

THE FIELD

The W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies is one of the largest such departments in the country, offering an undergraduate major for all students who desire in-depth knowledge of the history and culture of people of African descent in the U.S. and across the world. The course of study is deeply interdisciplinary with courses in African and African American history, literature, music, economics, and political science. The training and experience of the faculty provide a perspective on the history, culture, and place in the world of Africans and African Americans that differs markedly from that of the traditional disciplines.

A minor in Afro-American studies is available. Minors complete five courses in the department.

THE MAJOR

The major in Afro-American studies requires that students complete a minimum of 33 credit hours in the department in addition to the Junior Year Writing requirement (AfroAm 365) and Du Bois Senior Seminar (AfroAm 494DI; fulfills IE requirement). Independent study credits do not count toward the major requirements unless approved by a departmental advisor. The major requirements include 15 credits of introductory courses. These introduce the discipline of Black studies; the concepts, skills, and tools of modern scholarship; and the history, literature, and culture of Black people from their African origins to contemporary times. Students must also complete 12 credit hours in courses numbered above 200 and may choose to concentrate their studies in a particular area (history, social sciences, literature, arts), or may select from a number of areas. In addition, all majors are required to complete a three-credit senior project (AfroAm 496) under the supervision of a faculty member in the department.

COURSES OUTSIDE THE DEPARTMENT

Students may receive permission to apply to courses taught in other Five College Black studies departments or in other departments at UMass Amherst to fulfill their upper-division requirement. Written approval for this must be obtained from a Du Bois department advisor prior to enrollment in the outside course. The departments of anthropology, history, English, journalism, music, political science, sociology, and women, gender, sexuality studies (WGSS) regularly offer courses that fit within the purview of the Afro- American studies major; a list is available at the Du Bois department.

HONORS

Students may pursue honors opportunities within the major. Contact the department's honors coordinator for more information.

STUDY ABROAD

Majors may choose to study abroad if it supports their academic and career goals. Students should contact the International Programs Office (umass.edu/ipo) and work closely with their academic advisor to choose the appropriate courses in preparation.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Graduates of the W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies have gone on to graduate school in the fields of African and Afro-American studies, education, history, political science, public health, industrial relations, urban planning, law, literature, and several other areas. They have secured employment in areas such as teaching, journalism, television communications, criminal justice, insurance sales, and community organizing.

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND FINE ARTS

The humanities focus on human creativity, endeavor, and culture. The imaginative and creative arts—literary and performing—derive from life and teach about human behavior and constructs of social reality. The history of social, political, and economic systems illuminates and shapes the present and future. Students in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts are expected to broaden their perspectives on individual and cultural expression within their own and other societies, to understand the development and evolution of the discipline of study in relation to the culture from which it emanates, and to learn the methods by which knowledge in the discipline is gained.

Office: 329 New Africa House
Phone: 413-545-2751
Website: umass.edu/afroam

For more information on the major or minor in Afro-American studies, contact Tricia Loveland (tlovelan@afroam.umass.edu) or Britt Rusert (brusert@afroam.umass.edu).