

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES, MA

The program in African American studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison is dedicated to carrying on the vision of the elders and ancestors who devoted themselves to the highest standards of intellectual rigor and to the realization of a vision of true equality and opportunity. Like W.E.B. Du Bois, Anna Julia Cooper, John Hope Franklin, Zora Neale Hurston, and James Porter, the department is committed to bringing the fruits of academic research to the broadest possible audience, within and beyond the walls of the university. The deepest understanding of the complex reality of race in America requires an interdisciplinary approach, one that draws on history and literature, the social sciences, and the arts. Graduate studies are concentrated in three areas:

1. African American Culture (literature, theater history, music and culture, art history, and visual culture);
2. History and Society;
3. Black Women's Studies

The MA program is based on personalized programs of study shaped to meet the needs of individual students, many of whom participate in the "Bridge" programs which enable them to move directly into PhD programs in English (<http://www.english.wisc.edu/grad-afroam.htm>) or History (<https://history.wisc.edu/our-graduate-program/bridge-program/>). Program faculty are experts in their fields and work collaboratively to ensure that graduate students are well prepared to either take on further study at the PhD level or careers in teaching, public service, and the private, corporate sector. The program also offers doctoral minors for students in many graduate programs including African languages and literature, art history, communication arts, comparative literature, education, English, history, music, political science, social work, and sociology.

ADMISSIONS

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Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program's website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. **Applicants must meet the minimum requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/>) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s).** Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/>).

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	December 15
Spring Deadline	The program does not admit in the spring.
Summer Deadline	The program does not admit in the summer.
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Not required

English Proficiency Test Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Requirements for Admission policy: <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241> (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241/>).

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

Letters of Recommendation Required 3

To apply to the Master's program, upload all documents listed below to the Graduate School's online application (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/>):

- Unofficial transcript(s) or academic records from each institution attended;
 - International academic records must be in the original language accompanied by an official English translation.
- Statement of purpose (2 double-spaced pages);
- A writing sample (10-20 double-spaced pages);
- Three (3) letters of recommendation.

Prospective students must meet the Graduate School minimum requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/>). Admission to the department is competitive: the minimum overall GPA required is 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Students with a GPA above 3.3 are especially encouraged to apply.

Priority will be given to students who have completed undergraduate courses in subjects related to African American history, culture, or society or who have completed an undergraduate major in one of the following fields: African American Studies; a related social science discipline; or the humanities.

Students with an interest in pursuing a PhD in either English or History might be interested in applying to the Bridge Programs in English (<http://www.english.wisc.edu/grad-afroam.htm>) or History (<https://history.wisc.edu/our-graduate-program/bridge-program/>), which allow a student who has completed an MA in African American studies to move directly into one of those PhD programs.

More information about our application requirements is available on our website (<https://africanamericanstudies.wisc.edu/graduate-degree/#:~:text=Graduate%20Degree%20Application%20Requirements>).

FUNDING

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

[The Bursar's Office provides information about tuition and fees associated with being a graduate student.](#) [Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid.](#) [Further funding information is available from the Graduate School.](#)

Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum degree requirements (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#requirementstext>) and policies (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiestext>), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/ Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW–Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirement	Detail
Minimum Credit Requirement	30 credits
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	21 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	15 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/).
Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.00 GPA required. Refer to the Graduate School: Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/).
Other Grade Requirements	n/a

Assessments and Examinations The degree requires the completion of a Master's thesis. The purpose of the thesis is to demonstrate that degree candidates have acquired the knowledge and skills to carry out scholarly writing and research in their discipline, and to advance knowledge in the field itself.

Language Requirements n/a

REQUIRED COURSES

Students must complete 24 credits of approved graduate coursework as well as 6 thesis credits (AFROAMER 790 Research and Thesis).

Code	Title	Credits
Graduate courses in African American Studies		
At least 12 credits must be taken in the Department of African American Studies.		12
AFROAMER 525	Major Authors	
AFROAMER 621	Slavery and Capitalism in the United States	
AFROAMER/ HISTORY 628	History of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States	
AFROAMER 671	Selected Topics in Afro-American History	
AFROAMER/ ENGL 672	Selected Topics in Afro-American Literature	
AFROAMER 673	Selected Topics in Afro-American Society	
AFROAMER 675	Selected Topics in Afro-American Culture	
AFROAMER/ GEN&WS 677	Critical and Theoretical Perspectives in Black Women's Writings	
AFROAMER 699	Directed Study in Afro-American Studies (No more than 6 credits of Directed Study may be applied toward fulfillment of the MA coursework requirements.)	

Electives

Students will select their remaining courses in consultation with their faculty advisor. Students are encouraged to explore other subjects for related courses.

