

African American and African Studies

The major and minor in African American and African Studies is administered by the African American and African Studies Committee: Professors Gabriel (economics), Gadjigo (French), Grayson (religion), Lemly (English); Associate Professors Brodie (biological sciences), Brown (English), Douglas (psychology and education); Hanson (history), Morgan (history), Mosby (Spanish), Smith (politics), Wilson (economics and African American and African studies); Assistant Professors Banks (sociology), Omojola (music); Visiting Professor Pemberton (English).

Contact Persons

Holly Sharac, *senior administrative assistant*
Dorothy Mosby, *chair (fall 2009)*
Holly Hanson, *chair (spring, 2010)*

As a field of inquiry, African American and African studies describes and analyzes the origins and experiences of people of African descent wherever they live or have lived. These fields are inherently comparative, international, and interdisciplinary in approach, embracing the range of fields in the humanities and social sciences and including the performing arts.

The major prepares students for a number of careers: government, politics, international affairs, law, education, journalism, public health, religious studies, literature and the arts, and business management, to name only a few.

When declaring a major, each student chooses an advisor from the committee. In addition, she must have the approval of the program chair.

Students can choose one of two concentrations or take a combination of courses from each concentration in the major and minor. Each concentration has its own set of requirements that majors and minors have to

fulfill. Students can also select a combination of courses from each concentration.

The Concentration in African American Studies

The intent of African American studies is to provide a systematic investigation and analysis of the thoughts, experiences, and conditions under which people of African descent live in the United States. Courses making up the concentration will draw upon different disciplines to explore how African Americans relate to each other, to other Americans, and to other people of African descent living in the Americas, Europe, and Africa. Students majoring in the field should understand how blacks shape their lives in particular historical, social, political-economic, and cultural contexts.

Independent study or fieldwork is highly recommended to allow the student to study a particular topic in depth or to apply what she has learned in the classroom to issues affecting African Americans in the larger world. Students are also encouraged to take advantage of opportunities for internships, study abroad, and exchange at other institutions.

Requirements for the Concentration

Credits

- A minimum of 40 credits
- 20 of these credits must be at the 300 level in at least two different disciplines.

Courses

- African American and African Studies 101, Introduction to African American Studies
- One class on people of African descent in either Africa, the Caribbean, or the African diaspora at the 200 or 300 level

Other

- Independent Study 395 is strongly recommended. 301

Other courses to be counted for the concentration are drawn from departmental offerings with the approval of the program. 250
 Students may also count courses taken at the other Five College institutions subject to approval by the chair. 281
 282

African American and African studies is an interdisciplinary major. Students who pursue an interdisciplinary major automatically fulfill the College's "outside the major" requirement (see p. 8).

The Minor Concentration in African American Studies

The program should be planned carefully for coherence and integrity.

Credits

- A minimum of 20 credits 253
- 16 of these credits must be at the 200 level or higher. 132
- At least 4 of these credits must be at the 300 level. 395 may not be counted toward the minimum 4 credits at the 300 level. 142B
232

Courses

- African American and African Studies 101, Introduction to African American Studies 205

Other

- Signature of the program chair 240

Courses Counting toward the Major and Minor in African American Studies

See department listings for descriptions and course offerings.

Core

- 210 *African American Studies*
African American Culture and Society

American Studies

Senior Seminar on Richard Wright

English

African American Literature

History

African American History to 1865

African American History since 1865

Electives

American Studies

Topics in American Studies: Comparative Racializations: Latinos, African Americans, and Asian Americans

Senior Seminar: American Orientalisms: Afro/Arab/Asian Connections

Critical Social Thought

Critical Race Theory

Dance

Intro to Hip-Hop

Comparative Caribbean Dance

Intermediate Hip-Hop

Economics

Political Economy of "Race" in the U.S.

