

# African American Studies

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The African American studies graduate program focuses on life, culture, and social organization (broadly defined) of persons of African descent. Africa, North America, and the Caribbean are central components of the program. Students are expected to apply a multidisciplinary approach to the study of the international and national divisions of race as they pertain to persons of African descent, wherever they may find themselves. Such an approach is to be employed for the study and understanding of development and underdevelopment, domination and power, self-determination, mutual cooperation, and aesthetic and creative expression. Issues of identity construction, marginality, territoriality, and the universal role of race in the organization of political economy and in class formation are critical to the program's intellectual agenda.

Applications are accepted for the PhD program only.

## Admission to the University

### Uniform minimum requirements for admission

The following minimum requirements apply to all programs and will be verified by the Graduate Division:

1. A bachelor's degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution;
2. A minimum grade-point average of B or better (3.0);
3. If the applicant comes from a country or political entity (e.g. Quebec) where English is not the official language, adequate proficiency in English to do graduate work, as evidenced by a TOEFL score of at least 570 on the paper-and-pencil test, 230 on the computer-based test, 90 on the iBT test, or an IELTS Band score of at least 7 (note that individual programs may set higher levels for any of these); and
4. Enough undergraduate training to do graduate work in the given field.

### Applicants who already hold a graduate degree

The Graduate Council views academic degrees as evidence of broad research training, not as vocational training certificates; therefore, applicants who already have academic graduate degrees should be able to take up new subject matter on a serious level without undertaking a graduate program, unless the fields are completely dissimilar.

Programs may consider students for an additional academic master's or professional master's degree if the additional degree is in a distinctly different field.

Applicants admitted to a doctoral program that requires a master's degree to be earned at Berkeley as a prerequisite (even though the applicant already has a master's degree from another institution in the same or a closely allied field of study) will be permitted to undertake the second master's degree, despite the overlap in field.

The Graduate Division will admit students for a second doctoral degree only if they meet the following guidelines:

1. Applicants with doctoral degrees may be admitted for an additional doctoral degree only if that degree program is in a general area of knowledge distinctly different from the field in which they earned their original degree. For example, a physics PhD could be admitted to a doctoral degree program in music or history; however, a student with a doctoral degree in mathematics would not be permitted to add a PhD in statistics.
2. Applicants who hold the PhD degree may be admitted to a professional doctorate or professional master's degree program if there is no duplication of training involved.

Applicants may only apply to one single degree program or one concurrent degree program per admission cycle.

Any applicant who was previously registered at Berkeley as a graduate student, no matter how briefly, must apply for readmission, not admission, even if the new application is to a different program.

## Required documents for admissions applications

1. **Transcripts:** Upload unofficial transcripts with the application for the departmental initial review. Official transcripts of all college-level work will be required **if admitted**. Official transcripts must be in sealed envelopes as issued by the school(s) you have attended. Request a current transcript from every post-secondary school that you have attended, including community colleges, summer sessions, and extension programs. If you have attended Berkeley, upload unofficial transcript with the application for the departmental initial review. Official transcript with evidence of degree conferral **will not** be required if admitted.
2. **Letters of recommendation:** Applicants can request online letters of recommendation through the online application system. Hard copies of recommendation letters must be sent directly to the program, not the Graduate Division.
3. **Evidence of English language proficiency:** All applicants from countries in which the official language is not English are required to submit official evidence of English language proficiency. This requirement applies to applicants from Bangladesh, Burma, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Latin America, the Middle East, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, and most European countries. However, applicants who, at the time of application, have already completed at least one year of full-time academic course work with grades of B or better at a U.S. university may submit an official transcript from the U.S. university to fulfill this requirement. The following courses will not fulfill this requirement: 1) courses in English as a Second Language, 2) courses conducted in a language other than English, 3) courses that will be completed after the application is submitted, and 4) courses of a non-academic nature. If applicants have previously been denied admission to Berkeley on the basis of their English language proficiency, they must submit new test scores that meet the current minimum from one of the standardized tests.

