African American Studies

Director: Kathryn Morgan

The African American Studies Program is an interdisciplinary program that integrates the humanities, social and behavioral sciences and health related fields. A major in African American Studies leads to a Bachelor of Arts Degree. The Program also offers a minor. Since the Program requires only 40 hours for completion, students are encouraged to consider a "double major" with African American Studies.

The curriculum offered by the African American Studies Program advances knowledge about continental and diasporic African and African-American cultures and the history, literature, art, music, politics, economics, and religion associated with these cultures.

Our mission is to encourage critical thinking, develop analytical and writing skills, promote understanding and appreciation of contributions made by African Americans, and illuminate the complexity of race and the African American experience.

In addition to taking the required core classes for the major, students will be required to complete fifteen hours in one of three areas of emphasis: Global and Minority Health and Social Justice; Historical Investigation and Cultural Awareness; and History and Culture of Afro-Caribbean and Latino People.

The plan of study prepares students with critical knowledge, research skills, and communication skills to further their education in graduate and professional study in a variety of disciplines including African American Studies, Public Health, Criminal Justice, Public Administration, and Education; obtain employment in public health, social sciences, business and related fields; communicate effectively; and demonstrate the application of knowledge through community engagement.

The revised curriculum provides students more course options for completing the requirements of the degree. The revised curriculum also provides Areas of Emphasis that lead to a variety of career and graduate school opportunities. The three areas include: Global and Minority Health and Social Justice; Historical Investigation and Cultural Awareness; and the History and Culture of Afro-Caribbean and Latino People. As an African American Studies major, students select an area of study and complete enough hours to pursue a Master's or secure employment in that area. Students are able to develop goals early in their academic careers and strategies for achieving their goals.

In addition to the major in African American Studies, the Program also offers a minor. Students are required to complete 18 hours of coursework to fulfill the requirements for the minor. Students may also complete the minor online. Online courses will allow students to fulfill the minor requirements.

Bachelor of Arts with a Major in African American Studies

Requirements		Hours
Total Required Core Course Hours		
Blazer Core Curriculum		41
General Electives		39
AAS 100	African American Studies Seminar	1
AAS 200	Introduction to African-American Studies	3
or AAS 201	Honors Introduction to African American Studies	
AAS 223	African-Amer Hist to Civil War	3
or AAS 224	African American History Since 1865	
AAS 325	Black Psychology	3
AAS 350	Research Methods in African American Studies	3
AAS 331	African Diasporic Traditions	3
AAS 420	Public Health and Medical Issues in African Communities	3
AAS 490	African American Studies Internship	3
AAS 493	Capstone Seminar	3
or AAS 495	Individual Studies	
Students should select an Area of Emphasis and take 15 hours from the approved courses		**15**
MINORITY & GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH/SOCIAL JUSTICE		
AAS 220	History of Sport: The African American Experience	
AAS 273	The Black Power Movement	
AAS 310	Black Image: Screen and Television	
AAS 320	African Identity/Personality	
AAS 346	Race, Rhetoric, and Resistance	
AAS 442	Race, Crime, Gender and Social Policy	
or CJ 442	Race, Crime, and Social Policy	
SOC 250	Beyond Black and White: Exploring Race and Ethnicity	
SOC 280	Sickness and Health: An Introduction to Medical Sociology	
SOC 282	Healing the Divide: Social Factors of Minority Health	
PUH 201	Introduction to Public Health	
PSC 319	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	
PSC 350	African Politics	
CJ 100	Introduction to the Criminal Justice System	
CJ 230	The Judicial Process in America: An Overview	
ANTH 104	Introduction to Peace Studies	
ANTH 292	Anthropology of Slavery	
ANTH 371	Service Learning in Anthropology	
PHL 135	The Rule of Law	
HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION & CULTURAL AWARENESS		
AAS 165	Jazz Styles: History and Appreciation	
AAS 220	History of Sport: The African American Experience	
AAS 235	Introduction to African History and Culture	
AAS 260	History of Afro-Latin America	
or HY 260	History of Afro-Latin America	
AAS 273	The Black Power Movement	
AAS 300	African American Music	
AAS 301	History and Tradition of Gospel Music	
AAS 310	Black Image: Screen and Television	
AAS 311	Race and Representation in Media	
AAS 335	The Psychology of Hip Hop	
AAS 346	Race, Rhetoric, and Resistance	
AAS 385	The History of Haiti	
EH 324	African-American Special Topics	
EH 365	African American Literature, 1746-1954	
EH 366	African American Literature, 1954-Present	
EH 424	African-American Special Topics	
EH 422	African Literature	
EH 423	African Women's Literature	
EH 446	African American Autobiography	

