AFRO-AMERICAN STUDIES, M.A.

The program in Afro-American studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison is dedicated to carrying on the vision of the elders and ancestors who devoted themselves to the highest standards of intellectual rigor and to the realization of a vision of true equality and opportunity. Like W.E.B. Du Bois, Anna Julia Cooper, John Hope Franklin, Zora Neale Hurston and James Porter, the department is committed to bringing the fruits of academic research to the broadest possible audience, within and beyond the walls of the university. The deepest understanding of the complex reality of race in America requires an interdisciplinary approach, one that draws on history and literature, the social sciences, and the arts. Graduate studies are concentrated in three areas:

1. Afro-American Culture (literature, theater history, music and culture, art history and visual culture);
2. History and Society;
3. Black Women’s Studies

The M.A. program is based on personalized programs of study shaped to meet the needs of individual students, many of whom participate in the "Bridge" programs which enable them to move directly into Ph.D. programs in English (http://www.english.wisc.edu/grad-afroam.htm) or history (https://history.wisc.edu/our-graduate-program/bridge-program). Program faculty are experts in their fields and work collaboratively to ensure that graduate students are well prepared to either take on further study at the Ph.D.-level or careers in teaching, public service, and the private, corporate sector. The program also offers doctoral minors for students in many graduate programs including African languages and literature, art history, communication arts, comparative literature, education, English, history, music, political science, social work, and sociology.

ADMISSIONS

Deadline for application: December 15

The Graduate School (https://grad.wisc.edu) has an extensive website where you will find information regarding admissions and how to apply (https://www.gradsch.wisc.edu/eapp/eapp.pl) online. It is very important you read all information carefully.

All applicants to our program must meet the University of Wisconsin Graduate School’s admission requirements (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements)

Information regarding fellowships, tuition, housing, cost of living, etc. can be found at financial aid (https://financialaid.wisc.edu).

Read the application and corresponding instructions carefully. Only the online application and the $75 application fee are sent to the Graduate School. Other materials must be sent to the Department of Afro-American Studies.

To apply to the master’s program, please send the following to the Afro-American Studies Department, 4141 Helen C. White Hall, 600 N. Park St., Madison WI 53706:

- Official transcript(s) or academic records from each institution attended
  [International academic records must be in the original language accompanied by an official English translation. Documents must be issued by the school with the official seal/stamp and official signatures.]
- Reasons for Graduate Study if you did not include this with your online application to the Graduate School
- A writing sample
- Three (3) letters of recommendation (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/faq)
- If applying, please inform the department of any home/email address changes. This is very important.

The Department of Afro-American Studies does not currently require students to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), although we recommend that you do so. Students who do not take the GRE are ineligible for certain types of financial aid. Admission to the department is competitive: the minimum overall GPA required is 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Students with a GPA above 3.3 are especially encouraged to apply. Priority will be given to students who have completed undergraduate courses in subjects related to Afro-American history, culture, or society or who have completed an undergraduate major in one of the following fields: Afro-American Studies; a related social science discipline; the humanities.

The department admits students only once a year, in January, for the following academic year which begins in the fall. The department must receive all materials by December 15 if you wish to be considered for the Bridge Program, grant funding or a teaching assistantship during the academic year. Applications received after December 15 and by January 15 will be considered, but not for funding or the Bridge Program. It is your responsibility to check with the department prior to January 15 regarding the receipt of your materials. Materials submitted to the department cannot be returned.

GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic degree programs and the Graduate School. Applicants must meet requirements of both the program(s) and the Graduate School. Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions).

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and processes related to funding.
REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Face to Face</th>
<th>Evening/Weekend</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Hybrid</th>
<th>Accelerated</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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Mode of Instruction Definitions

**Evening/Weekend:** These programs are offered in an evening and/or weekend format to accommodate working schedules. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses and personal connections, while keeping your day job. For more information about the meeting schedule of a specific program, contact the program.

**Online:** These programs are offered primarily online. Many available online programs can be completed almost entirely online with all online programs offering at least 50 percent or more of the program work online. Some online programs have an on-campus component that is often designed to accommodate working schedules. Take advantage of the convenience of online learning while participating in a rich, interactive learning environment. For more information about the online nature of a specific program, contact the program.

**Hybrid:** These programs have innovative curricula that combine on-campus and online formats. Most hybrid programs are completed on-campus with a partial or completely online semester. For more information about the hybrid schedule of a specific program, contact the program.

