.

2. The syllabus includes an outline of course content by topic for each unit. For example:

- **Unit 1 Topics:**
  - ♦ What is African American Studies?
  - ♦ The African Continent: A Varied Landscape
  - ♦ Population Growth and Ethnolinguistic Diversity
  - ♦ Africa’s Ancient Societies
  - ♦ The Sudanic Empires: Ghana, Mali, and Songhai
  - ♦ Learning Traditions
  - ♦ Indigenous Cosmologies and Religious Syncretism
  - ♦ Culture and Trade in Southern and East Africa
  - ♦ West Central Africa: The Kingdom of Kongo
  - ♦ Kinship and Political Leadership
  - ♦ Global Africans

3. All topics in each of the four units of the course will be covered. Those units and the tentative schedule for the school year are as follows:

- Unit 1: ORIGINS OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA (Weeks 1–5)
- Unit 2: FREEDOM, ENSLAVEMENT, AND RESISTANCE (Weeks 6–14)
- Unit 3: THE PRACTICE OF FREEDOM (Weeks 15–21)
- Unit 4: MOVEMENTS AND DEBATES (Weeks 22–28)

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## Curricular Requirement 6

The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Skill Category 1: Applying Disciplinary Knowledge.

### Required Evidence

- The syllabus provides a brief description of at least one activity or assignment (e.g., essay, classroom debate, oral presentation, etc.) in which students identify and explain relevant disciplinary knowledge.
- At least one activity must be labeled with Skill 1.

### Samples of Evidence

1. Students will **view a documentary or read an assigned text (teacher choice) about the Tulsa Race Massacre**. Students will identify and explain the course concepts presented in the video or text in a whole class discussion. Referencing evidence from the source, students will **explain, in writing, how two or more course concepts are presented in the video**. (Skill 1.B, Identify and explain the context of a specific event, development, or process)
2. Students will **examine the evolution/trajectory of a faith tradition ritual that emerged during chattel slavery** and still is practiced in some contemporary Black Protestant or Catholic churches. **Students will provide further evidence by presenting a visual or textual example and explaining how the current practice retains ties to an earlier tradition**. (Skill 1.C, Identify and explain patterns, connections, or other relationships [causation, changes, continuities, comparison])
3. **Review “Plea to the Jurisdiction of Cinque and Others, August 21, 1839.”** Together with an assigned group, **students will develop a five-minute presentation in which they reenact this plea in their own 21st century vernacular**. Students can be creative in their delivery (for example, to use rap, develop a PowerPoint or other visual aids, etc.). The students’ presentations must provide the historical context for this plea and explain the developments which led to its occurrence. (Skill 1)

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## Curricular Requirement 7

The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Skill Category 2: Source Analysis (text, visual, and data sources).

### Required Evidence

- The syllabus provides a brief description of at least one activity or assignment in which students analyze a **text** source and at least one activity in which students analyze a **visual** source for at least two of the following features: claims, evidence, reasoning, perspective, purpose, context, and audience.  
AND
- The syllabus describes at least one activity in which students analyze a **data** source and draw conclusions from the patterns, trends, and/or limitations in the data and then connect it to the relevant course content.
- At least one required source must be used and the activity or activities must be labeled with Skill 2.

**Note:** Acronyms (e.g., SOAPS, APPARTS) referencing a strategy to be used with activities or assignments must be clearly defined in the syllabus.

### Samples of Evidence

- (TEXT) Students will read the text of the 15th Amendment, identifying its various components, focusing on the audience and purpose of the amendment. Students will then write a short paragraph describing one or more voting rights issues that are not addressed by the 15th Amendment.
- Students will then **review excerpts outlining evidence of race discrimination in voting included in “Letter from Birmingham Jail.”** After reviewing the excerpts, students will complete a quickwrite describing the author’s claims, reasoning, perspective, and evidence. Students will then **participate in a whole class discussion focusing on the context and audience in which the “Letter from Birmingham Jail” was written, and discuss, in small groups, whether the letter achieved its intended impact.** (Skill 2)
- (VISUAL) Students will analyze the image: “Demonstrators, many with signs, protest outside the White House, Washington DC, March 12, 1965”. Students will then **write a short paragraph describing the image and the themes and perspectives represented in the image.** (Skill 2C)
- (DATA) Students will explore voter registration and turnout data by race before and after the Voting Rights Act took effect. After reviewing the evidence presented in the data, **students will collaborate, in small groups, to identify and describe one trend in the data and one limitation of the data.** A representative from each group will then report their results to the class. (Skill 2D)

#### 1. 2.14, Black Organizing in the North: Freedom, Women’s Rights, and Education

TEXT

“Why Sit Here and Die” by Maria W. Stewart, 1832

- **Students will analyze the source and answer the following questions:**
  - ♦ What claims does the author make?
  - ♦ What evidence does the author make to reconcile the claim?
  - ♦ What reasoning does the author offer?
  - ♦ What is the perspective, purpose, context, and audience of the author?

## VISUAL

- **Students will research and analyze the photograph of a notable Black female activist from the 19th or 20th century. Students will write a brief statement on the photograph using these guiding questions:**
  - ♦ What do we know about the context of the photo?
  - ♦ What is a historical argument you can make about the features of the photograph?