EH 447	African American Dramatic Tradition
EH 448	African American Poetry Tradition
EH 466	The Slave Narrative and Its Literary Expressions
EH 467	Black Women Writers
EH 468	The Harlem Renaissance
ARH 205	Survey of African Art
ARH 480	Art Criticism and Theory
HY 223	African-American History to 1865
HY 224	African-American History Since 1865
HY 289	Topics in African American History
HY 304	U.S. Civil Rights Movement
HY 310	Film in the 1960s
HY 312	Rock n Roll and Race Relations
HY 326	Mansions, Mines, and Jim Crow
HY 389	Topics in African American History
HISTORY & CULTURE OF AFRO-CARIBBEAN AND LATINO PEOPLE	
AAS 385	The History of Haiti
ANTH 248	Peoples of the World: Latin America
HY 260	History of Afro-Latin America
HY 245	Introduction to Latin American History
HY 247	Indians, Spaniards & Creoles
HY 341	The U.S. and Latin America
HY 342	Sex & Latin American Society
SPA 101	Introductory Spanish I
SPA 310	Cultures of the Spanish-Speaking World
SPA 414	Afro-Latin American Literature and Culture
Total Hours	**120**

A grade of 'C' or better is required for this major.

Minor in African American Studies

Requirements		**Hours**
Select 6 courses from the following courses:		**18**
AAS 100	African American Studies Seminar	
AAS 165	Jazz Styles: History and Appreciation	
AAS 200	Introduction to African-American Studies	
AAS 220	History of Sport: The African American Experience	
AAS 223	African-Amer Hist to Civil War	
AAS 224	African American History Since 1865	
AAS 235	Introduction to African History and Culture	
AAS 250	Special Topics in African-American Studies	
AAS 260	History of Afro-Latin America	
AAS 273	The Black Power Movement	
AAS 300	African American Music	
AAS 301	History and Tradition of Gospel Music	
AAS 310	Black Image: Screen and Television	
AAS 311	Race and Representation in Media	
AAS 320	African Identity/Personality	
AAS 325	Black Psychology	
AAS 330	African Aesthetics and Traditional Religion	
AAS 331	African Diasporic Traditions	
AAS 335	The Psychology of Hip Hop	
AAS 345	Pulpits in Protest: Social Change Speeches from the Black Church and Beyond	
AAS 346	Race, Rhetoric, and Resistance	
AAS 350	Research Methods in African American Studies	
AAS 385	The History of Haiti	
AAS 400	Seminar in African American Studies	
AAS 420	Public Health and Medical Issues in African Communities	
AAS/CJ 442	Race, Crime, Gender and Social Policy (AAS 442)	
AAS 490	African American Studies Internship	
Total Hours		**18**

A grade of C or better is required for courses applying to this minor.

Proposed Program of Study for a Major in African-American Studies

Freshman

First Term	**Hours**	**Second Term**	**Hours**
EH 101	3	EH 102	3
Blazer Core Quantitative Literacy	3	Blazer Core Thinking Broadly	3
AAS 200 or 201	3	Blazer Core Creative Arts	3
Blazer Core: Thinking Broadly	3	Blazer Core Communicating in the Modern World	3
Blazer Core Local Beginnings	3	Blazer Core Reasoning	3
AAS 100	1		
	16		**15**

