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Department of  
**African and Afro-American Studies**

Courses of Study:  
 Minor  
 Major (B.A.)

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### Objectives

The department welcomes all members of the student body who have an interest in Africa and/or African-America. The major is arranged through consultation with the departmental advisor or another professor. Majors may ask for guidance in the selection of elective courses with related content or approach within their chosen disciplines.

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### Faculty

#### Faith Smith, Chair

Literature and popular culture of the Caribbean, African-America, and African Diaspora.

#### Mark Auslander, Mellon Fellow in African Art and Aesthetics

Art and aesthetics. Museum studies. Religion. Kinship. Historical anthropology. Development. Africa. United States.

#### Joan Bryant

African-American history. Reform movements. Race and ethnicity.

#### Mingus Mapps, Florence Levy Kay Fellow in Urban Politics

Urban politics. Race and American politics. Race, inequality and public policy. Civil rights laws and politics. Campaigns and elections.

#### Wellington Nyangoni

Africa: Economic development. Comparative Third World political economy.

#### Ibrahim Sundiata

Africa: Social history. Slavery. The African diaspora. Afro-Brazil.

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### Requirements for the Major

**A.** Required of all candidates: eight semester courses from among the AAAS and cross-listed courses below. One of the eight courses must be AAAS 5a (Introduction to African and Afro-American Studies), which should be taken as the first AAAS course, as it provides an introduction to themes and methods of analysis.

**B.** At least one course will be taken in each of the following areas: social science, humanities, and history.

**C.** At least four courses will be taken in one of the following disciplines as a field of specialization: literature, music, history, political science, sociology, and economics. A candidate may elect a five-course interdisciplinary focus on Africa or Afro-American affairs as a specialization. Always confirm your choice of specialization with the department academic advisor.

**D.** Five of the eight required courses must be from within the department (e.g., from the AAAS courses below). No course with a final grade below C- can count toward the major.

**E.** Candidates for departmental honors must satisfactorily complete AAAS 99d (Senior Research).

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### Requirements for the Minor

Five semester courses are required, including the following:

**A.** AAAS 5a (Introduction to African and Afro-American Studies). This should be taken as the first AAAS course, as it provides an introduction to themes and methods of analysis.

**B.** AAAS 70a (Introduction to Afro-American History).

**C.** The remaining three courses will be selected from among the department's offerings in literature, history, political science, and music.

Students are required to declare the minor in AAAS no later than the beginning of their senior year. Each student will be assigned a departmental advisor by the undergraduate advising head.

## Courses of Instruction

### (1-99) Primarily for Undergraduate Students

#### AAAS 5a Introduction to African and Afro-American Studies

[ ss ]

An interdisciplinary introduction to major topics in African and Afro-American studies, providing fundamental insights into Africa, the Caribbean, and the Americas through approaches and techniques of social science and the humanities. Usually offered every year. Ms. Bryant

#### AAAS 18b Africa and the West

[ ss nw ]

Focuses on the relationship between Africa and the "West" from the time of the ancient Egyptians to the postcolonial period. It also assesses the dilemma neocolonialism poses for the West. Usually offered every third year. Mr. Sundiata

#### AAAS 60a Economics of Third World Hunger

[ ss nw ]

Employs the tools of social science, particularly economics, to study causes and potential solutions to problems in production, trade, and consumption of food in the underdeveloped world. Usually offered every second year. Mr. Nyangoni

#### AAAS 70a Introduction to Afro-American History

[ ss ]

A survey of the Afro-American experience from the era of slavery to the present. Topics include the rise of a distinct community and its institutions, Reconstruction and segregation, the contributions of blacks to American society, and the struggles for freedom and equality. Usually offered every second year. Ms. Bryant

#### AAAS 78b Systemic Racism

[ ss ]

An in-depth examination of the multiple forms of oppression in American Society. The course starts with an analysis of racism from an institutional, psychological, and applied perspective. Explores the sociopolitical, economical, and historical themes that result from systemic racism. Staff

#### AAAS 79b Afro-American Literature of the Twentieth Century

[ wi ss hum ]