Education

Whiteness, Racism, and Inequality in Schools and Society

Educational Studies

Researching Race and Racism in Education

English

Contemporary Autobiography: Race, Sexuality, Style

Memories of Home

The Poetics of Race and Identity

African American Poetry

African American Literature

African American Diasporas: Literature and Culture

Harlem Renaissance

271	Women Writers: Black and White Southern Women Writers	375	American History: The Middle Period: The Age of Emancipation
339	Race, Romance, and Reform: Nineteenth-Century African American Women's Literature	381	Recent American History: The Civil Rights Movement
345	The Career and Legacy of Richard Wright		<i>Latin American Studies</i>
350	Studies in African American Literature: Slavery and the American Literary Imagination	170	Readings in Caribbean Literature
351	Toni Morrison	260	Afro-Latin America: From Slavery to Invisibility
370	The Caribbean in American Culture	276	Contemporary Caribbean Societies
372	Contesting Borders: The Literature of Exile	289	Slavery in the Americas
375	Black Texts, Black Experiments: Contemporary African American Poetics	373	Studies in Comparative Caribbean Culture: Contemporary Caribbean Writers
375	The Conceptual Black Body in Twentieth-Century and Contemporary Visual Culture		<i>Philosophy</i>
379	Suzan-Lori Parks, Revolutionary Playwright	248	Philosophical Issues in Race and Racism
389	American Memoir		<i>Politics</i>
	<i>Gender Studies</i>	210	Minorities and the Law
204	Women and Gender in the Study of Culture: Black Women Writers: Feminist Visions from the African Diaspora	244	Urban Politics and Policies
333	Contemporary Latin American Literature: Skin of a Woman: Afro-Latina and Afro-Latin American Women Writers	250	Politics of Black Urban Reform
333	Interdisciplinary Seminar: Black Feminism: Theory and Praxis	251	Black and Latino Politics
333	Interdisciplinary Seminar: Sex, Love, and Gender in Contemporary African Film	252	Topics in Urban Studies
	<i>History</i>	313	The Politics of Poverty
101	African American Autobiographies and Biographies	347	Race and Urban Political Economy
280	Race and Gender in North American History: African American Women and U.S. History	348	Colloquium in Politics: Community Development
301	Colloquium: Slaves and Their Allies		<i>Psychology</i>
301	Colloquium: Segregation: Origins and Legacies	213	Psychology of Racism
			<i>Religion</i>
		107	The Women Who Shaped the Mind of Frederick Douglass
		218	Women in American Religious History
		228	On Human Freedom: Lordship and Bondage in Religion and Culture
		230	Spirituals and the Blues
			<i>Sociology</i>
		216	Issues in Sociology: Racial and Ethnic Relations
		316	Special Topics in Sociology: Class in the Black Community
		316	Special Topics in Sociology: Black Cultural Production and Consumption

Theatre Arts
 350 Suzan-Lori Parks, Revolutionary Playwright

The Concentration in African Studies

The intent of African studies is to provide a systematic investigation and analysis of the thoughts, experiences, and conditions under which people of African descent live on the continent of Africa. Courses making up the concentration will draw upon different disciplines to explore how Africans relate to each other within and across regions and nation-states and to people of African descent in the Diaspora. Students majoring in the field should understand how Africans shape their lives in particular historical, social, political-economic, and cultural contexts.

Independent study or fieldwork is highly recommended to allow the student to study a particular topic in depth or to apply what she has learned in the classroom to issues affecting Africans in the larger world. Students are also encouraged to take advantage of opportunities for internships, study abroad, and exchange at other institutions.

Requirements for the Concentration

Credits

- A minimum of 40 credits
- 20 of these credits must be at the 300 level in at least two different disciplines.

Courses

- History 141, Violence and Social Change in Modern Africa
- One class on people of African descent in either the Americas, the Caribbean, or the African Diaspora at the 200 or 300 level

Other

- Independent Study 395 is strongly recommended.

Other courses to be counted for the concentration are drawn from departmental offerings with the approval of the program.

Students may also count courses taken at the other Five College institutions subject to approval by the chair.

The Minor Concentration in African Studies

The program should be planned carefully for coherence and integrity.

Credits

- A minimum of 20 credits
- 16 of these credits must be at the 200 level or higher.
- At least 4 of these credits must be at the 300 level. 395 may not be counted toward the minimum 4 credits at the 300 level.

Courses

- History 141, Violence and Social Change in Modern Africa

Other

- Signature of the program chair

Courses Counting toward the Major and Minor in African Studies

See department listings for descriptions and course offerings.