## Admission to the Program

Applicants must have completed an undergraduate degree and should demonstrate a general knowledge of African American history and an understanding of the disciplinary bases for the study of the African diaspora. Demonstrated knowledge in the field should include understanding relations among social, economic, and political structures and culture in African American life.

Students are admitted to graduate studies in the fall semester only. Applicants must file:

1. A University of California, Berkeley graduate application
2. Two official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended
3. Three letters of recommendation
4. Writing sample (no more than 15 pages) that best reflects their program/research interests.
5. TOEFL (required for all international students)

Students who have been accepted to this program and have earned a master's degree in another program will be evaluated based on requirements for the pre-qualifying examinations.

## Program Requirements

A minimum of two years or four semesters of academic residence is required by the university for all Ph.D. programs. Academic residence is defined as enrollment in at least 12 units in the 200 series of courses. Thus, every graduate student must enroll in and complete a minimum of 12 units of graduate course work per required semester of academic residency. After successful completion of course work with a minimum GPA of 3.30, a pre qualifying examination based upon general knowledge in the field of African American Studies will be administered by the department.

## Academic Preparation

Applicants must have completed an undergraduate degree and should demonstrate a general knowledge of African American history and an understanding of the disciplinary bases for the study of the African Diaspora. Demonstrated knowledge in the field should include understanding relations among social, economic, and political structures and culture in African American life. Applicant records must also demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language at the undergraduate level comparable to this university's language requirement.

## Curriculum

Courses per individualized approved study list

## African American Studies

AFRICAM 201A Interdisciplinary Research Methods 4 Units

This seminar will provide a detailed introduction and working knowledge of the various methodological techniques appropriate for interdisciplinary research on the African Diaspora.

### Hours & Format

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

AFRICAM 201B Qualitative Research Methods for African American Studies 4 Units

A review of competing epistemologies in qualitative research of African Americans.

### Hours & Format

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 4 hours of seminar per week

### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**Instructor:** Small

AFRICAM 201D Theories of the African Diaspora 4 Units

This course is intended to provide students with an initial background for the composition of the position paper discussing the concept and study of African Diaspora necessary for passing department qualifying exams. It will introduce some of the theoretical frameworks for, and approaches to, scholarship concerning the African Diaspora.

### Rules & Requirements

**Repeat rules:** Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

### Hours & Format

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**Instructor:** Scott

AFRICAM 240 Special Topics in Cultural Studies of the Diaspora 1 - 4 Units

One hour of lecture per week per unit. Topics will vary from term to term depending on student demand and faculty availability.

### Rules & Requirements

**Repeat rules:** Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

### Hours & Format

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of lecture per week

### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

**AFRICAM 241 Special Topics in Development Studies of the Diaspora 1 - 4 Units**

One hour of lecture per week per unit. Topics will vary from term to term depending on student demand and faculty availability.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of lecture per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**AFRICAM 242 Special Topics in African Linguistics 4 Units**

Topics will vary to suit student demand or interest. The seminar will require solid grounding in linguistic theory.

**Rules & Requirements**

**Repeat rules:** Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**Instructor:** Mchombo

**AFRICAM 250 Black Intellectuals: Social and Cultural Roles 4 Units**

The course will examine the development of an intellectual group in African American life from the 18th century to the present. Implicit in the examination is consideration of the social and cultural roles, writers, scholars, artists, and other thinkers have played in American and African American culture.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**AFRICAM 256B Diaspora, Citizenship, and Transnationality 4 Units**

This seminar analyzes the social construction and reproduction of diasporic communities in the U.S., Canada, and Europe. It examines the relations of the diaspora to the homeland in the context of the globalization process. The role of transnational migration and deterritorialization in the production of bipolar, fragmented, and multiple identities will be analyzed. Postnational models of citizenship--differentiated, transnational, and multicultural--will be assessed in light of poststructuralist theories.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**Instructor:** Laguerre

**AFRICAM 257A Identity Politics in the Caribbean and Africa 4 Units**

An exhaustive examination of the conditions under which identity constructs (race, ethnicity, nation, religion, language, region, etc.) come to occupy the symbolic center in the organization of mass political movements in non-industrialized Third World societies. The course will be comparative in scope using case histories from Africa and the Caribbean. It will focus on the relationship between the "politics of identity," national economic decision making, and the distribution of economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**Instructor:** Hintzen