An introduction to the essential themes, aesthetic concerns, and textual strategies that characterize Afro-American writing of this century. Examines those influences that have shaped the poetry, fiction, and prose nonfiction of representative writers. Usually offered every second year. Ms. Smith

#### AAAS 80a Economy and Society in Africa

[ ss nw ]

Perspectives on the interaction of economic and other variables in African societies. Topics include the ethical and economic bases of distributive justice; models of social theory, efficiency, and equality in law; the role of economic variables in the theory of history; and world systems analysis. Usually offered every third year. Mr. Nyangoni

#### AAAS 81b Religion in African-American History

[ ss ]

*Prerequisite or corequisite:* AAAS 70a.

Examines religious development in African-American history. Explores religious experience and identity, religion in popular culture, institutional developments, political activism among religious figures, theological innovations, and religious conflict in order to understand how religion has informed African-American life. Usually offered every second year. Ms. Bryant

#### AAAS 85a Survey of Southern African History

[ ss nw ]

Explores the roots of segregation and apartheid in South Africa, the development of a regional political economy dominated by South Africa, labor migrancy and land alienation in southern Africa, and the rise of African and Afrikaaner nationalisms. Usually offered every second year. Mr. Sundiata

#### AAAS 98a Independent Study

Independent readings and research on a topic within the student's interest under the direction of a faculty supervisor. Usually offered every year. Staff

#### AAAS 98b Independent Study

Independent readings and research on a topic within the student's interest under the direction of a faculty supervisor. Usually offered every year. Staff

#### AAAS 99d Senior Research

Usually offered every year. Staff

### (100-199) For Both Undergraduate and Graduate Students

#### AAAS 115a Introduction to African History

[ ss nw ]

The history of African societies from their earliest beginnings to the present era. Topics include African participation in antiquity and early Christianity and preindustrial political, economic, and cultural developments, among others. Usually offered every second year. Mr. Sundiata

#### AAAS 117a Communications and Social Change in Developing Nations

[ ss ]

Examines the role of communications and information systems within and between developed and underdeveloped nations and addresses the larger perspective of global communications. Usually offered every third year. Staff

#### AAAS 120b Race in African-American History

[ ss ]

*Prerequisite:* AAAS 70a (may be taken concurrently) or AAAS 145b.

Is race un-American? African-American racial thought provides a critical lens for understanding the meanings and functions of race. Analyzing primary sources from the antebellum period to the present, we ask: Is race racist? What is black culture? Does justice require "colorblindness?" Usually offered every second year. Ms. Bryant

#### AAAS 122a Politics of Southern Africa

[ ss nw ]

Study of clashing nationalisms, alternative patterns of development, and internationalization of conflict in southern Africa. The political economy of South Africa in regional context and its effect on the politics of its neighbors, particularly Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, and Zimbabwe. Mr. Nyangoni

#### AAAS 123a Third World Ideologies

[ wi ss nw ]

Analyzes ideological concepts developed by seminal Third World political thinkers and their application to modern political analysis. Usually offered every second year. Mr. Nyangoni

#### AAAS 125b Caribbean Women and Globalization: Sexuality, Citizenship, Work

[ wi ss ]

Utilizing perspectives from sociology, anthropology, fiction, and music, to examine the relationship between women's sexuality and conceptions of labor, citizenship, and sovereignty. The course considers these alongside conceptions of masculinity, contending feminisms, and the global. Usually offered every second year. Ms. Smith

**AAAS 126b Political Economy of the Third World**

[ wi ss nw ]

Development of capitalism and different roles and functions assigned to all "Third Worlds," in the periphery as well as the center. Special attention will be paid to African and Afro-American peripheries. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Nyangoni

**AAAS 131b American Freedom before Emancipation**

[ ss ]

*Prerequisite or corequisite: AAAS 70a or HIST 51a.*

What did it mean to be free in an age of slavery? The experiences of free African Americans focus our investigation of this founding myth of America. Explores what freedom meant to criminals, reformers, laborers, slaveholders, artists, abolitionists, soldiers, and statesmen. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Bryant

**AAAS 132b Introduction to African Literature**

[ ss nw hum ]

Examines the cultural production of African writers and filmmakers and their critiques of the post-colonial state. Their exploration of gender, sexuality, language choice, the pressures placed on "authentic" identities by diasporic communities, and the conflicting claims of tradition and modernity. Usually offered every third year.