## DATA

- Students will make an argument explaining why college acceptance for Black women over a 20-year period has changed **utilizing evidence** from the National Center for Education Statistics. (Skill 2)

2. A) (TEXT SOURCE) **SKILL 2:** Read “**On Being Brought from Africa to America**” by Phillis Wheatley, 1773 and **answer the following questions:**

- ♦ **What are her claims?**
- ♦ **What evidence, if any, does she provide?**
- ♦ **What is her line of reasoning?**
- ♦ **What perspective or point-of-view does she represent?**
- ♦ **What do you think is the purpose of the poem?**
- ♦ **What is the context in which this poem was written?**
- ♦ **Who is her audience? Who is she speaking to in this poem?**

B) (VISUAL SOURCE) **SKILL 2:** View “**The Great Migration Series**” by Jacob Lawrence, 1940–41, Panel No. 1 (from Unit 3, page 186 of the 24/25 Framework). **Write 2–3 paragraphs** in which you describe the **context** and **purpose** of the image.

C) (DATA SOURCE) **SKILL 2:** See the **chart**, “Figure 1: While lower and middle class increase, Black upper class decrease,” in “Charts on the Black middle class (e.g., where the Black middle class lives, occupations, home ownership)” from the Brookings Institution report by Andre M. Perry and Carl Romer, 2020. **Then answer the following questions:**

1. What **time frame** is captured in the chart? (CONTEXT)
2. What **patterns or trends** does this figure suggest? (EVIDENCE/REASONING)
3. What do you believe are the **limitations** of this data, and why?
4. How does this illustration **support the claims** made in Unit 4 regarding diversity within Black communities? (EVIDENCE/REASONING)

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## Curricular Requirement 8

The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Skill Category 3: Argumentation.

### Required Evidence

The syllabus provides a description of at least one activity or assignment in which students demonstrate argumentation skills in a written essay that includes:

- Formulating a defensible claim
- Using a line of reasoning to develop a well-supported argument
- Evaluating the credibility of sources used to support a claim
- Effectively supporting a claim with strategically selected sources and using specific and relevant evidence
- Consistently applying an appropriate citation style

### Samples of Evidence

1. Students will analyze Chief Justice Earl Warren’s unanimous opinion in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). Students will **formulate a defensible claim** and will **use a line of reasoning to develop a well-supported argument evaluating the credibility of each justice’s claim**. To support the line of reasoning, they will evaluate the credibility of sources and will use specific and **relevant evidence in their argument**. Students will **use a recognized citation method (such as APA or MLA)** to reference any outside information they include in their argument.
2. Students respond to the following prompt and write a defensible essay. The essay must include a defensible claim and use a line of reasoning to develop a well-supported argument.  
*Prompt: Explain how General Order 3 influenced the creation and/or development of Juneteenth.*  
In their responses, students should make a claim about the ways General Order 3 influenced the development of Juneteenth, provide a line of reasoning for making this claim, and support their claim with evidence. They should **highlight the credibility of the source(s) they used**, and should **use a recognized citation method for any outside information included in their argument**.
3. Following in-depth work exploring significant figures in African American Studies, students will develop a written argument focusing on a specific late nineteenth or twentieth century civil rights activist and explaining why that individual’s approach to activism would be most relevant and/or effective today. This 600–800 word argument should do the following:
  - **Present, in the opening paragraph, what you will show or prove**; this is your main idea, the purpose of your essay. (FORMULATING A DEFENSIBLE CLAIM)
  - **Make at least three claims** that support what you are arguing (approximately one paragraph per claim).
  - Reference at least three sources **as credible evidence** (articles, charts, graphs, etc. from well-vetted sources—NOT blogs or Wikipedia articles) to help prove each claim you make.

- **Use a recognizable citation style consistently to properly attribute** your sources.
- **Summarize your argument** with a paragraph that states your conclusion and why this is significant.

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## Curricular Requirement 9

Students are required to spend at least fifteen 45-minute class periods, or the equivalent thereof, engaging in the Individual Student Project, including research, analysis of multiple sources, and the development and submission of a research project that will culminate in a presentation and oral defense.

### Required Evidence

- The syllabus includes an explicit statement confirming that at least fifteen 45-minute class periods, or three weeks, or their equivalent are designated for the Individual Student Project.

AND

- The syllabus states that the project will be scored in accordance with the AP Project Rubric.

### Clarifying Terms

- Equivalent class time:** at least 11 hours (the approximate clock time that equals the minimum 675 minutes) in the classroom.

### Samples of Evidence

1. The three weeks from April 17th through May 4th (**fifteen 45-minute class periods**) will be designated for the Individual Student Project. With guidance from the teacher, the research, analysis, and development of the project will be completed within this time frame. The teacher will use **the AP Project Rubric** to score the project.
  
2. The course project provides students with an opportunity to research any topic, theme, issue, or development in the field of African American Studies. Students will define a research topic and line of inquiry, conduct independent research to analyze primary and secondary sources from multiple disciplines, and develop an Individual Student Project. Students will apply the tools African American Studies scholars embrace, such as analyzing sources using an interdisciplinary approach and integrating evidence from multiple disciplines (e.g., history, art, music, political science). **The course has been designed to enable teachers to set aside fifteen 45-minute class periods for students to work on the project**, in addition to the associated homework time for those class periods. **The project will be scored using the AP Project Rubric.**
  
3. Students will spend the **required 11 hours** working on the Individual Student Project. The teacher will introduce the components of the Individual Student Project throughout the course. **The project will be scored using the AP Project Rubric.**