Sophomore

First Term	**Hours**	**Second Term**	**Hours**
AAS 325	3	Blazer Core Scientific Inquiry	4
Blazer Core City as a Classroom	3	AAS 331 (AAS Area of Emphasis)	3
AAS 223 (AAS 223)	3	AAS Elective (Area of Emphasis)	3
Blazer Core Scientific Inquiry	4	General Elective	3
General Elective	3	General Elective	3
	16		**16**

Junior

First Term	**Hours**	**Second Term**	**Hours**
AAS 350	3	AAS Elective (Area of Emphasis)	3
AAS Elective (Area of Emphasis)	3	AAS Elective (Area of Emphasis)	3
General Elective	3	General Elective	3
General Elective	3	General Elective	3
General Elective	3	General Elective	3
	15		**15**

Senior

First Term	**Hours**	**Second Term**	**Hours**
AAS 420	3	AAS 493 or 495	3
AAS Elective (Area of Emphasis)	3	AAS 490[1]	3
General Elective	3	General Elective	3
General Elective	3	General Elective	3
General Elective	3		
	15		**12**

Total credit hours: 120

[1] Must meet with the Program Director in the semester prior to completing the Internship.

African American Studies Honors Program

Purpose

The purposes of the Honors Program in African American Studies are to promote academic excellence; provide opportunity for majors to do extensive study and research in the discipline; and prepare academically talented majors to pursue graduate school or professional careers.

Eligibility

- completion of required AAS courses:
  - AAS 200 Introduction to African American Studies
  - AAS 350 Research Methods in African American Studies
  - AAS 331 African Diasporic Traditions
- undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.00
- GPA of 3.25 in AAS courses
- junior-senior level standing

Requirements

- completion of required courses for the AAS major
- approval by the Program Director
- completion of AAS 497 Honors Seminar (Fall Semester)
- completion of AAS 498 Honors Thesis/Project (Spring Semester)
- formal presentation of the final project

Benefits

Participation in the African American Studies Honors program provides opportunities for academically talented students to have unique access to faculty and to interact with other honors students in an environment that encourages creative and innovative thinking. Seminar participation and research experience will be useful for graduate study or a career in the field. Completion of the Honors program is an advantage when applying to graduate programs. Finally, students who complete the program will be recognized at the African American Studies outstanding student ceremony and will graduate “With Honors in African American Studies.

Contact

For additional information and/or admission to the African American Honors Program, please contact:

Dr. Kay Morgan, Program Director
African American Studies Program
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Courses

AAS 100. African American Studies Seminar. 1 Hour.
AAS 100 is an initial course that introduces new majors and minors to the field and the African American Studies Program. Emphases will be placed on exploring the history and development of the AAS Program, major and minor requirements, internship and service learning opportunities and career options. Required of all new majors & minors.

AAS 150. Let’s BMEN. 1 Hour.
Given the historical and current retention rate at colleges/universities in the U.S.; this class is designed to assist young scholars in navigating an academic environment. This course will explore issues such as masculinity, cultural identity, leadership and education relative to African American males. It seeks to provide students with tools and strategies that can be employed as they matriculate though their college experience.

AAS 165. Jazz Styles: History and Appreciation. 3 Hours.
American jazz with emphasis on instrumental and vocal performers, jazz bands, and combos. Development of big band, swing, and popular music.

AAS 200. Introduction to African-American Studies. 3 Hours.
Examination of seven core areas of African American Studies: History, Religion, Social Organization, Politics, Economics, Creative Production, and Psychology. Emphasizes major thematical theoretical and critical discourses of Black Studies, and its emergence as a political/social movement and discipline. Relates the latter to the complexity and diversity of contemporary movements such as Civil Rights, Free Speech, Black Power, and Afro-centricism. Majors and minors in African American Studies should complete this course before enrolling in any higher level AAS course. Ethics and Civic Responsibility are significant components of this course. This course meets Blazer Core Curriculum History & Meaning with a flag in Global/Multi-Cultural Perspectives.

AAS 201. Honors Introduction to African American Studies. 3 Hours.
An advanced study of African American Studies as a discipline. Examines the seven core areas of the field with an emphasis on the major theories, critical discourses, and the emergence of Black Studies as a field of inquiry.

