

AFRICAN AMERICAN & AFRICAN STUDIES, BACHELOR OF ARTS

College of Letters & Science

African American & African Studies is an interdisciplinary field of study in the humanities, arts, and social sciences. This major introduces students to the social, cultural, historical, and artistic dimensions of global African Diaspora and Black communities in the United States, Africa, Europe, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, and Pacific regions of the world. The instructors are creative, accessible and highly qualified, with specializations across a range of disciplines. Students are exposed to and trained to think critically about the conditions and demands of global societies. Students may choose to enrich their education by studying for a summer, a quarter, or a year in Africa, or by studying for a quarter in the Caribbean. Majors and Minors are also encouraged to take advantage of relevant internship opportunities.

The Program

The purpose of this program is to give students a sense of the individual characteristics and common concerns of Black communities in Africa, the United States, and the wider Diaspora. The African American emphasis includes courses on history, culture, and the impact of developments in politics and the economy on the social organization of Black people in the United States. The African Diaspora emphasis enables students to study the way Black communities outside Africa and the United States have dealt with questions of race and ethnicity. It also considers how they have defined their identity in the political arena by using religion, theater and dance, literature, and film. The African emphasis allows students to focus on Africa's recent history, social issues, and contemporary culture.

Career Alternatives

Students majoring in African American & African Studies gain knowledge and strong critical thinking and analytical skills, problem-solving skills, and communication skills, all suited for advanced studies in all areas, including but not limited to the social sciences, law, education, business, medicine, and professional schools. Graduates in the major have pursued careers in all areas including education, the private and public sectors, the non-profit sector, international development agencies and human service. The interdisciplinary nature of African American & African Studies is excellent preparation for professions in community organizations such as the Urban League, NAACP, and the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Major Advisor

Katherine Ampaw-Matthei M.Ed.; kampaw@ucdavis.edu
African American & African Studies Staff (<https://aas.ucdavis.edu/staff/>)

American History & Institutions

This University requirement can be satisfied by completion of AAS 010, AAS 100; listed in American History & Institutions Requirement (<https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/undergraduate-education/university-degree-requirements/american-history-institutions-requirement/>).

The major requirements below are in addition to meeting University Degree Requirements ([https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/undergraduate-](https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/undergraduate-education/university-degree-requirements/)

[education/university-degree-requirements/](https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/undergraduate-education/university-degree-requirements/)) & College Degree Requirements (<https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/undergraduate-education/college-degree-requirements/>); unless otherwise noted. The minimum number of units required for the African American & African Studies Bachelor of Arts is 64.

Note: Although a course may be listed more than once, such a course may satisfy only one requirement.

Code	Title	Units
Preparatory Subject Matter		
<i>African American & African Studies</i>		
AAS 010	African-American Culture & Society	4
or AAS 012	Introduction to African Studies	
Choose one:		4
AAS 015	Introduction to African American Humanities	
AAS 017	Women in African Societies	
AAS 018	Introduction to Caribbean Studies	
AAS 050	Black Popular Culture	
AAS 051	History of Afro American Dance	
AAS 052	African Traditional Religion	
AAS 080	Introduction to Black Politics	
Choose one:		4
ANT 002	Cultural Anthropology	
ECN 001A	Principles of Microeconomics	
or ECN 001AV	Principles of Microeconomics	
or ECN 001AY	Principles of Microeconomics	
ECN 001B	Principles of Macroeconomics	
or ECN 001BV	Principles of Macroeconomics	
POL 001	American National Government	
or POL 001Y	American National Government	
POL 002	Introduction to Comparative Politics	
PSC 001	General Psychology	
or PSC 001V	General Psychology	
or PSC 001Y	General Psychology	
SOC 001	Introduction to Sociology	
or SOC 001V	Introduction to Sociology	
Choose one:		4
AMS 010	Introduction to American Studies	
ASA 001	Historical Experience of Asian Americans	
ASA 002	Contemporary Issues of Asian Americans	
CHI 010	Introduction to Chicana/o Studies	
or CHI 010V	Introduction to Chicana/o Studies	
GSW 050	Introduction to Critical Gender Studies	
or GSW 050V	Introduction to Critical Gender Studies	
NAS 001	Introduction to Native American Studies	
NAS 010	Native American Experience	
<i>History</i>		
Choose two:		8
HIS 015A	Africa to 1900	
HIS 015B	Africa Today	
HIS 017A	History of the United States	
HIS 017B	History of the United States	

