

African and Afro-American Studies

Why African and Afro-American Studies at Brandeis?

African, African-American, and Caribbean thinkers have played a major role in defining the critical issues of our time, just as the culture of Africans and their descendants has transformed the cultures of the Americas and the world.

A major or minor in African and Afro-American studies allows you to explore intellectual, cultural, economic, religious, social, and historical issues related to Africans and people of African descent. Courses are drawn from, and use the methods of, several disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. You will develop the analytical tools to read different kinds of texts, to write persuasively, and to participate knowledgeably in debates about developments in Africa, as well as the United States and the rest of the Americas.

Curriculum Overview

Students can major or minor in African and Afro-American studies.

The major requires nine courses drawn from department and cross-listed offerings, including:

- AAAS 5a (Introduction to African and Afro-American Studies)
- One course each in the areas of social science, humanities, and history
- Four courses in one of the specializations listed on our Web site

Of the nine courses, five must be from within the department.

If you wish to pursue honors, you must satisfactorily complete AAAS 99d (Senior Research).

The minor requires five courses:

- AAAS 5a
- One of the following: AAAS 70a (Introduction to Afro-American History), AAAS 115a (Introduction to African History), AAAS 79b (Afro-American Literature of the Twentieth Century), or AAAS 133b (The Literature of the Caribbean)
- Three other courses offered in the department

Career Opportunities

During their time here, some of our majors pursue study-abroad opportunities in Africa and the Caribbean. Some are involved in internships in the Boston area. After they graduate, our majors go on to work in public policy, social activism, teaching (at all levels), law, administration, the arts, and many other fields.

Department Faculty

Following is a list of department faculty members and their areas of specialization:

- **Wellington Nyangoni, chair**
Economic development in Africa, comparative Third-World political economy
- **Peniel E. Joseph**
African-American history, twentieth-century American social history, African diaspora
- **Marieta Joyner**
African-American history
- **Mingus Mapps**
Urban politics; race and American politics; race, inequality, and public policy; civil-rights law and politics; campaigns and elections
- **Wayne Marshall**
Ethnomusicology, cultural study of music, hip-hop, reggaeton, electronic popular music
- **Faith Smith**
Literature and popular culture of the Caribbean, African-American literature, African diaspora
- **Ibrahim Sundiata**
Social history of Africa, slavery, African diaspora, Afro-Brazil

For further information on the research and teaching interests of our faculty members, please refer to the faculty page on the department Web site.