AAS 220. History of Sport: The African American Experience. 3 Hours.
This course provides a socio-cultural and historical overview of the African American athletes (male and female) that contributed to sports as we know them today. Focus will begin on the historical figures that helped shape sports culture and will continue into discussions about the role African-Americans play in collegiate and professionals sports today.

AAS 223. African-Amer Hist to Civil War. 3 Hours.
Survey of the African American experience from Pre-Colonial Africa to the End of the Civil War.

AAS 224. African American History Since 1865. 3 Hours.
Survey of late 19th century to present African American history.

AAS 235. Introduction to African History and Culture. 3 Hours.
Media representations of an uncivilized Africa marked by political instability, hunger and wars is pervasive. This introductory course on African culture and History takes the student on a journey of Africa from “inception” to date. The course will explore early empires of Africa and Africa’s rich political and cultural traditions, diversity, conflicts and religion. This course will analyze historical events like the Transatlantic slave trade, the scramble for, and partition of Africa, colonialism and neo-colonialism on the African Continent, the struggle for independence and the role of America in emergent African Nations; and current events like the role of the African Union, ECOWAS and other regional organizations and the influence of Africa in world politics. It will also introduce Students to African Diaspora – causes, patterns and peculiar conflicts of diasporic existence and assimilation into American culture and society. The course serves as a launching pad to understanding Black and African-American studies.

AAS 250. Special Topics in African-American Studies. 3 Hours.
Specific topic in African American Studies.

AAS 260. History of Afro-Latin America. 3 Hours.
This course surveys the history of those countries of Latin America, e.g. Cuba, Brazil and Colombia, that comprise the heart of the New World's African diaspora, having received most of the roughly 10 million Africans brought to Latin American shores during the centuries-long transatlantic slave trade. It explores the dramatic experiences of Afro-Latin Americans including their roles in the destruction of slave systems, creation of nations based on democratic principles, and rise of vibrant multicultural societies.

AAS 273. The Black Power Movement. 3 Hours.
The Black Power Movement remains one of the most compelling—and misunderstood—elements of African American History. Since the 1960s, critics have—at best—accused Black Power of distracting attention from more productive endeavors, betraying the promise of civil rights, and dividing an interracial coalition of sympathetic liberals. At worst, opponents have attacked Black Power as a foolish, racist, and violent threat to white America, the state, and the Black Freedom Struggle itself. Participants and scholars, however, tell a different story. Rather than divisive and destructive, the Black Power Movement was unifying and creative. Rather than betraying a winning civil rights coalition, Black Power exposed and challenged the limitations of white allies and liberal reform. Rather than a radical break with the past, Black Power represented a new articulation of old traditions of race pride and self-determination. Accordingly, this course favors a deep historical context. We begin with the Nineteenth-century roots of Black Nationalism and black radicalism and move chronologically through the 1970s. Seeking to restore the distorted legacy of the Black Power movement, however, we also explore its shortcomings, lest its lessons for the Freedom Struggle in the present day go unexamined. Finally, this course also adopts a subtitle—“In Their Own Words”—to foreground and elevate the voices of historical actors, allowing the ideas and debates at the heart of Black Power to breathe in the 21st century. Each session will combine collective discussion of the readings and group analysis of primary sources with an abbreviated lecture.

AAS 290. Writing in African American Studies. 3 Hours.
Course offers students continued practice in reading, research, and writing central to academic investigation and to interdisciplinary approaches. Develops skills in writing across disciplines and critical thinking. Emphasizes readings on diverse, contemporary, and multicultural issues in African American Studies. Writing, Ethics and Civic Responsibility are significant components of this course.

AAS 300. African American Music. 3 Hours.
Survey, history and appreciation of African derived music and its presence in the United States from its earliest forms in spirituals, blues and jazz to contemporary forms of be-bop, hip-hop, reggae, and rap.