**AFRICAM 257B Power, Domination, and Ideology 4 Units**

This course will focus on theories and realities of power, domination, and ideology as they pertain to issues of identity in the post-World War II political economies of Africa and the African diaspora.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**Instructor:** Hintzen

**AFRICAM 262 Black Feminist Criticism 4 Units**

This course will focus on the development of a black feminist criticism(s). We will be specifically concerned with the writings of significant black women critics of the 19th and 20th centuries who have used intersections of class, race, and gender to analyze major issues of their time.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**AFRICAM C265 Research Advances in Race, Diversity, and Educational Policy 3 Units**

This introductory graduate seminar will engage the research literature on race, diversity, and educational policy to provide a foundation for examining contemporary issues in American public schooling. We will examine research on race, culture, and learning alongside more policy driven research on school structures, governance, finance, politics, and policy. In doing so, we will blend micro level examinations of teaching and learning with macro level considerations of politics and policy.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**Instructors:** Nasir, Perry, Scott, J.

**Also listed as:** EDUC C265C

**AFRICAM C286 The Education of African-American Students 3 Units**  
This seminar will examine a wide range of perspectives on the education of African American children and adolescents in the United States. Readings will support students in understanding some of the key issues and tensions in African American education and school achievement, including the roles that culture, identity, parents, families, and communities play in the education and schooling of African American students; systemic issues in educational improvement and the perpetuation of "achievement gaps"; and language and power.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**Instructor:** Suad-Bakari

**Also listed as:** EDUC C286

**AFRICAM 296 Directed Dissertation Research 1 - 13 Units**

Open to qualified students who have been advanced to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree and are directly engaged in doctoral dissertation research.

**Rules & Requirements**

**Prerequisites:** Advancement to Ph.D. candidacy

**Repeat rules:** Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 1-8 hours of independent study per week

**Summer:** 6 weeks - 2.5-20 hours of independent study per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

**AFRICAM 298 Master's Examination Preparation Course 4 Units**  
This class is designed to prepare second year graduate students for the spring Master's Examination in African Diaspora Studies. Basing our syllabus upon the established reading list, we will meet weekly to discuss individual texts, methods of interpreting and critiquing works across disciplines, strategies for reading, studying, and ultimately taking the exam itself.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 4 hours of seminar per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**AFRICAM 299 Individual Study or Research 1 - 4 Units**  
Individual study or research program to be worked out with sponsoring faculty before approval by department chair. Regular meetings arranged with faculty sponsor.

**Rules & Requirements**

**Prerequisites:** Consent of instructor

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

**Summer:**

6 weeks - 2.5-10 hours of independent study per week

10 weeks - 1.5-6 hours of independent study per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**AFRICAM C375 Critical Pedagogy: Instructor Training 4 Units**

The seminar provides a systemic approach to theories and practices of critical pedagogy at the university level. Examines the arts of teaching and learning and current disciplinary and cross-disciplinary issues in African/diaspora and Ethnic Studies. Participation two hours per week as practicum in 39, "Introduction to the University: African American Perspectives" is mandatory. The course is required for students expecting to serve as graduate student instructors in the department.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 2 hours of seminar per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Professional course for teachers or prospective teachers

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**Instructors:** Clark, Wong

**Also listed as:** ETH GRP C375

**AFRICAM 602 Individual Study for Doctoral Students 2 - 12 Units**

Individual study, in consultation with group faculty, to prepare students for the doctoral oral examinations. A student will be permitted to accumulate a maximum of 8 units toward examination preparation. Units earned in this course may not be used to meet academic residence or unit requirements for the master's or doctoral degree.

**Rules & Requirements**

**Prerequisites:** 201A-201B

**Repeat rules:** Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

**Hours & Format**

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 2-8 hours of independent study per week

**Summer:**

6 weeks - 5-20 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 3.5-15 hours of independent study per week

10 weeks - 3-12 hours of independent study per week

**Additional Details**

**Subject/Course Level:** African American Studies/Graduate examination preparation

**Grading:** Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.