

# African American Studies, B.A.

## Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- understand basic facts, principles, key figures, and events related to African American experience in American society, plus recognize the significant contributions of African Americans in the United States and abroad;
- become familiar with the foundations of the discipline of African American studies and the development of the field, specifically conceptual ideas that shape the academic study of African American life;
- acquire the tools for contextualizing and understanding the intersectionality of race, class, gender, and/or sexual orientation in an effort to identify relevant challenges and solve human problems related to the African American community;
- learn to critically analyze cultural issues shaping the lives and conditions of African Americans through curriculum, community service, and service learning as they confirm the value of diversity in the 21st century; and
- be prepared for their careers in nonprofit organizations, civil service, law, entrepreneurship, education, or academia through the development of skills in critical thinking, oral and written communication, and research.

## Requirements

The Bachelor of Arts with a major in African American studies requires a minimum of 120 s.h., including at least 30 s.h. of work for the major. Students must maintain a g.p.a. of at least 2.00 in all courses for the major and in all UI courses for the major. They also must complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences GE CLAS Core. Transfer credit is evaluated individually and is limited to a maximum of 9 s.h.

The B.A. with a major in African American studies requires the following course work.

Code	Title	Hours
Introductory Courses		6
African American Studies Core		18
Electives		6
Total Hours		30

## Introductory Courses

Students are required to complete the following introductory courses.

Code	Title	Hours
AFAM:1020/ AMST:1030	Introduction to African American Culture	3
AFAM:1030	Introduction to African American Society	3

Introduction to African American Culture (AFAM:1020) examines the evolution of cultural experiences and developments in the United States and the African diaspora (e.g. the Harlem Renaissance, graphic novels, blues, hip hop, soul, and gospel). The course includes readings in literature,

music, film, comics, anime, popular culture events, plus the visual and performing arts.

Introduction to African American Society (AFAM:1030) examines the construction of social and historical institutions in the United States and the African diaspora (e.g., black church, black family, black traditions, and social movements). The course includes readings in education, sports, political science, religion, health, criminal justice, history, sociology, and other disciplines.

## African American Studies Core

In addition to the two required introductory courses, all students must complete at least two courses from each of the three topical areas below (minimum of 18 s.h.). Additional courses may be approved for the topical areas; consult with an African American studies advisor.

### History, Religion, and the Diaspora

Code	Title	Hours
Two of these:		
AFAM:1250/ RELS:1350	Introduction to African American Religions	3
AFAM:2266/ HIST:2266	Civil War and Emancipation	3
AFAM:2267/ HIST:2267	African American History to 1877: From Slave Cabin to Senate Floor	3
AFAM:2730/ RELS:2730	African American Islam	3
AFAM:3245/ RELS:3745	Twentieth-Century African American Religion: Civil Rights to Hip-Hop	3
AFAM:3275/ HIST:3275	History of Slavery in the U.S.A.	3-4
AFAM:3555/ ENGL:3555	Topics in African Cinema	3
AFAM:3758/ HIST:3758	The Ancient African Past	3
AFAM:3760/ HIST:3760	The Making of Modern Africa	3
AFAM:3900	Topics in African American Studies (when topic is history, religion, or the diaspora)	arr.
AFAM:4195/ HIST:4295	African American History 1619-1865	3
AFAM:4298/ HIST:4296	African American History 1865-Present	3
AFAM:7205/ GWSS:7205/ HIST:7205	Gender and Race in Nineteenth-Century U.S.	arr.
EPLS:5126	Twentieth-Century Educational Movements	2-3

### Literature and Performing Arts

Code	Title	Hours
Two of these:		
AFAM:1240	The Art of Listening to Jazz	3
AFAM:1241	The Soundtrack of Black America	3
AFAM:1820	Everybody is a Star: Black Celebrity Since 1968	3