AAS 301. History and Tradition of Gospel Music. 3 Hours.
The purpose of this course is to broaden the knowledge of American Gospel Music history and to identify the valuable contributions of this genre by studying its eras and major contributors.

AAS 310. Black Image: Screen and Television. 3 Hours.
History and definition of the image of the African-ancestored people in the United States through cinema and television.

AAS 311. Race and Representation in Media. 3 Hours.
The course critically assesses the depiction of race in various visual media presentations. It explores how race is projected in media and how these media structures can create, support stereotypes of race and perpetuate social inequalities.

AAS 320. African Identity/Personality. 3 Hours.
This course is a study of the African identity, personality, and the concept of ¿blackness¿ with particular emphasis on what it means to be black in America. An adequate discourse on the complexities of African American Studies requires a multi-disciplinary approach that considers the expansive nature of the African Experience in North America. Accordingly, any substantive intellectual and scholarly foundation for critically understanding the salient areas of this course require the application of cross-discipline areas of study involving race, culture, socioeconomics, history, African American political behavior, and psychosocial theories of development. Quantitative Literacy is a significant component of this course.

AAS 325. Black Psychology. 3 Hours.
This courses examines and explores theory, research, and practice related to the study of psycho-social experiences from the worldview of Africans in America.

AAS 330. African Aesthetics and Traditional Religion. 3 Hours.
African aesthetics, African cosmology, and qualities of African spirituality.

AAS 331. African Diasporic Traditions. 3 Hours.
This course interrogates oral, written and performance discourse pertaining to the life-worlds of people of African descent on the continent and the diaspora. The purpose of this course is to analyze the customs and traditions of African descended people around the globe. It investigates aspects of African cultures that have endured despite its dispersal throughout the New World. The course examines the cultural footprints and impact that African culture has made on Western civilization by exploring African diasporic music, religions, literature, political thought, and social movements.

AAS 335. The Psychology of Hip Hop. 3 Hours.
Psychology of Hip Hop uses hip hop music and culture as conceptual lenses for analyzing and interpreting the life experiences of people of African descent throughout the African diaspora. Drawing mainly on psychology as well as other social sciences, this course is intended to provide students with an understanding of the psycho-historical and psycho-social development of African Americans relative to hip hop culture. This course explores and examines the thesis that African American music is an expression of African American life. Thus hip hop music and culture serve as soundtracks that allow the opportunity to listen to and learn from this particular manifestation of what W. E. B. Du Bois called the souls/psychology of Black folk.

AAS 345. Pulpits in Protest: Social Change Speeches from the Black Church and Beyond. 3 Hours.
This course is largely constructed around the study and the discussion of four major social movements involving African Americans and the protest speeches, sermons, and songs given by women and men from the Black Church and beyond. The course demonstrates the power of oration and rhetoric and how this medium was leveraged to expose oppression and bring about social change of the oppressed. The course is organized chronologically with an emphasis on the ideas of black social thought within the black church, political protest, and the speeches, sermons, and songs given in a particular movement with efforts to initiate social change.

AAS 346. Race, Rhetoric, and Resistance. 3 Hours.
This course is a study and discussion of race, protest movements, and the rhetoric, speeches, sermons, and music during four (4) major social movements involving African Americans. The course is organized chronologically with an emphasis on the ideas of black social thought in America.

AAS 350. Research Methods in African American Studies. 3 Hours.
Research Methods in Africana Studies will introduce students to a general conceptual framework for ordering the social theories and methods that people of African descent have used to interpret and understand Africana life experiences.
Prerequisites: AAS 200 [Min Grade: C]

AAS 366. African American Literature II. 3 Hours.
Cultural values from James Baldwin in 1950s, through black nationalist, civil rights, and black feminist movements, to contemporary writers such as Ishmael Reed, Charles Johnson, and Toni Morrison.
Prerequisites: EH 101 [Min Grade: C] and (EH 102 [Min Grade: C] or EH 107 [Min Grade: C]) and AAS 200 [Min Grade: C]

AAS 385. The History of Haiti. 3 Hours.
The course is an examination of the history of Haiti from slavery through the twentieth century to gain a broader understanding of the country and to develop the tools to critically challenge these dominant narratives and stereotypes about the country.