Choose one:	4
AAS 016	Verbal & Performance Arts in Africa
AAS 051	History of Afro American Dance
AAS/DRA 155A	African-American Dance & Culture in the United States, Brazil & the Caribbean
DRA 041A	Beginning Jazz Dance
DRA 041B	Intermediate Jazz Dance
DRA 044A	Beginning Hip Hop Dance
DRA 044B	Intermediate Hip Hop Dance
MUS 028	Introduction to African American Music
MUS 105	History & Analysis of Jazz
MUS 106	History of Rock Music
Preparatory Subject Matter Subtotal	28
Depth Subject Matter	
Choose one:	4
AAS 100	Survey of Ethnicity in the US
AAS 101	Introduction to Research in the Afro-American Community
AAS 107A	African Descent Communities & Culture in the Caribbean & Latin America
AAS 107B	African Descent Communities & Culture in North America
AAS 107C	African Descent Communities & Culture in Asia
AAS 110	West African Social Organization
AAS 145B	Black Intellectuals
AAS 172	Diaspora & New Black Identities
AAS 180	Race & Ethnicity in Latin America
Choose one:	4
AAS 150A	Afro-American Visual Arts Tradition: A Historical & Cultural Study
AAS 150B	Afro-American Visual Arts Tradition: A Historical & Cultural Study
AAS 151	Afro-American Vernacular Music & Verbal Arts
AAS 152	Major Voices in Black World Literature
AAS 153/COM 154	African Literature
AAS/DRA 155A	African-American Dance & Culture in the United States, Brazil & the Caribbean
AAS 156	Language & Identity in Africa & the African Diaspora
AAS 157	Literature & Society in South Africa
AAS 160	African-American Folklore
AAS 169	History of African American Television
AAS 170	African-American Film & Video
AAS 171	Black African & Black European Film & Video
AAS 175A	Black Documentary: History & Theory
AAS 175B	Black Documentary Practicum
AAS 181	Hip Hop in Urban America
AAS 182	Hip Hop Culture & Globalization
AAS 185	Topics in African American Film
Choose one:	4
AAS 111	Cultural Politics in Contemporary Africa

AAS 123	Black Female Experience in Contemporary Society	
AAS 130	Education in the African-American Community	
AAS 133	The Black Family In America	
AAS 141	Psychology of the African American Experience	
AAS 145A	Black Social & Political Thought	
AAS 145B	Black Intellectuals	
AAS 156	Language & Identity in Africa & the African Diaspora	
AAS 162	Islam in Africa & the Americas	
AAS 163	African Religions in the Americas	
AAS 165	Afro-Christianity & the Black Church	
AAS 172	Diaspora & New Black Identities	
AAS 176	The Politics of Resources	
AAS 177	Politics of Life in Africa	
A coordinated program of upper division courses, selected and approved in consultation with the major advisor and chosen to reflect the student's major emphasis. Possible areas of emphasis include the following:		24
Creative arts in the black community worldwide, social and political trends in the global black community, African American society and culture, Africa, African Diasporas. These areas of emphasis are offered as guidelines for students in the major. They are not the only areas of emphasis that students may choose for the major.		
Depth Subject Matter Subtotal		36
Total Units		64

Related Upper Division Courses

The following courses are offered by faculty members in other disciplines and focus on African American studies, African diaspora studies, or African studies:

Code	Title	Units
AMS 156	Race, Culture & Society in the United States	4
ANT 104N	Cultural Politics of the Environment	4
ANT 139AN	Race, Class, Gender Systems	4
ANT 140A	(Discontinued for fall 2025) **	4
ANT 140B	Cultures & Societies of East & South Africa (Discontinued for spring 2026) **	4
AHI 150	Arts of Sub-Saharan Africa	4
CRD 151	Community Field Research: Theory & Analysis	5
CRD 152	Community Development	4
CRD 172	Social Inequality: Issues & Innovations	4
COM 154/AAS 153	African Literature	4
COM 165	Caribbean Literatures	4
ENL 167	20th-Century African American Poetry	4
ENL 178	Topics in Nations, Regions, & Other Cultural Geographies	4
ENL 179	Topics in Comparative Racial & Ethnic Literary Studies	4
ENL 181A	African American Literature to 1900	4

ENL 181B	African American Literature 1900-Present	4
HIS 1020	Undergraduate Proseminar in History: Africa	5
HIS 115A	History of West Africa	4
HIS 115B	History of East Africa & the Indian Ocean	4
HIS 115C	History of Southern Africa from Exploration to the Rainbow Nation	4
HIS 115D	Postcolonial Africa	4
HIS 116	African History: Special Themes	4
HIS 177A	History of Black People & American Race Relations: 1450-1860	4
HIS 177B	History of Black People & American Race Relations: 1860-Present	4
POL 134	Africa & U.S. Foreign Policy	4
POL 176	Racial Politics	4
SOC 128	Interracial Interpersonal Dynamics	4
SOC 129	Sociology of Black Experience in America	4
SOC 130	Race Relations	4
SOC 137	African American Society & Culture 1790 to 1990	4
SOC 143A	Urban Society	4
SOC 145A	Sociology of Third World Development	4
SOC 145B	Gender & Rural Development in the Third World	4
DRA/AAS 155A	African American Dance & Culture in the United States, Brazil & the Caribbean	4
WMS 160	Women, "Race" & Sexuality in Postcolonial Cinema	4
WMS 180	Women of Color Writing in the United States (Discontinued for spring 2026) **	4
or GSW 180	Women of Color Writing in the United States	
WMS 182	Globalization, Gender & Culture	4

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Course(s) discontinued; see your advisor for course options.