

AFRICANA STUDIES (BA IN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES)

Interdisciplinary Studies

The Faculty of Arts & Sciences offers the BA & BS degrees in Interdisciplinary Studies. Within the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies degree program, students may select from six majors: Africana Studies; Environment & Sustainability; Film & Media Studies; Gender, Sexuality, & Women's Studies; Integrative Conservation, and Medieval & Renaissance Studies. Additionally, students may earn a BA or a BS in Interdisciplinary Studies with a Self-Designed major. Within this option, students will work closely with a faculty advisor to formulate a curriculum that is tailored to the student's interests. The responsibility for formulating a sound academic program of interdisciplinary study lies with the individual student and the advisor, and the proposed major must be approved by the Committee on Interdisciplinary Studies (CIS). Normally, students pursuing an interdisciplinary major base their program upon a solid understanding of an established discipline, and must include courses from at least three departments, with no more than half of the credit hours from any one department. More than two courses at the introductory level are seldom approved.

Applications for Self-Designed majors must adhere to the Registrar's deadlines for declaring a primary major. In addition, all applications for Self-Designed majors as a change of major or secondary major must be submitted to the Committee on Interdisciplinary Studies before the beginning of preregistration for the first semester of the student's senior year. All Self-Designed programs must be compatible with the degree requirements for Arts & Sciences. Each major must fulfill the Major Writing Requirement by earning a grade of C- or better in the course designated as the writing course within the program submitted to CHIS. Each major must also fulfill the Computer Proficiency Requirement by earning a grade of C- or better in the course designated as the computer proficiency course within the program submitted. CHIS, or the appropriate advisory committee, must approve the designation of courses that fulfill the writing and computer proficiency requirements.

The Africana Studies Program

The interdisciplinary major in Africana Studies (AFST) employs rigorous interdisciplinary and comparative approaches for the study of over one billion people of African descent, a fourth of whom are in the Diaspora. The central mission of the program is to prepare students for lifelong learning, graduate study in various fields, and careers in private and public organizations across the globe.

The AFST curriculum engages students in a critical examination of the intellectual, political, economic and cultural challenges and achievements of Africans and African-descended peoples. The study of these diverse and dynamic traditions does much more than recognizing the impact of racism. It also encompasses imperial, national, ethnic, linguistic, and religious currents and intersections in such settings as Africa, North America, the Caribbean Basin, Latin America, the Middle East, South Asia, and Europe.

The Program draws on wide-ranging fields of inquiry that include history, sociology, economics, anthropology, political science, religion, literature, music, drama, dance, film, and the visual arts. Through coursework that

integrates and often transcends disciplinary knowledge, students will learn to appreciate the specificity of Africa and its offshoots, the ways in which local and global forces interacted to shape a shared identity of Blackness as well as community-specific identities, and the trajectories of syncretism and other forms of intercultural exchange.

Details on the structure of the major are provided below. Full descriptions of courses and requirements are available from faculty advisors and the program's website. Africana majors are encouraged to look into allied Interdisciplinary programs such as American Studies, Gender, Sexuality, & Women's Studies, and Asian & Pacific Islander American Studies for complementary courses and intellectual exchange.

Engaged Scholarship

Students are encouraged to pursue engaged-scholarship opportunities to supplement classroom study of such issues as racial inequality, cultural exchange, and identity politics.

Study Abroad

Students are strongly encouraged to seek overseas opportunities, especially in Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America that complement the major. Contact the Global Education Office at the Reves Center for more information. With prior approval, courses taken abroad may be applied to the major or other requirements.

Study Away

Majors are also encouraged to seek out study away opportunities in the U.S. in approved Centers or Institutes, Colleges, or Universities. For example, students may arrange to take language courses elsewhere in the summer, or devote a semester to undertake a pre-approved program of study and research.

Living Learning Community

Africana House is a living and learning community that promotes awareness of and explores the scholarship on the history, cultural traditions, political, and economic circumstances that together define over 1.2 billion people of African descent. This community (limited to 42 students) is intended to broaden the learning experience at W&M beyond the traditional classroom, while providing a smaller village-like setting within the larger university in which students live and work together.

Internships

Students are strongly encouraged to seek internships to complement the major. Contact the Cohen Career Center for more information. With prior approval, unpaid internships may be applied to the major.

Requirements for Major Major Declaration

Prospective majors in Africana Studies should discuss their plan-of-study with a faculty advisor by the end of the sophomore year. Declaration forms and instructions for majors and minors are available at the websites of Africana Studies and the University Registrar.

Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
Gateway Course		
AFST 205	Introduction to Africana Studies	3
Methods		
AFST 299	Research Methods in Africana Studies	3

Language Requirement

Requires additional Africa-relevant foreign language study	3
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Regional Introductory Course

Select one of the following:	3
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AFST 350	Introduction to African Studies
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AFST 351	Introduction to African American Studies
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AFST 304	Introduction to the African Diaspora
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Capstone Experience	3-4
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AFST 406	Advanced Topics in Africana Studies
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AFST 480	Independent Study
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or AFST 495 Senior Honors	
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AFST 496	Honors
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Electives	21
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AFST 499	Senior Project in Africana Studies
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The remaining credits come from other Africana Studies courses in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Students need to take at least three (3) credit hours in Humanities and three (3) credit hours in Social Sciences.

Total Hours	36-37
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Language Requirement

Africana Studies requires an Africa-relevant foreign language study that exceeds the College-wide proficiency requirement. Specifically, Africana Studies requires additional Africa-relevant foreign language study that can be fulfilled by any one of the following:

1. one course beyond the 202-level in one language approved by the Curriculum Committee, or
2. 202-level proficiency in a second Africa-relevant language approved by the Curriculum Committee, or
3. LING 250 African-American English or AFST 251 Soon Come: Caribbean Languages and Identities or HIST 278 Deciphering Ancient Egypt, or other Africana Studies courses on African Languages, or
4. off-campus study programs or native proficiency in any national, ethnic, or community language of African or the African Diaspora approved by the Africana Curriculum Committee, or
5. native proficiency in the following can also be used to fulfill the requirement: Arabic, French, Portuguese, or Spanish. Others may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Curriculum Committee.

Note

Courses cannot be double counted within the Africana Studies minor.