AFAM:1830	Music of the African American Diaspora	3
AFAM:2014/ MUS:2014	Giants of Jazz: Miles, Trane, and Duke	3
AFAM:2465/ ENGL:2465	Selected African American Authors	3
AFAM:2700/ AMST:2700	The Black Image in Sequential Art: Comics, Graphic Novels, and Anime	3
AFAM:2781/ ENGL:2460/ POLI:2107	Black Literature and Politics: Controversies of National Allegiance	3
AFAM:3459/ ENGL:3459	African American Literature Before 1900	3
AFAM:3460/ ENGL:3460	African American Literature After 1900	3
AFAM:3462/ ENGL:3462/ THTR:3462	African American Drama	3
AFAM:3465/ ENGL:3465	African American Autobiography	3
AFAM:3710/ GWSS:3710	African American Women Writers	3
AFAM:3840/ THTR:3403	Free-Style Writing: Poetry, Plays, and Performances	3
AFAM:3900	Topics in African American Studies (when topic is literature or performing arts)	arr.
AFAM:4710/ ENGL:4410	Midwest African American Literature and Culture	3

## Media, Politics, and Social Institutions

Code	Title	Hours
Two of these:		
AFAM:2064/ SOC:2064	Racial Inequity and the Experiences of African American Families in the U.S.	3
AFAM:2070/ COMM:2069	Black Television Culture	3
AFAM:2076/ COMM:2076	Race, Ethnicity, and Media	3
AFAM:2079/ SPST:2079	Race and Ethnicity in Sport	3
AFAM:2500	Black Culture and Experience: Contemporary Issues	3
AFAM:3053/ AMST:3053	The Civil Rights Movement	3
AFAM:3130/ AMST:3130	Black American Cinema	3
AFAM:3400/ AMST:3400	Black Popular Music	3
AFAM:3500/ RELS:3808	Malcolm X, King, and Human Rights	3
AFAM:3900	Topics in African American Studies (when topic is media, politics, or social institutions)	arr.
AFAM:3925/ JMC:3165	African Americans and the Media	3

AFAM:4001/ COMM:4172	Television and African American Culture	3
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## Electives

Students also must take two elective courses (minimum of 6 s.h.) selected from the three topical areas listed above. With the approval of an African American studies advisor, students may substitute relevant courses offered by other departments for one or both electives; the substituted courses may not be cross-listed with African American studies. Students must gain the advisor's approval before enrolling in a substitute course.

Code	Title	Hours
Two electives selected from the three topical areas above, or approved substitutes		6

## Language Requirement

The language requirement for the African American studies major is the same as the World Languages requirement of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences GE CLAS Core. Students are encouraged, but not required, to take African language courses (Swahili is currently offered) or Spanish language courses to fulfill the World Languages requirement.

## Honors

### Honors in the Major

Students majoring in African American studies have the opportunity to graduate with honors in the major. Honors in the major offers students the opportunity to pursue special interests and individual in-depth research.

Honors students must maintain a minimum UI cumulative g.p.a. of at least 3.33 and complete all required course work for the major (30 s.h.). Students should register for up to 6 s.h. of AFAM:4990 Honors Project which enhances a student's ability to complete honors projects under the guidance of the supervising faculty member. Students enroll in AFAM:4990 with the approval of their African American studies advisor, who typically supervises the course. They may count up to 6 s.h. earned in AFAM:4990 toward the 30 s.h. required for the major.

Under the guidance of the African American studies advisor, an honors student defines a research project (thesis) using primary, secondary, or archival sources. Students submit a project proposal by the end of their junior year. They also complete a thesis under the guidance of a supervising faculty member and present the results as a senior essay to a committee of two faculty members, including the supervising African American studies faculty member and one other African American studies faculty member, chosen in consultation with the supervisor. A student's committee may choose to hear an oral defense of the honors thesis, usually during the student's last semester.

## University of Iowa Honors Program

In addition to honors in the major, students have opportunities for honors study and activities through membership in the University of Iowa Honors Program. Visit Honors at Iowa to learn about the University's honors program.

