

Office of Black Male Achievement  
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**Black Men:  
Representations and Reality**

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The curriculum introduces students to the complexity of the black male experience by exploring the lived reality of black men in the United States. Ranging historically-far and thematically-wide, these courses will expose students to the experience of black male labor force participation and employment outcomes; deconstruct representations of black masculinity in popular culture; explore academic dilemmas associated with primary and secondary educational pursuits; and uncover issues connected with law, incarceration, and criminal justice. In addition, part of the curriculum will examine the relationship complexities involving black men and black women by looking closely at the African-American role in traditional and non-traditional family structures. Along with historical and sociological content, these courses will address the issue of character development and black male leadership. Thus, the courses seek to address the most central of questions: Who are black men and what is the black male experience, given the growing diversity of black maleness in Minnesota, the United States and the Diaspora? At the center of the curriculum is not only what other people have said about the black male historical and contemporary experience, but also how black men have imagined and constructed their own experience over time.

**Unit Questions for the course**

1. Who am I?
2. Who are we?
3. What is our current state?
4. Where am I going and how do I get there?
5. Once I'm there, how do I stay and or advance?

**BIG IDEAS of the course**

- Knowledge of Self
- Empowerment/Activism
- Student Engagement/Character Development
- Self-Identity