AFRICAN CULTURAL STUDIES, M.A.

The mission of the Department of African Cultural Studies is to provide research and teaching in the languages and expressive cultures of Africa and Africans around the world.

The department is the only one of its kind in the United States. It offers curricula leading to both the master of arts degree and the doctor of philosophy degree. Its students come from all over the world, including many African countries.

ADMISSIONS

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).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Deadline</td>
<td>November 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Deadline</td>
<td>This program does not admit in the spring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Deadline</td>
<td>This program does not admit in the summer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRE (Graduate Record</td>
<td>Not required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Proficiency</td>
<td>Every applicant whose native language is not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test</td>
<td>English or whose undergraduate instruction was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>not in English must provide an English proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>test score and meet the Graduate School minimum</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>requirements (<a href="https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/">https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>requirements/#english-proficiency).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Test(s) (e.g.,</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMAT, MCAT)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters of Recommendation</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PREREQUISITES

Admission to the graduate program requires a bachelor’s degree with substantial coursework related to the expressive cultures of Africa. Admitted students with an insufficient background in African cultural studies may be asked to complete additional coursework beyond the regular degree requirements. Applicants should have a minimum 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 grading scale or equivalent academic performance on other scales. The department will consider special cases, however, for probationary admission. If you have questions about your eligibility, please contact the graduate coordinator.

Admission into the Ph.D. program requires a master of arts in a closely related field (with the thesis or other substantive piece of graduate-level writing submitted as a writing sample).

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

All applicants to the program must apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply) by 15 November. Please note, the $75 application fee is due at the time of application (an additional $6 will be charged to international students to cover processing). The department cannot review an applicant who has not met all Graduate School admissions requirements (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements). Carefully review the instructions and other information the Graduate School provides; most of the admissions questions we receive relate to the Graduate School’s requirements and are answered in their documentation.

As part of the online application process, you will be asked supplemental questions regarding your language and teaching experience and expected to upload the information listed below:

- **University Transcripts**
  
  You must upload transcripts or academic records from each institution attended. You may upload unofficial copies for department review. If you are offered admission to the program, the Graduate School will request that you provide official copies of transcripts or academic records from each institution you have attended. These must be issued directly by the institutions with all official seals, stamps, and signatures. International academic records must be in the original languages and records in languages other than English accompanied by an official English translation. An accepted student may not matriculate or enroll for courses until the Graduate School has documented official transcript(s) matching or updating the application transcript(s).

- **TOEFL or IELTS Scores** (international applicants)
  
  If your undergraduate institution did not conduct courses in English, you must complete either the Test Of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System exam (IELTS). The online application allows you to self-report scores, but we cannot consider your application until the Graduate School receives your official score report directly from the examination organization. Students who do not meet Graduate School guidelines for English proficiency (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements) may be considered for admission, but will be required to complete assigned English language courses during their first year of study.

- **Purpose Statement**
  
  Your statement of purpose should make clear that you understand the kinds of courses we offer (http://african.wisc.edu/courses) and the research interests of our faculty and substantiate how your own interests intersect with our faculty expertise (http://african.wisc.edu/people/faculty). Give a detailed account of the reasons and circumstances that led to your decision to undertake graduate work in the Department of African Cultural Studies. Include references to your academic work, your short-term and long-term goals, your personal relationship to or interests in the fields we study, and your knowledge of any African languages. If your transcripts reflect any negative episodes in your academic career, e.g., a poor grade or a dropped course, you may explain them here.
  
  We look for evidence of your developing research interests and how they relate to the research interests of our faculty.

  The department will make secondary use of your purpose statement to assess the quality of your writing. We recommend a length of 500-1000 words. The scope of your discussion and the level of detail that you choose to provide will be part of our assessment.

- **Summer Deadline**
  
  This program does not admit in the summer.

- **Spring Deadline**
  
  This program does not admit in the spring.

- **Fall Deadline**
  
  This program does not admit in the summer.

- **Requirements**
  
  This program does not admit in the spring.

- **Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT)**
  
  n/a

- **Letters of Recommendation**
  
  3

- **Not required.**

- **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).
of funding, mostly in the form of teaching assistantships. Our top
students receive about five years of funding. Most students also pursue outside funding as their career progresses. Details
are listed below.

TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS
The department regularly funds teaching assistantships for both our
language and literature/culture courses. Opportunities and assignments
vary by semester. All continuing graduate students in good academic
standing must apply by 15 November to be considered for positions
for the following academic year. All new applicants are automatically
considered. Teaching assistants earn tuition remission, a stipend, and
benefits.

Please consult our website (https://african.wisc.edu/programs/teaching-
assistantships) for the most up-to-date information regarding teaching
assistantships.

