

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

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program’s admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program’s website.

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

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	December 15
Spring Deadline	The program does not admit in the spring.
Summer Deadline	The program does not admit in the summer.
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	May be required in certain cases; consult program.

English Proficiency Test Every applicant whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English must provide an English proficiency test score and meet the Graduate School minimum requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency>).

Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT)	n/a
Letters of Recommendation Required	3

The Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) has an extensive website where you will find information regarding admissions and how to apply (<http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/african-american-studies/afro-american-studies-ma/apply.grad.wisc.edu>) 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 upload all documents to Applicant Review

- 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 African 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.

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 restrictions related to funding.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

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

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/ Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students are able to complete a program with minimal disruptions to careers and other commitments.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW–Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirements Detail

Minimum
Credit
Requirement 30 credits

Minimum
Residence
Credit
Requirement 21 credits

Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement 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 (<https://public.my.wisc.edu/web/expanded> (<https://public.my.wisc.edu/web/expanded/>)).

Overall Graduate GPA Requirement 3.00 GPA required.

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 African 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

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 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.

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.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)
 - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Dean of Students Office (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employeeabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

Students should contact the department chair or program director with questions about grievances. They may also contact the L&S Academic Divisional Associate Deans, the L&S Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning Administration, or the L&S Director of Human Resources.

OTHER

Students with an interest in pursuing a Ph.D. in either English or history might be interested in applying to the in 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.

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.

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, Adell, Plummer, Whitmire (chair); Associate Professor Clark-Pujara; Assistant Professors Davis, Edmonds, Ifatunji