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 Art History, English, and History. 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.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

To make progress toward a graduate degree, students must meet the Graduate School Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext) in addition to the requirements of the program.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.A.

MINIMUM GRADUATE DEGREE CREDIT REQUIREMENT

30 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE RESIDENCE CREDIT REQUIREMENT

21 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE COURSEWORK (50%) REQUIREMENT

Half of the degree coursework (15 of 30 credits) must be completed in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle).

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: 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.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNDERGRADUATE

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

PRIOR COURSEWORK 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 occasion 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.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS FROM: OTHER UW–MADISON GRADUATE PROGRAMS

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 9 credits of graduate coursework from other programs.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

12 credits

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC COURSES REQUIRED

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.

OVERALL GRADUATE GPA REQUIREMENT

3.00

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.

PROBATION POLICY

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.

ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS

Contact the program for information on required assessments and examinations.

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.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Contact the program for information on any language requirements.

ADMISSIONS

All applicants for admission must satisfy the Graduate School’s minimum requirements. Applicants should normally have completed undergraduate coursework in subjects related to Afro-American history, culture, or society. Applicants will customarily meet this requirement by completing an undergraduate major in Afro-American studies, in a related social science discipline, or in the humanities with a grade point average of 3.3 or higher on a 4.0 scale. A program to make up deficiencies may be worked out with the graduate admissions committee.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- 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.
- 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.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

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