EBRAHIM HUSSEIN FELLOWSHIP
The Ebrahim Hussein Endowment for research in African expressive
cultures was established in the College of Letters & Science in 2003
thanks to the generosity of Robert M. Philipson, alumnus of the College
of Letters & Science (Ph.D.1989). The college will award $7500 each
to one or more full-time graduate students in L&S to carry out research on
African expressive cultures in Africa and/or archives outside of the United
States. The research must lead to a Ph.D. dissertation, an M.A. thesis, or
a publishable-quality paper. Doctoral students may receive up to $7500
each; M.A. level students may receive up to $3,750 each.

Selection Criteria:
• Excellence of research proposal
• Demonstrated commitment to researching African expressive
cultures
• General academic record
• Strong recommendations from faculty
• Timing of the proposed research in relation to degree requirements

OTHER FUNDING RESOURCES
The Graduate School provides additional information helpful to graduate
students in need of funding.

FINDING

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.

PROGRAM RESOURCES
The department automatically considers all applicants for support
through teaching assistantships and various UW–Madison fellowships. The
process is very competitive, and we are unable to provide support
for all students qualified to pursue degrees in our graduate program.
However, the majority of our students do receive about five years
of funding, mostly in the form of teaching assistantships. Our top
domestic minority students are typically nominated for, and often receive,
Advanced Opportunity Fellowships (https://grad.wisc.edu/diversity/oeid).
All domestic students are encouraged to apply for Foreign Language Area
Studies (https://flas.wisc.edu) (FLAS) fellowships. Many of our graduate
students also pursue outside funding as their career progresses. Details
are listed below.

• African Studies Graduate Student Summer Fieldwork Award (http://
africa.wisc.edu/?page_id=12507)
• Dana-Allen Dissertation Fellowship (https://irh.wisc.edu/fellowships/
dissertation)
• Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowships (https://flas.wisc.edu)
• Scott Kloeck-Jenson Fellowship (https://iris.wisc.edu/funding/students/skj)
• IRIS Graduate Student Summer Fieldwork Award (https://iris.wisc.edu/funding/students/summer-fieldwork-award)

External funding options (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/fellowships) (near bottom of the page)

• American Association of University Women (http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/educational-funding-and-awards)
• American Council of Learned Societies (http://www.acls.org/programs/comps)
• Gorgias Press (https://www.gorgiaspress.com/awards)
• Jacob K. Javits Fellowship Program (https://www2.ed.gov/programs/jacobjavits)
• Aga Khan International Education Programme (http://www.akdn.org/our-agencies/aga-khan-foundation/international-scholarship-programme)
• Margaret McNamara Education Grants (http://www.mmeg.org/programs)
• Woodrow Wilson Dissertation Fellowship in Women's Studies (http://woodrow.org/fellowships/womens-studies)

Research travel awards (https://grad.wisc.edu/studentfunding/grantscomp/research)

• American Council of Learned Societies (http://www.acls.org/programs/comps)
• Chateaubriand Fellowship (https://www.chateaubriand-fellowship.org)
• German Academic Exchange Service (https://www.daad.org/en/find-funding) (DAAD)
• Harvard Society of Fellows (https://socfell.fas.harvard.edu/about)
• Royal Historical Society (http://royalhistsoc.org/grants/research-expenses/research-expenses-for-overseas-students-guidelines)

Conference presentation funds (https://grad.wisc.edu/studentfunding/grantscomp/conference)

Research travel awards (https://grad.wisc.edu/studentfunding/grantscomp/research)

• American Council of Learned Societies (http://www.acls.org/programs/comps)
• Chateaubriand Fellowship (https://www.chateaubriand-fellowship.org)
• German Academic Exchange Service (https://www.daad.org/en/find-funding) (DAAD)
• Harvard Society of Fellows (https://socfell.fas.harvard.edu/about)
• Royal Historical Society (http://royalhistsoc.org/grants/research-expenses/research-expenses-for-overseas-students-guidelines)

Conference presentation funds (https://grad.wisc.edu/studentfunding/grantscomp/conference)

**REQUIREMENTS**

**MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/policiesandrequirementsstext), 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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>Requirements</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>30 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit</td>
<td>24 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence</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://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/">https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>3.00 GPA required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessments and Examinations**

By the beginning of the fourth semester (e.g. the end of January), the candidate will complete a Qualifying Paper (QP) in the form, length, and quality of a publishable article. The QP may be based on a paper written for a departmental seminar, revised based on the instructor's feedback, and then read by two faculty members. One faculty member will be the student’s primary MA advisor (by mutual agreement); the second will be assigned by the Department Chair or DGS. Acting as if they are reviewers for a journal determining whether the QP is publishable, the two faculty members will deem the QP “publishable,” suggest additional revisions, or reject it.

**Language Requirements**

Two years of African language are required. Students may petition for an exemption if they have received comparable African language training or have intermediate or higher proficiency in an African language.
REQUIRED COURSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFRICAN 700</td>
<td>Reading and Writing African Cultural Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRICAN 803</td>
<td>Theories of African Cultural Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two departmental seminars at the 900-level</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Six departmental elective courses chosen in consultation with the graduate advisor</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Credits</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

UW-Madison Undergraduate

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 6 credits of coursework numbered 300 or above from a UW-Madison undergraduate degree.

