

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES, BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.)

The Bachelor of Arts in African American Studies is an interdisciplinary degree that provides students with knowledge of human cultures and intellectual and practical skills to engage complexity, diversity and change. The degree program fosters students' personal and social responsibility and, through applied learning experiences, empowers students to negotiate and to solve the complex problems of the 21st century. African American studies majors often pursue graduate and professional degree programs in business, education, history, international relations, law, political science, psychology, public health and social work. Career opportunities with a B.A. only in African American Studies include employment in community health agencies, public and private schools and nonprofit organizations.

Student learning outcomes

Upon completing this program, students will know how to do the following:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the major concepts, perspectives and theories in Africana studies
- Articulate the manner in which institutional structures and systemic practices shape and affect the experiences of Black people in the United States and abroad
- Demonstrate knowledge of basic methodological approaches (both quantitative and qualitative) in Africana studies and the general role of methodology in building knowledge about the Black experience
- Critically engage and propose integrity-based solutions to problems that impact persons of African descent and their communities

Special requirements

Majors in African American studies must meet the general education requirements of the College of Humanities and Sciences. The Bachelor of Arts in African American Studies requires the completion of 120 credits with at least 30 credits in African American Studies courses. Students must complete 24 major core credits. They are also required to establish an area of study by taking a minimum of two approved courses in a single cooperating department (listed below). Only courses in the selected cooperating department count toward the African American studies major GPA. Students may fulfill all or part of this requirement by taking African American studies course electives.

Degree requirements for African American Studies, Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)

Course	Title	Hours
General education (https://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/general-education-curriculum/)		
Select 30 credits of general education courses in consultation with an adviser.		30
Major requirements		
• Major core requirements		
AFAM 201	Theories and Foundations of Africana Studies	3
AFAM 211	Africana Social and Political Thought	3

AFAM 310	Black Health Matters: Social Determinants of Health in the African American Community	3
AFAM 311	African Diaspora Experiences	3
AFAM 330	Blackness and Media: Representations of Race, Gender and Culture	3
AFAM 399	Interdisciplinary Research Methods ¹	3
AFAM 493	Internship in Africana Studies	3
AFAM 499	Capstone Seminar in Africana Studies	3
• Additional major requirements		
Complete two courses from one cooperating department (select from list below)		6
Ancillary requirements		
AFAM 111 Play course video for Introduction to Africana Studies	Introduction to Africana Studies (satisfies general education BOK for humanities/fine arts and/or AOI for global perspectives)	3
HUMS 202	Choices in a Consumer Society	1
Experiential fine arts ²		1-3
Foreign language through the 102 level (by course or placement)		0-6
Open electives		
Select any course.		50-58
Total Hours		120

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Any one of GSWS 393, POLI 320, PSYC 317, SOCY 320 or SLWK 380 may be substituted for this course if completed with a minimum grade of C.

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Course offered by the School of the Arts

The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 120.

Cooperating departments and programs requirement

Complete two courses in one of the cooperating departments or programs listed below, including at least one Africana-focused course and at least one upper level course. Students may fulfill all or part of this requirement by taking African American studies course electives.

- Anthropology
- Dance
- English
- Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies
- History
- International Studies
- Mass Communications
- Music History
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Religious Studies
- Sociology
- Theatre
- Urban and Regional Studies

Refer to the list below for Africana-focused courses offered by or in conjunction with these cooperating departments.

Africana-focused courses from the Department of African American Studies and cooperating departments

Note: Students must complete two courses in one cooperating department or program, including at least one Africana-focused course (from lists below) and at least one upper-level course. Students may fulfill all or part of this requirement by taking African American studies course electives.