Ms. Smith

**AAAS 133b The Literature of the Caribbean**

[ ss nw hum ]

An exploration of the narrative strategies and themes of writers of the region who grapple with issues of colonialism, class, race, ethnicity, and gender in a context of often conflicting allegiances to North and South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Smith

**AAAS 134b Novel and Film of the African Diaspora**

[ nw hum ]

Writers and filmmakers, who are usually examined separately under national or regional canonical categories such as "(North) American," "Latin American," "African," "British," or "Caribbean," are brought together here to examine transnational identities, and investments in "authentic," "African," or "black" identities. Usually offered every third year.

Ms. Smith

**AAAS 145b What is Race?**

[ wi ss ]

What is race? How has it shaped what it means to be American? We explore 19th- and 20th-century interpretations of race in science, law, reform initiatives, and popular literature. Issues include eugenics, census categories, race loyalty, polygenesis, immigration, passing, and miscegenation. Usually offered every third year.

Ms. Bryant

**AAAS 155a Slavery in America**

[ ss ]

Examines the rise of slavery in America, the formation of slave and free-black communities, the emergence of the planter class, the role of slavery in the economy and politics, the relationship between slavery and racism, and the legacy of slavery. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Bryant

**AAAS 156a The Civil Rights Movement**

[ ss ]

Explores the civil rights movement through primary readings and films. Includes an assessment of the consequences of the movement and the ongoing controversies over the best ways to achieve equality for black Americans. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Bryant

**AAAS 158a Theories of Development and Underdevelopment**

[ wi ss nw ]

Humankind has for some time now possessed the scientific and technological means to combat the scourge of poverty. The purpose of this seminar is to acquaint students with contending theories of development and underdevelopment, emphasizing the open and contested nature of the process involved and of the field of study itself. Among the topics to be studied are modernization theory, the challenge to modernization posed by dependency and world systems theories, and more recent approaches centered on the concepts of basic needs and of sustainable development. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Nyangoni

**AAAS 163b Africa in World Politics**

[ ss ]

Explores the impact of African states in world affairs; the African and Afro-Asian groups in the United Nations; relations with Eastern Europe, Western Europe, and the Americas; the Afro-Asian Movement; nonalignment; the Organization of African Unity; and Pan-Africanism. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Nyangoni

**AAAS 167a African and Caribbean Comparative Political Systems**

[ ss nw ]

Introduces students to the literature and method of comparative political analysis. Case studies central to the course will be Ghana, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe; and Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and Cuba. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Nyangoni

**AAAS 170b Seminar: Political Economy of Developing Countries**

[ ss ]

Analysis of political and economic issues in developing countries. Special emphasis on the major explanations for underdevelopment and alternative strategies for development. Topics include colonialism, nationalism, developing countries in the international system, state-building, rural development, and gender perspectives on underdevelopment. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Nyangoni

**Cross-Listed Courses****ANTH 112a**

African Art and Aesthetics

**ANTH 133a**

Culture and Power in Africa

**COML 111b**

Creating the Transnational Caribbean: Language, Gender, Race

**ENG 16a**

Nineteenth-Century African-American Literature: Texts and Contexts

**ENG 17b**

African Novel

**ENG 127b**

Migrating Bodies, Migrating Texts

**ENG 147b**

South African Literature and Apartheid

**HIST 115a**

History of Comparative Race and Ethnic Relations

**HIST 116a**

History of West Africa

**HS 120a**

Race and the Law

**PHIL 18a**

Philosophy of Race and Gender

**POL 140a**

Politics of Africa

**SOC 125b**

U.S.-Caribbean Relations

**SOC 171a**

Women Leaders and Transformation in Developing Countries