

AFRICAN AMERICAN AND AFRICANA STUDIES MAJOR

Assistant Program Director and Academic Advisor: Marshal Washington

The African American and Africana Studies Department offers a Bachelor of Arts in African American and Africana Studies or a Bachelor of Arts in African American and Africana Studies with a concentration in Public Policy. All students will take three foundation courses, two methods courses and one of three capstone options. Students choosing the African-American and Africana Studies major take five courses in two thematic areas (or clusters): 1) Cultural and Historical Analysis and 2) Civic Engagement and Social Justice. Students choosing the major will take courses that emphasize understanding historical and cultural context, developing problem-solving and critical thinking skills and fostering the capacity to effect change locally, nationally and globally. Courses cover a wide range of topics, including history, literature, health and well-being, family, politics, criminal justice, gender and race, and incorporate both the African-American and African Diasporic experience.

Students who choose the Public Policy Concentration must take six courses in our Public Policy sequence. The Public Policy concentration offers an emphasis on problem-solving, analytical decision-making, and practical applications of policy analysis and management skills. Courses in public policy cover a range of policy areas, including health, criminal justice, reproduction and education, and also address the institutions and processes involved in policy-making. Students have the opportunity to pursue a Joint BA/MPP degree.

Admission to the Major

Students wishing to major in African American and Africana Studies must make an advising appointment for an orientation to the major. Students must complete an application and attend a BSOS academic plan workshop.

Please call the AAAS office at 301-405-1158 or contact lahsram9@umd.edu to schedule an advising appointment.

Program Objectives

The African American and Africana Studies Department (AAAS) fosters an intellectual environment in which majors learn to critically examine, analyze, interpret and discuss the experiences, culture, traditions, and dynamics of people of the African Diaspora. A primary goal of the program is to develop strong critical thinking, analytical skills, research and writing skills, through our curriculum, such that AAAS majors learn the interdisciplinary methods used in examining the socio-economic, historical, and political experiences and contributions of people of African descent. Our curriculum is organized and structured to introduce AAAS majors to African American and Africana Studies and to ensure that they receive an appropriate grounding in the major themes of the field and can place these themes in the historical context of the African Diaspora such that they are better prepared to address the social science issues of race, racism, and inequality. The program provides preparation in fundamental research methodology so that AAAS majors are able to explore research questions with sufficient rigor.

Relevance of goals to the mission statements and/or strategic plans of the university, college, or program as applicable:

The University of Maryland's stated goals for undergraduates include the ability to learn and develop critical reasoning and research skills; written and oral communications skills; science and quantitative reasoning, and technological fluency. AAAS majors are well prepared upon graduation in these areas through the department's curriculum and extensive one-on-one mentoring by the AAAS faculty.

Program Learning Outcomes

A primary goal of the African American and Africana Studies Department is to develop strong critical thinking, research and writing skills, through our curriculum, such that AAAS majors learn the interdisciplinary methods used in examining the socio-economic, historical, and political experiences and contributions of people of African descent. Students should acquire the following knowledge and skills:

1. Develop an understanding and generate analysis of the histories that have shaped (and been shaped by) Black American, African and African diasporic life.
2. Develop an understanding and generate an analysis of the social issues that shape Black American, African and African diasporic life.
3. Develop a critical understanding of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research methods, the unique contributions Black knowledge traditions have made to these methods/their value in researching key questions of Black American, African and African diasporic life, and a practical understanding of how to apply these methods to redressing forms of social inequality.
4. Effectively develop and compose sound research-backed arguments rooted in the field of African American and Africana Studies in oral and written form.
5. Be able to identify, describe, understand at a material level, and propose solutions to issues of inequity, oppression and life outcomes associated with the impact of systemic racism and the intersection of multiple identities on members of the African American, African and African diaspora communities in the US and globally.

REQUIREMENTS

Students must earn a grade of "C-" or better in each course that is to be counted toward completion of degree requirements. Students must have a minimum 2.0 cumulative grade point average across all courses used to satisfy major degree requirements. All related or supporting courses in other departments must be approved by an AAAS academic advisor. Each semester there will be an approved list of courses for both those choosing the major or the concentration in Public Policy. The academic advisor will review the student's options during their mandatory advising appointment.

African-American and Africana Studies Major: 35 Total Credits

Public Policy Concentration: 38 Total Credits

Course	Title	Credits
College Requirements (https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/behavioral-social-sciences/#collegerequirementstext)		
Foundation Courses Required for All Majors		
AAAS100	Introduction to African American and Africana Studies	3
AAAS200	African Civilization	3
AAAS101	Public Policy and the Black Community	3
or AAAS202	Black Culture in the United States	

Methods		
AAAS210	Intro to Research Design and Analysis in African American and Africana Studies	3
AAAS399	Research in African-American and Africana Studies ²	2
Select One:		3
AAAS395	Fundamentals of Quantitative Research in Socio-Cultural Perspective	
AAAS390	(Advanced Qualitative Methods)	
Capstone (Choose One)		3
AAAS397	Senior Thesis	
AAAS4XX	(Study Abroad in Africa or African Diaspora)	
AAAS4XX	(Capstone Seminar and Community Practicum)	
Total Credits		20

¹ Required for Public Policy Concentration Students

² Research Practicum is taken for 1 credit per semester.

African-American and Africana Studies Major

Course	Title	Credits
Five courses at the 300 or 400 level are required. There must be at least one course in Cluster 1 and one in Cluster 2		15
Cluster 1		
A list of upper-level cluster courses that will meet this requirement is available on the AAAS department website each semester.		
Cluster 2		
A list of upper-level cluster courses that will meet this requirement is available on the AAAS department website each semester.		
Total Credits		15

Public Policy Concentration

Course	Title	Credits
Analytic Component		
AAAS301	Applied Policy Analysis and the Black Community	3
ECON200	Principles of Microeconomics	3
PLCY388	Special Topics in Public Policy	3
or PLCY401	Making Policy Work: Contemporary Challenges and Solutions	
AASP Policy Electives in African American Studies		9
AAAS398	Selected Topics in the African Diaspora	
AAAS411	Black Resistance Movements	
AAAS441	Science, Technology, and the Black Community	
AAAS443	Law and the Black Community	
AAAS498	Special Topics in Black Culture	
AAAS499	Advanced Topics in Public Policy and the Black Community	
Total Credits		18

GRADUATION PLANS

Click here (<https://fellercenter.umd.edu/academic-advising/forms-policies/graduation-plans/>) for roadmaps for graduation plans in the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences.

Additional information on developing a graduation plan can be found on the following pages:

- <http://4yearplans.umd.edu>
- the Student Academic Success-Degree Completion Policy (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/registration-academic-requirements-regulations/academic-advising/#success>) section of this catalog