**Accelerated:** These on-campus programs are offered in an accelerated format that allows you to complete your program in a condensed time-frame. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses with minimal disruption to your career. For more information about the accelerated nature of a specific program, contact the program.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Credit Requirement</th>
<th>30 credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum Residence Credit Requirement</td>
<td>21 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement</td>
<td>Half of degree coursework (15 credits out of 30 total credits) must be completed graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (<a href="https://public.my.wisc.edu/web/expanded">https://public.my.wisc.edu/web/expanded</a>).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Graduate GPA Requirement</td>
<td>3.00 GPA required.</td>
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Other Grade Requirements

The Graduate School requires an average grade of B or better in all coursework (300 or above, not including research credits) taken as a graduate student unless conditions for probationary status require higher grades. Grades of Incomplete are considered to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the next enrolled semester.

Assessments and Examinations

In addition to the 24 credits of coursework, students choose one of two options for completion of the degree. Plan A requires the completion of a master's thesis. The purpose of the M.A. thesis is to demonstrate that degree candidates have acquired the knowledge and skills to carry out scholarly writing and research in their discipline, and to advance knowledge in the field itself. Students who plan to earn a Ph.D. are strongly encouraged to choose Plan A for their master's degree. Plan B requires the completion of a final paper followed by an oral defense on a reading list developed in consultation with the student's advisor.

Language Requirements

n/a

REQUIRED COURSES

Students must take 24 credits of approved graduate coursework and 6 Research and Thesis credits. At least 12 of the course credits must be taken in the Department of Afro-American Studies.

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

A Graduate Program Handbook containing all of the program's policies and requirements is forthcoming from the program.

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Work from Other Institutions

For well-prepared advanced students, the program may accept 9 credits of prior graduate coursework from other institutions towards the minimum graduate degree credit and minimum graduate coursework (50%) requirement. The minimum graduate residence credit requirement can be satisfied only with courses taken as a graduate student at UW–Madison.

UW–Madison Undergraduate

No credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to count toward the program's graduate degree requirements.

UW–Madison University Special

The program may decide to accept up to 9 University Special student credits as fulfillment of the minimum graduate residence, graduate degree, or minor credit requirements on
occasional as an exception (on a case-by-case basis). UW–Madison coursework taken as a University Special student would not be allowed to count toward the 50% graduate coursework minimum unless taken at the 700 level or above.

**PROBATION**

The Graduate School regularly reviews the record of any student who earned grades of BC, C, D, F, or Incomplete in a graduate course (300 or above), or grade of U in research credits. This review could result in academic probation with a hold on future enrollment or in being suspended from the Graduate School.

**ADVISOR / COMMITTEE**

Every graduate student is required to have an advisor. To ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward a degree, the Graduate School expects them to meet with their advisor on a regular basis.

An advisor generally serves as the thesis advisor. In many cases, an advisor is assigned to incoming students. Students can be suspended from the Graduate School if they do not have an advisor. An advisor is a faculty member, or sometimes a committee, from the major department responsible for providing advice regarding graduate studies.

A committee often accomplishes advising for the students in the early stages of their studies.

**CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED**

12 credits

**TIME CONSTRAINTS**

Master’s degree students who have been absent for five or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence. Individual programs may count the coursework students completed prior to their absence for meeting program requirements; that coursework may not count toward Graduate School credit requirements.

**OTHER**

Students with an interest in pursuing a Ph.D. in either English or history might be interested in applying to the English Bridge Programs (http://www.english.wisc.edu/grad-afroam.htm) or History (https://history.wisc.edu/our-graduate-program/bridge-program), which allow a student who has completed an M.A. in Afro-American studies to move directly into one of those Ph.D. programs.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. To provide students with a thorough understanding of a range of disciplinary approaches to the study of the African American experience in the United States and the African diaspora.

2. To provide students with a foundation in their area of concentration that will enable them to pursue doctoral work in a relevant discipline, especially in the areas of English and history, where we have established Bridge programs with UW departments.

3. To familiarize students with the techniques of effective teaching in multiracial classrooms, including training in dealing with controversial issues and potential racial tensions.

**PEOPLE**

Faculty: Professors Greene (chair), Adell, Drewal, Plummer, Thornton, Werner; Associate Professor Clark-Pujara; Assistant Professors Almiron, Brown, Davis

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES**

Take advantage of the Graduate School’s professional development resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/pd) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.