African Cultural Studies, Ph.D.

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. For those learning to conduct research in African expressive cultures, it offers curricula leading to both the master of arts degree and the doctor of philosophy degree. For those learning to teach African languages, it offers a terminal master of arts degree with an emphasis on pedagogy. Its students come from all over the world, including many African countries.

African Cultural Studies, Ph.D.

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 any negative episodes in your academic career, e.g., a poor grade or a dropped course, you may explain them here.

The department will make secondary use of your purpose statement to assess the style and substance of your writing. We recommend a length
However, the majority of our students do receive about five years for all students qualified to pursue degrees in our graduate program. The process is the department automatically considers all applicants for support.

**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.

**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 year 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.

Find information about:

- Types of funding available (https://grad.wisc.edu/studentfunding/types)
- How to search for funding (https://grad.wisc.edu/studentfunding/steps)
- Funding for international students (https://iss.wisc.edu/students/new-students/funding-scholarships)
- General funding resources on campus (https://grad.wisc.edu/studentfunding/resources)

- 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 (http://iris.wisc.edu/funding/students/skj)
• IRIS Graduate Student Summer Fieldwork Award (http://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/compss)
• Gorgias Press (https://www.gorgiaspress.com/awards)
• Jacob K. Javits Fellowship Program (https://www2.ed.gov/programs/jacobjavits) (US Dept of Ed)
• Aga Kahn 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/compss)
• 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)

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

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<tr>
<th>Requirements Detail</th>
<th>Minimum Credit Requirement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Credit Requirement</td>
<td>51 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residence Credit Requirement</td>
<td>45 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coursework Requirement</td>
<td>Half of degree coursework (26 credits out of 51 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="http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle">http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle</a>).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Graduate GPA Requirement</td>
<td>3.00 GPA required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Grade Requirements</td>
<td>Ph.D. candidates should maintain a 3.5 GPA in all core curriculum courses and may not have any more than two incompletes on their record at any one time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessments and Examinations</td>
<td>Doctoral students must pass a preliminary written examination to become dissertators, followed by a dissertation proposal oral defense. After writing the dissertation, candidates must pass an oral defense of the completed dissertation. Doctoral students must submit a short statement (2-3 pages) at the end of their third semester, discussing how the courses that they have taken so far, as well as those that they plan to take in the future semester(s), relate to their area of focus and inform their dissertation research and their envisioned career path. The statement should be approved by the advisor, then submitted by the advisor at a faculty meeting for feedback.</td>
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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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African Cultural Studies, Ph.D. 3
**Language Requirements**

Ph.D. students must complete one year of an African language beyond second year level. One additional course in a language relevant to the student’s doctoral research and/or geographic area of focus, other than English. The language must be chosen in consultation with the director of graduate studies.

**Doctoral Minor/Breadth Requirements**

All doctoral students are required to complete a minor.

**REQUIRED COURSES**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One year’s study of an African language beyond second year level. Students may petition for an exemption if they have an equivalent level of proficiency in an African language.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Four graduate-level courses: in consultation with the director of graduate studies and/or the dissertation committee chair, each student is expected to define, no later than the third semester, an area of focus within African Cultural Studies, e.g., literature, music, film, critical applied linguistics, drama, critical theory, diaspora studies, new media. Within that area of study, students will take:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Two graduate seminars</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Two additional courses to be chosen in consultation with the director of graduate studies and/or the dissertation committee chair</td>
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<td></td>
<td>One additional course in a language relevant to the student’s doctoral research and/or geographic area of focus, other than English. The language must be chosen in consultation with the director of graduate studies.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Completion of a Ph.D. minor</td>
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**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**

Up to 6 credits of prior coursework may be counted toward the Ph.D. with approval.

**UW–Madison Undergraduate**

No credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to count toward the degree.

**UW–Madison University Special**

No credits from a UW–Madison University Special student career are allowed to count toward the degree.

**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**

All students are required to find a dissertation advisor by the beginning of the third semester in the program. The dissertation committee must consist of at least four members representing more than one graduate program, three of whom must be UW–Madison graduate faculty or former UW–Madison graduate faculty up to one year after resignation or retirement. At least one of the four members must be from outside of the Department and all doctoral committee members must be designated as readers.

**CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED**

15 credits

**TIME CONSTRAINTS**

A student may not hold an assistantship for more than five years.

For students who earned an M.A. elsewhere, coursework should be completed in six semesters. By the beginning of the sixth semester, the candidate proceeds to the preliminary examination. A student who has not attempted the written preliminary exam by the beginning of the their seventh semester, or passed it by the end of the seventh semester, will leave the program with a terminal M.A. (provided they have at least thirty credits).

For students who earned an M.A. at UW–Madison, coursework should be completed in four semesters. By the beginning of the fourth semester, the candidate proceeds to the preliminary examination. A student who has not attempted the written preliminary exam by the beginning of their fifth semester, or passed it by the end of the fifth semester, will leave the program.

A candidate for a doctoral degree who fails to take the final oral examination and deposit the dissertation within five years after passing the preliminary examination may be required to take another preliminary examination and to be admitted to candidacy a second time.

**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. (Content) Develop knowledge of a secondary field of research from outside the Department of African Cultural Studies.
6. (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.
7. (Research Skills) Effectively retrieve and comprehend primary sources in English and African languages, and secondary sources from a range of disciplines.
8. (Research Skills) Gain firm knowledge of existing research in their area of specialization and its gaps.
9. (Research Skills) Read material (primary and secondary) relevant to African cultural studies in a non-African language other than English.
10. (Research Skills) Have an understanding of professional and ethical responsibility with regard to producing original research and working with human subjects.
11. (Communication Skills) Develop or improve speaking, listening, writing, reading skills in an African language, and integrate these skills to communicate effectively.
12. (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.
13. (Communication Skills) Show knowledge of conventional rhetorical strategies, and integrate research by other authors while distinguishing between their own ideas and those of others.
14. (Communication Skills) Write and speak across disciplinary boundaries with regard to existing research about Africa and the diaspora in the humanities and social sciences.
15. (Communication Skills) Demonstrate their ability to organize a book-length project into logical smaller components, so that it can be addressed in depth in a multi-chapter piece of writing.
17. (Analytical Skills) Discuss cultural texts from various theoretical and critical perspectives, formulate ideas and make connections between literary/cultural concepts and themes.
18. (Analytical Skills) Demonstrate command of the terminology and methodology of cultural studies, construct complex arguments, and use primary and secondary sources to support arguments.
19. (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