AAS 390. Critical Conversations about Birmingham's History. 3 Hours.
This service-learning course examines the social responsibility mission of African American Studies and how that mission will be revived through engagement between the African American Studies Program and the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. Emphasis is placed on Birmingham's historical fight for social justice and the significant sites that are a part of this history. This course will combine course content with the requirement for service-learning hours. Students will learn insights into the history of prominent civil rights sites, spend service-learning hours in those locations, and acquire skills to become tour facilitators for those sites.
Prerequisites: AAS 200 [Min Grade: C]

AAS 400. Seminar in African American Studies. 3 Hours.
Specific topic in African American Studies.

AAS 420. Public Health and Medical Issues in African Communities. 3 Hours.
This course introduces students to important health issues that face the African American community. The goals are to increase awareness and stimulate discussion about health problems facing African Americans, factors believed to cause, contribute or worsen these problems, and steps now taken to alleviate or eliminate these problems.
Prerequisites: AAS 200 [Min Grade: C]

AAS 442. Race, Crime, Gender and Social Policy. 3 Hours.
This class is an examination of crime and the policies of crime control within the context of race and gender. This class attempts to study crime and the policies of crime control within the context of race, class, and gender. We will address the following topics:(1) The role of inequality in participation of crime. Are persons in subordinate positions of power (racial & ethnic minorities, females & lower class) more likely to become involved in criminal behavior & why? (2) The manner in which race and gender independently affect interaction with the criminal justice system. How do persons in these groups interact with the criminal justice system as offenders, victims & professionals? (3) The manner in which crime policies have influenced interaction of these groups with the criminal justice system and alternatives to the present strategies.

AAS 448. African American Poetry Tradition. 3 Hours.
Development of African American poetry from its early works to the present, including Wheatley, Dumbar, Hughes, Brooks, and Angelou.
Prerequisites: EH 101 [Min Grade: C] and (EH 102 [Min Grade: C] or EH 107 [Min Grade: C])

AAS 490. African American Studies Internship. 3 Hours.
This course offers students a supervised work experience, either paid or unpaid, at an agency or organization related to African American Studies. The internship is an essential opportunity for students to gain pre-professional work experience, applying theoretical knowledge in real-world settings while addressing issues important to the African American community. Students can earn up to 3 credits by completing 120 working hours in one semester or by registering for 1-2 credits (40-80 working hours) over multiple semesters, providing flexibility in meeting internship requirements.

AAS 493. Capstone Seminar. 3 Hours.
Specific topics vary...The course will provide an opportunity for students to reflect upon and to use the knowledge, skills and dispositions developed in previous African American Studies coursework. This course or AAS 495 required of all AAS majors. AAS 493 is ideally taken in the final undergraduate semester. Preq: 9 hours AAS coursework at the 400 level and permission of the Program Director. 3 hours.

AAS 495. Individual Studies. 3 Hours.
Specific topics vary. An individually designed course for semi-independent research or guided readings in areas and subjects that synthesize the African American Studies core areas. The course will provide an opportunity for students to reflect upon and use the knowledge, skills, and disposition developed in previous African American Studies coursework. This course or AAS 493 required of all AAS majors. AAS 495 is ideally taken in the final undergraduate semester. Consult Program Director for procedure to apply for this course.

AAS 497. Honors Seminar. 3 Hours.
The African American Studies Departmental Honors Program requires completion of a two course sequence. This first course in the sequence provides students with an overview of the research process. Students are taught the basics of research, statistical analysis and techniques of making a formal presentation of research. Under the guidance of the Program Director and faculty mentor, students are required to develop an honors research project.
Prerequisites: AAS 200 [Min Grade: B] and AAS 325 [Min Grade: B] and AAS 350 [Min Grade: B]

AAS 498. Honors Project. 3 Hours.
Under the guidance of the faculty mentor, students complete the project and make a formal presentation of the research.
Prerequisites: AAS 497 [Min Grade: B]