BCS 70970: African (Im)Migrant Identity and Christianity in the U.S.
3 Semester Hours

Instructor: Dr. Oluwatomisin Oredein, o.oredein@tcu.edu
Prerequisites: None

Description of Content
African identity in the United States is historically complex and constantly in process. The dominant narrative of African-descended identity in the United States has been through the channels of the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade, but other modes of African identity exist, including immigrant persons from African nations with significant history in the U.S. Through examining and conversing with both theoretical and theological texts, students will examine how these African persons navigate, reconcile, and create their own cultures of Christian and American identity within the West.

This course centers and examines notions of colonialism, citizenship, Africa-to-U.S. migration, and self-determined narrative. It will illumine how foundational Western cultural, social, and theological precepts influence, challenge, harm, and inspire new theological voice and culture amongst persons of African diasporic and immigrant descent.

The aim of the course is for students during the duration of the course to reflect not only upon the question, “What impact does foreign identity have on notions of belonging within the Christian faith tradition and within the context of the U.S.?” but also, “Which principles of Western life are fortified and which ideas are resisted in the social and theological existence of persons who may bear the identity, ‘American African?’”

Course Objectives
Throughout the course, students will be attentive to inquiries around culture, identity, and theological formation of those who identify as American African immigrants in the U.S by:

- Examining how different accounts of wrestling with place, culture, and God-talk can help “put words to” social, ethnic, and theological particularity of persons of African descent with immigrant identity or experience
- Learning how to analytically explore particularity of experience through examining the contours of U.S. immigrant identity and life
- Practicing synthesizing information learned in the course through class discussions, writing assignments, and a final paper
- Processing their own social location in light of the loci of the communities centered in the course

Class Procedures
Class will consist of lecture conversations, discussions, and debates.
Requirements
1. Attendance and participation in every class session
2. Leading class discussion when assigned
3. Midterm paper
4. Final paper

Texts to purchase (tentative)

Students will need access to Brite’s academic platform/learning management system to access the remainder of the readings. This platform as well as email will be my main means of communication with everyone in the course. If access in this manner is a problem, please be in touch with the appropriate persons to work towards the best solution.

Grading Procedures
Attendance: 15%
Participation: 25%
Discussion Leading: 10%
Midterm Paper: 30%
Final paper: 20%