Core

English

253 African Literature

Geography

217 The African Environments

History

140 Identity and Community in Early Africa

141 Violence and Social Change in Modern Africa

Electives

Anthropology

301 Education in South Africa: Policy and Practice: Education and Health in Post-Apartheid South Africa

	<i>Dance</i>			<i>History</i>
142A	West African Dance	206		African Cities: Development Dreams and Nightmares in the Twentieth Century
243A	Cultural Dance Forms: West African			241 African Popular Culture
	<i>Earth and Environment</i>		242 Colonial Worlds: Africa and India	
304	Selected Problems in Regional Geography: Africa—Problems and Prospects	296		296 Women in History: African Women's Work, 1880–1980
311	Third World Development		301 Colloquium: Ecology and Imperialism in Africa	
	<i>Educational Studies</i>		301 Colloquium: Food and Famine in African History	
301	Education in South Africa: Policy and Practice: Education and Health in Post-Apartheid South Africa		301 Colloquium: Money in History	
	<i>English</i>		341 Topics in African History: When Worlds Collide: The Colonial Moment in Africa	
101	Seminars in Reading, Writing, Reasoning: Into Africa		341 Topics in African History: Power and Exchange in the African Past	
251	Literature of the Black Empire			<i>Latin American Studies</i>
253	African Literature			170 Readings in Caribbean Literature
337	The Political Imagination in Contemporary South Africa		170 Contemporary Caribbean Societies	276 Studies in Comparative Caribbean Culture: Contemporary Caribbean Writers
	<i>French</i>		373	
120	African Cinema			<i>Music</i>
219	The French-Speaking World			126 Introduction to World Music
311	<i>Paris dans l'imaginaire Africain</i>		126 West African Drumming Ensemble	
341	Ousmane Sembène: <i>L'oeuvre d'un artist-militant</i>		166 Introduction to the Music of Africa	
341	<i>Contes et Legendes d'Afrique Francophone</i>		226 World Music	
370	Women and Writing in French- Speaking Africa		371 Analytical Studies in World Music	
	<i>Geography</i>			<i>Politics</i>
215	Geography of the Middle East and North Africa	213		213 African Political Systems
319	Africa: Problems and Prospects	398		398 The Rwanda Genocide in Comparative Perspective
	<i>German Studies</i>			<i>Sociology</i>
241	<i>Special Topics in German Studies:</i> BunTesrepublik Deutschland: Afro- Germans and Turkish Im/Migrants in Film and Text	103		103 Contemporary South Africa
341	Topics in German Studies: Color Me German: Perceptions of Other in German Culture from 1800- 1933	301		301 Education in South Africa: Policy and Practice: Education and Health in Post-Apartheid South Africa
		329		329 Social Change in Southern Africa
				<i>Spanish</i>
		261		261 Afro-Spanish Literature
		341		341 Contemporary Latin American Literature: Skin of a Woman: Afro- Latina and Afro-Latin American Women Writers

- 341 Contemporary Latin American Literature: Treading the Ebony Path: Afro-Hispanic Literature
- 361 The Mind of the Traveler: Journey, Expeditions, Tours
- Meets multicultural requirement; meets Social Sciences III-A requirement*
The department
4 credits

Course Offerings

*100s American Dreams, American Dilemmas: Race, Democracy, and Human Capability in the Twenty-first Century

(First-year seminar; writing-intensive course)
In the twentieth century, American dreams of full citizenship for the descendants of enslaved Americans were always tempered by dilemmas of racial conflict. The struggle for racial, gender, and economic justice has achieved much during the last 60 years. What challenges remain in education, housing, employment, and consumer markets? What resources and policies are available to enhance well-being and agency for all citizens? This course surveys the strivings of people of African descent in the United States. The quest for racial justice and equality of opportunity is unfinished. The course reviews the accomplishments and work outstanding as our society moves from access to achievement.

Meets multicultural requirement; meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

L. Wilson

Prereq. fy only; 4 credits

*101f Introduction to African American and African Studies: Identity, Community, and Progress

This course will introduce students to topics and methodologies within the vast field of African studies. This course will attempt to disrupt the history-based, U.S.-centric model by presenting alternate texts and approaches to the study of the global black experience. We must necessarily begin by questioning the idea, definition, and practice of blackness: what is it? How/did a unified black identity emerge from disparate people, practices, and experiences? After investigating the formation of the African diaspora, we will consider texts from the Americas, Europe, and the continent, assessing each for its historical, aesthetic, political, and cultural value.

*206s Black Women Writers: Feminist Visions from the African Diaspora

(Writing-intensive course; Same as Gender Studies 204) This course will explore the influence of feminist politics on the writing of women throughout the African Diaspora. By exploring the different cultural, political, and historical contexts in which these writers work, we will attempt to define the continuities and conflicts that exist within the vast field of black women's writing. Why, when, and how did a black feminist consciousness emerge? How did racial tensions within the predominantly white feminist movement lead to the development of a separate black "womanist"/Third World agenda? How does feminist literature of the African Diaspora challenge negative stereotypes and misrepresentations of black women's realities?