Membership in the UI Honors Program is not required to earn honors in the African American studies major.

## Academic Plans

### Four-Year Graduation Plan

The following checkpoints list the minimum requirements students must complete by certain semesters in order to stay on the University's Four-Year Graduation Plan. Courses in the major are those required to complete the major; they may be offered by departments other than the major department.

During the first year of study, students should focus on completing the GE CLAS Core, perhaps including Swahili or Spanish course work to begin satisfying the World Languages requirement.

**Before the fifth semester begins:** at least three courses in the major, including AFAM:1020 Introduction to African American Culture and AFAM:1030 Introduction to African American Society

**Before the seventh semester begins:** at least seven courses in the major and at least 90 s.h. earned toward the degree

**Before the eighth semester begins:** at least nine courses in the major

**During the eighth semester:** enrollment in all remaining course work in the major, all remaining GE CLAS Core courses, and a sufficient number of semester hours to graduate

### Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

### African American Studies, B.A.

Course	Title	Hours
<b>First Year</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
ENGL:1200 or RHET:1030	The Interpretation of Literature or Rhetoric	3 - 4
Major: introductory course <sup>a, b</sup>		3
GE CLAS Core: Historical Perspectives <sup>c</sup>		3
GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences without Lab <sup>c</sup>		3
CSI:1600	Success at Iowa	2
Hours		14-15
<b>Spring</b>		
ENGL:1200 or RHET:1030	The Interpretation of Literature or Rhetoric	3 - 4
Major: introductory course <sup>a, b</sup>		3
GE CLAS Core: Diversity and Inclusion <sup>c</sup>		3
GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences with Lab <sup>c</sup>		4
Elective course <sup>d</sup>		2
Hours		15-16
<b>Second Year</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
Major: history, religion, and the diaspora topical area course		3
GE CLAS Core: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts <sup>c</sup>		3
GE CLAS Core: Quantitative or Formal Reasoning <sup>c</sup>		3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages First Level Proficiency or elective course <sup>e</sup>		4 - 5

Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Hours	16-17

#### Spring

Major: history, religion, and the diaspora topical area course	3
Major: media, politics, and social institutions topical area course	3
GE CLAS Core: International and Global Issues <sup>c</sup>	3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Second Level Proficiency or elective course <sup>e</sup>	4 - 5
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Hours	16-17

#### Third Year

##### Fall

Major: literature and performing arts topical area course	3
Major: media, politics, and social institutions topical area course	3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Second Level Proficiency or elective course <sup>e</sup>	4 - 5
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Hours	16-17

##### Spring

Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Major: literature and performing arts topical area course	3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Fourth Level Proficiency or elective course <sup>e</sup>	4 - 5
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Hours	16-17

#### Fourth Year

##### Fall

Major: elective course <sup>f</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Hours	15

##### Spring

Major: elective course <sup>f</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>d</sup>	3
Hours	15

Total Hours	123-129
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a Choose from AFAM:1020 or AFAM:1030.

b Fulfills a major requirement and may fulfill a GE requirement.

c GE CLAS Core courses may be completed in any order unless used as a prerequisite for another course. Students should consult with an advisor about the best sequencing of courses.

d Students may use elective courses to earn credit towards the total s.h. required for graduation or to complete a double major, minors, or certificates.

- e Students who have completed four years of a single language in high school have satisfied the GE CLAS Core World Languages requirement. Enrollment in world languages courses requires a placement exam, unless enrolling in a first-semester-level course.
- f Students are required to complete 6 s.h. in major electives.

## Career Advancement

The African American studies major provides valuable background for careers in a diverse society, in areas such as community work, public school teaching, religion, government, political science, and law. Some graduates go on to advanced study, many preparing for work as teachers and administrators at colleges and universities.

The Pomerantz Career Center offers multiple resources to help students find internships and jobs.