Course	Title	Hours
African American studies		
AFAM/SOCY 104	Sociology of Racism	3
AFAM/HIST 105	Survey of African History	3
AFAM/HIST 106	Survey of African History	3
AFAM/ANTH/INTL 200	Introduction to African Societies	3
AFAM 291	Topics in African American Studies	3
AFAM/POLI 302	Politics of the Civil Rights Movement	3
AFAM/GSWS/SOCY 305	Oppression, Resilience and the Black Family	3
AFAM/RELS/INTL 307	Black Religion	3
AFAM/ANTH/INTL 309	Gender and Global Health	3
AFAM/POLI/GSWS 318	Politics of Race, Class and Gender	3
AFAM/PSYC 322	Personality and Behavior of the African American	3
AFAM 338	Ferguson, USA: The Criminalization of Race in Historical Perspective	3
AFAM/POLI 343	Black Political Thought	3
AFAM/POLI 345	African-American Politics	3
AFAM/POLI/INTL 356	African Government and Politics	3
AFAM/POLI/INTL 357		
AFAM/HIST 361	Americans from Africa	3
AFAM/HIST 362	Americans from Africa	3
AFAM/ENGL 363/INTL 366	African Literature	3
AFAM/ENGL 365/INTL 367	Caribbean Literature	3
AFAM/ENGL 379	African-American Literature: Beginnings Through the Harlem Renaissance	3
AFAM/HIST 387	History of West Africa to 1800	3
AFAM/HIST 389	Southern Africa Since 1600	3
AFAM 390/HIST 380/GSWS 390	Forced and Coerced Labor in Africa and the Americas	3
AFAM 391	Topics in African American Studies	3
AFAM 392/HIST 376	Caribbean History to 1838	3
AFAM 393	Akhenaten to Cleopatra	3
AFAM/ANTH 416	The Origin and Evolution of the Idea of Race	3
AFAM 491	Topics in African-American Studies	3
Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser		

Anthropology		
ANTH/AFAM/INTL 200	Introduction to African Societies	3
ANTH/AFAM/GSWS 309	Gender and Global Health	3
ANTH 321	Gender and Culture in Africa	3
ANTH 388	African Archaeology	3
ANTH/AFAM 416	The Origin and Evolution of the Idea of Race	3
AFAM/ANTH/INTL 420	Women of Africa	3
Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser		
Dance		
AFAM/DANC 121	Tap Technique I	2
AFAM/DANC 122		2
AFAM/DANC 126	African-Caribbean Dance I	2
AFAM/DANC 127		2
AFAM/DANC 151	Jazz Dance Technique I	2
AFAM/DANC 152		2
DANC 255	Hip Hop Dance	2
DANC 256		2
DANC 291	Topics in Dance	1-4
DANC 413	African American Presence in American Dance, Performance and Social Contexts	3
Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser		
English		
ENGL 355/GSWS 359	Black Women Writers	3
ENGL 359	Studies in African American Literature:	3

ENGL/AFAM 363/INTL 366	African Literature	3
ENGL/AFAM 365/INTL 367	Caribbean Literature	3
ENGL/AFAM 379	African-American Literature: Beginnings Through the Harlem Renaissance	3
ENGL/AFAM 382	African-American Literature: Realism to the Present	3
ENGL 417	Themes in African American Literature:	3

Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser		
Gender, sexuality and women's studies		
AFAM/ANTH/INTL/GSWS 309	Gender and Global Health	3
GSWS/AFAM/SOCY 305	Oppression, Resilience and the Black Family	3
GSWS/AFAM/POLI 318	Politics of Race, Class and Gender	3
GSWS 359/ENGL 355	Black Women Writers	3
GSWS 383	Beyoncé: Music, Race and Fame	3
GSWS/AFAM 390/HIST 380	Forced and Coerced Labor in Africa and the Americas	3
GSWS/DANC 415	Black Performance Theory	3
GSWS 450	Black Feminist Thought	3