UW-Madison University Special

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 15 credits of coursework numbered 400 or above taken as a UW-Madison University Special student. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

PROBATION

A semester GPA below 3.0 will result in the student being placed on academic probation. If a semester GPA of 3.0 is not attained during the subsequent semester of full time enrollment (or 12 credits of enrollment if enrolled part-time) the student may be dismissed from the program or allowed to continue for one additional semester based on advisor appeal to the Graduate School.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

Candidates are required to meet with the director of graduate studies every semester prior to enrolling for the next semester.

Failure to meet this requirement will result in a hold on the student’s enrollment.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

TIME CONSTRAINTS

Students who have not produced a “publishable” (passing) QP by the beginning of the fourth semester (e.g. the end of January) must write a brief request for an extension to the end of the fourth semester, to be presented by their advisor for approval by the faculty. No more than one such extension will be granted.

Students who have not produced a “publishable” (passing) QP by the end of their fourth semester will leave the program with a terminal MA. Those who produce a “publishable” QP by the end of their fourth semester will be considered for admission to the PhD program. A decision regarding admission to the Ph.D. will be taken at a faculty meeting, based on a recommendation by the QP readers and input from other faculty members.

OTHER

n/a

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. (Content) Recognize canonical authors and texts, historical forms, genres, and structures, and recognize aesthetic and cultural concerns in Africa and its diasporas.
2. (Content) Develop in-depth knowledge in a sub-field of specialization within African cultural studies.
3. (Content) Demonstrate their understanding of major theories, approaches, concepts, and current and classical research findings in African and diaspora literary and cultural studies.
4. (Content) Develop a level of proficiency in the different “ways of knowing” Africa and the diaspora through language, literatures, and cultures.
5. (Research Skills) Understand their own learning processes and possess the capacity to intentionally seek, evaluate, and learn from information, and recognize and reduce bias in their thinking.
6. (Research Skills) Effectively retrieve and comprehend primary sources in English and African languages, and secondary sources from a range of disciplines.
7. (Research Skills) Gain firm knowledge of existing research in their area of specialization and its gaps.
8. (Communication Skills) Develop or improve speaking, listening, writing, reading skills in an African language, and integrate these skills to communicate effectively.
9. (Communication Skills) Communicate effectively through essays, oral presentations, and discussion, so they may share their knowledge,
wisdom, and values with others across social and professional settings.

10. (Communication Skills) Show knowledge of conventional rhetorical strategies, and integrate research by other authors while distinguishing between their own ideas and those of others.

11. (Communication Skills) Write and speak across disciplinary boundaries with regard to existing research about Africa and the diaspora in the humanities and social sciences.

12. (Communication Skills) Demonstrate their ability to organize a larger project into logical smaller components.

13. (Analytical Skills) Discuss cultural texts from various theoretical and critical perspectives, formulate ideas and make connections between literary/cultural concepts and themes.

14. (Analytical Skills) Demonstrate command of the terminology and methodology of cultural studies, construct complex arguments, and use primary and secondary sources to support arguments.

15. (Analytical Skills) Articulate the place of their own research in relation to existing research on related topics.

PEOPLE

FACULTY

To view full faculty profiles, visit our website (https://african.wisc.edu/people/faculty).

Matthew H. Brown: African screen media (particularly "Nollywood"), oral traditions, literature
Vlad Dima: French New Wave cinema, Francophone cinemas, film theory, television studies
Ainehi Edoro: Form, theory, and history of the African novel
Névine El Nossery: Francophone & Middle Eastern literature and culture, postcolonial studies
Samuel England: Classical Arabic poetry and prose, modern Arabic literature
Luis Madureira: Colonial and postcolonial studies, modernism, theater and performance
Tejumola Olaniyan: African, African American, and Caribbean literature and culture
Ronald Radano: Ethnomusicology, US Black music and its transnational circulation
Reginold Royston: Africana cultural studies, new media and sound studies, philosophy and history of information and communications technology, diaspora and transnationalism
Damon Sajnani: Africana cultural studies, social and political theory, HipHop studies
Katrina Daly Thompson: African discourse, ethnographic approaches to language use, language pedagogy, gender, sexuality, Islam

EMERITUS FACULTY

Patrick Bennett
Dustin Cowell
Jo Ellen Fair
Magdalena Hauner
Linda Hunter
Edris Makward
Michael Schatzberg
Harold Scheub
Aliko Songolo

ACADEMIC STAFF

Bill Bach: Department Administrator
Colleen Hamilton: Second language acquisition
Toni Landis: Academic Advisor/Student Services Coordinator
Mustafa Mustafa: Arabic