Meets multicultural requirement; meets Humanities I-A requirement

The department

Prereq. 101 Intro to African American Studies, or permission of instructor; 4 credits

*208f Introduction to Twentieth-Century Critical Race Theory

(See Critical Social Thought 253s)

Meets multicultural requirement; meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

L. Wilson

4 credits

210f African American Culture and Society

(Community-Based Learning course; speaking-intensive course) Comprehensive survey of the cultural economy of race, class, and gender and the American Dream. Examines institutional developments in the era of racial/ethnic and gender equality through inclusion, 1945-1980. Explores legacies of recent social progress and challenges of durable social inequalities. Theorizes the nexus of poverty, opportunity, and mobility in the early twenty-first century. Brings together Mount Holyoke students and women in the final stages of their sentences in Hampden County, who collaborate as peers in a semester-long exploration combining critical analy-

sis and creative nonfiction writing. The semester will culminate in a reading and graduation ceremony for its students.

Meets multicultural requirement; meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

L. Wilson

Prereq. interview with instructor, jr & sr only except by permission. Interviews 30 March-7 April 2009; lbwilson@mholyoke.edu; 4 credits

295fs Independent Study

Does not meet a distribution requirement

The department

1-4 credits

***306 Black Masculinities: The Performance of Gender in African American Culture**

(Writing-intensive course) This course will explore the construction and performance of black masculine identities within the US. By exploring the different political and historical contexts in which gender identities are formed, students will seek to understand the various agendas which are served by particular performances of black masculinity. In US society, what does it mean to be a man? What does it take to defy "the Man"? How do exaggerations of particular masculine attributes enhance or diminish male power? Has a history of racial oppression impacted the ability of black men to perform "authentic" masculine roles? Why do some black male identities seem to replicate the oppression of the dominant society?

Meets multicultural requirement; meets

Humanities I-B requirement

Z. Elliott

Prereq. 8 credits in department, or permission of instructor; 4 credits

***308s Luminous Darkness: African American Social Thought**

Examines the causes of and proposed solutions to "the Negro problem" in post-Civil War American public policy. Focuses on the life, work, and legacies of DuBois. Drawing on domestic and diasporic fictional and non-fictional depictions of black life in the "DuBoisian century" the course considers different responses to his 1903 question, "How does it feel to be a problem?" Examining theories, arguments, movements and policies targeting blacks and their environment al-

lows us to criticize black modernity, assess the changing role of black intellectuals in society, evaluate "race theory" and consider dominant and marginal attempts to analyze and overcome the "color line" in America.

Meets multicultural requirement; meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

L. Wilson

Prereq. 8 credits in department, permission of instructor; 4 credits

***320f Gender, Terror, and Trauma in African American Culture**

This course will explore representations of violence in African American culture, with special consideration given to literary depictions of rape and lynching. After examining the historical function of violence within the United States, students will perform a comparative analysis of texts authored by black women and men. We will also explore cultural, social, and political movements (abolition, civil rights, black power, black feminism, hip-hop) that have emerged in response to the violent policing of black bodies. How has violence been used to terrorize blacks? What role has violence played in the African American struggle for liberation and equality?

Meets multicultural requirement; meets

Humanities I-A requirement

The department

Prereq. 8 credits in the department or permission of instructor; 4 credits

***335f Black Feminism: Theory and Praxis**

(Writing-intensive course) This course explores foundational texts of major authors along with lesser-known contributors to the black feminist movement, from the nineteenth century to the present. It also examines the various ways in which black feminist theory has been expressed in and applied to the arts and political activism, analyzing black feminist cultural criticism as it applies to music, film, fine arts, performance, and literature. Conflicts and continuities between black and white feminists, and the role of profeminist men within the movement will be considered as well.

Meets multicultural requirement; meets

Humanities I-A requirement

The department

Prereq. 8 credits in department or permission of instructor; 4 credits

***340s Sex, Love, and Gender in Contemporary African American Film**
(Writing-intensive course; Same as Film Studies 320-01) This course will explore the representation in film of intimate relationships among African Americans. Confronting an ongoing history of racist, sexist, and homophobic images, films produced by and featuring blacks can offer alternate interpretations of love, romance, and sexuality. Coupled with literature and theoretical readings by feminists and black cultural critics, students will consider the function of--and challenges to--intimacy in interpersonal relationships among African Americans. Directors under consideration include Spike Lee, Kasi Lemmons, Marlon Riggs, and Sanaa Hamri.

Meets multicultural requirement; meets Humanities I-A requirement

The department

Prereq. AFRAM 101 plus 8 credits in African American and African Studies; 1 meeting (2 hours) plus screening prior to class (TBA); 4 credits

395fs Independent Study

Does not meet a distribution requirement

The department

1-8 credits