Thesis

Students must complete 6 credits of thesis.

AFROAMER 790	Research and Thesis	6
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Total Credits 30

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/>) serve as the official document of record for Graduate School academic and administrative policies and procedures and are updated continuously. Note some policies redirect to entries in the official UW–Madison Policy Library (<https://policy.wisc.edu/>). Programs may set more stringent policies than the Graduate School. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions

For well-prepared advanced students, the program may transfer 9 credits of prior graduate coursework from other institutions towards the minimum graduate degree credit and minimum graduate coursework (50%) requirement. The minimum graduate residence credit requirement can be satisfied only with courses taken as a graduate student at UW-Madison.

Undergraduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions or UW-Madison

No credits from an undergraduate degree are allowed to transfer toward the program's graduate degree requirements.

Credits Earned as a Professional Student at UW-Madison (Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary careers)

Refer to the Graduate School: Transfer Credits for Prior Coursework (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>) policy.

Credits Earned as a University Special Student at UW-Madison

The program may decide to transfer up to 9 University Special student credits in fulfillment of the minimum graduate degree or minor credit requirements on occasion as an exception (on a case-by-case basis). UW-Madison coursework taken as a University Special student may not be allowed to transfer toward the 50% graduate coursework minimum unless taken in coursework numbered 700 or above or as a Capstone Certificate.

PROBATION

Refer to the Graduate School: Probation (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1217/>) policy.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

Refer to the Graduate School: Advisor (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1232/>) and Graduate School: Committees (Doctoral/Master's/MFA) (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1201/>) policies.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

12 credits

TIME LIMITS

Refer to the Graduate School: Time Limits (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1221/>) policy.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)
 - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and

conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)

- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employeeabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office Student Assistance and Support (OSAS) (<https://osas.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

L&S POLICY FOR GRADUATE STUDENT ACADEMIC APPEALS

Graduate students have the right to appeal an academic decision related to an L&S graduate program if the student believes that the decision is inconsistent with published policy.

Academic decisions that may be appealed include:

- Dismissal from the graduate program
- Failure to pass a qualifying or preliminary examination
- Failure to achieve satisfactory academic progress
- Academic disciplinary action related to failure to meet professional conduct standards

Issues such as the following cannot be appealed using this process:

- A faculty member declining to serve as a graduate student's advisor.
- Decisions regarding the student's disciplinary knowledge, evaluation of the quality of work, or similar judgements. These are the domain of the department faculty.
- Course grades. These can be appealed instead using the L&S Policy for Grade Appeal (<https://kb.wisc.edu/lis/22258/>).
- Incidents of bias or hate, hostile and intimidating behavior (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>), or discrimination (Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>), Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/eo-complaint/formal-investigations/>)). Direct these to the linked campus offices appropriate for the incident(s).

Appeal Process for Graduate Students

A graduate student wishing to appeal an academic decision must follow the process in the order listed below. Note time limits within each step.

1. The student should first seek informal resolution, if possible, by discussing the concern with their academic advisor, the department's Director of Graduate Studies, and/or the department chair.
2. If the program has an appeal policy listed in their graduate program handbook, the student should follow the policy as written, including adhering to any indicated deadlines. In the absence of a specific departmental process, the chair or designee will be the reviewer and

decision maker, and the student should submit a written appeal to the chair within 15 business days of the academic decision. The chair or designee will notify the student in writing of their decision.

3. If the departmental process upholds the original decision, the graduate student may next initiate an appeal to L&S. To do so, the student must submit a written appeal to the L&S Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Academic Affairs within 15 business days of notification of the department's decision.
 - a. To the fullest extent possible, the written appeal should include, in a single document: a clear and concise statement of the academic decision being appealed, any relevant background on what led to the decision, the specific policies involved, the relief sought, any relevant documentation related to the departmental appeal, and the names and titles of any individuals contributing to or involved in the decision.
 - b. The Assistant Dean will work with the Academic Associate Dean of the appropriate division to consider the appeal. They may seek additional information and/or meetings related to the case.
 - c. The Assistant Dean and Academic Associate Dean will provide a written decision within 20 business days.
4. If L&S upholds the original decision, the graduate student may appeal to the Graduate School. More information can be found on their website: Grievances and Appeals (<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/>) (see: Graduate School Appeal Process).

OTHER

n/a

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

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1. To provide students with a thorough understanding of a range of disciplinary approaches to the study of the African American experience in the United States and the African diaspora.
2. To provide students with a foundation in their area of concentration that will enable them to pursue doctoral work in a relevant discipline, especially in the areas of English and history, where we have established Bridge programs with UW departments.
3. To familiarize students with the techniques of effective teaching in multiracial classrooms, including training in dealing with controversial issues and potential racial tensions.