GSWS 460	Gender, Sexuality and HIV In African Literature	3	INTL/AFAM/RELS 451	Religion, Racism and Social Justice	3
Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser			Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser		
History			Mass communications		
HIST/AFAM 105	Survey of African History	3	MASC 290	Ethical Problems in Mass Media	3
HIST/AFAM 106	Survey of African History	3	MASC 390	Ethical Problems in Mass Media	3
HIST 302	Ancient Egypt	3	MASC 474	Diversity in the Media	3
Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser			Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser		
History			Music and music history		
HIST/AFAM 361	Americans from Africa	3	AFAM/MHIS 350/INTL 370	Studies in the Music of the African Continent and Diaspora	3
HIST/AFAM 362	Americans from Africa	3	APPM 360	Large Jazz Ensemble ¹	1
HIST 376/AFAM 392	Caribbean History to 1838	3	APPM 361	Small Jazz Ensemble ¹	1
HIST 348	The American Civil War and Reconstruction	3	MHIS 147	Jazz Theory and Aural Skills ²	3
HIST 352	The U.S. South to 1865	3	MHIS 291	Topics in Music	1-3
HIST 353	The U.S. South Since 1865	3	MHIS 311	Jazz Arranging I ²	3
HIST 356	Virginia to 1865	3	MHIS 312	Jazz Arranging II ²	3
HIST 357	Virginia Since 1865	3	MHIS 324	Jazz History ²	3
HIST 360	The Civil Rights Movement	3	Political science		
HIST 367	East Africa, 1895-Present	3	POLI/AFAM 302	Politics of the Civil Rights Movement	3
HIST 368	Colonialism in Africa	3	POLI/AFAM/GSWS 318	Politics of Race, Class and Gender	3
HIST 377	Caribbean History Since 1838	3	POLI/AFAM 343	Black Political Thought	3
HIST 378	Atlantic Slavery	3	POLI/AFAM 345	African-American Politics	3
HIST 380/AFAM 390/ GSWS 390	Forced and Coerced Labor in Africa and the Americas	3	POLI 346	Black Political Activism	3
HIST 381/AFAM 387	History of West Africa to 1800	3	POLI 347	Black Queer Politics	3
HIST 383/AFAM 389	Southern Africa Since 1600	3	POLI/AFAM/INTL 356	African Government and Politics	3
HIST 384	Africa: Social, Cultural and Economic History	3	POLI/AFAM/INTL 357		3
HIST 410	Studies in African History: ____	3	Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser		
HIST 411	Studies in the African Diaspora: ____	3	Psychology		
HIST 417	Studies in African American History: ____	3	PSYC/EDUS 305	Educational Psychology	3
Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser			PSYC/LFSC 307	Community Solutions: Multiple Perspectives	3
International studies			PSYC 321	Social Psychology	3
INTL/AFAM/ANTH 200	Introduction to African Societies	3	PSYC/AFAM 322	Personality and Behavior of the African American	3
INTL/SOCY 250	Confronting Climate Crisis	3	PSYC/SOCY 341	Group Dynamics	3
INTL/URSP 303	World Regions	3	AFAM 346	Mental Health Across the African Diaspora	3
INTL/AFAM/RELS 307	Black Religion	3	Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser		
INTL/AFAM/URSP 333	Geography of Africa	3	Religious studies		
INTL/AFAM/POLI 356	African Government and Politics	3	RELS/AFAM 307	Black Religion	3
INTL/AFAM/POLI 357		3	RELS 340/INTL 341	Global Ethics and the World's Religions	3
INTL 366/AFAM 363/ ENGL 363	African Literature	3	RELS 450/INTL 449	Religion, Globalization and Social Justice	3
INTL 367/AFAM 365/ ENGL 365	Caribbean Literature	3	RELS/AFAM/INTL 451	Religion, Racism and Social Justice	3
INTL 370/AFAM 350/ MHIS 350	Studies in the Music of the African Continent and Diaspora	3	Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser		
INTL/AFAM/ANTH 420	Women of Africa	3	Sociology		
			SOCY/AFAM 104	Sociology of Racism	3
			SOCY/INTL 250	Confronting Climate Crisis	3

SOCY/AFAM/GSWS 305	Oppression, Resilience and the Black Family	3
SOCY 310	Social Movements and Social Conflict	3
SOCY 322	Sociology of Race and Ethnicity	3
SOCY 327	Urban Sociology	3
SOCY 350	Environmental Sociology	3
SOCY 355	Comparative Social Justice: Forging Cultures of Resilience in South Africa and the U.S.	3
SOCY 401	Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities	3
SOCY 420	Environmental Racism	3
Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser		

Theatre

AFAM/THEA 303	Black Theatre	3
THEA 375	Black Performance Techniques	3
Or a course approved in conjunction by advisers in Theatre and African American studies		

Urban and regional studies

URSP 108	Uncovering Richmond	3
URSP 245	Housing and Community Revitalization	3
URSP 304	Urban Social Systems	3
URSP 315	The Evolution of American Cities	3
URSP 316	Urban Life in Modern America	3
URSP 331	Geography of Latin America and the Caribbean	3
URSP 333	Geography of Africa	3
URSP 435	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the City	3
Or a course approved by an African American studies adviser		

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Accessible by audition

2

Restricted to music majors

What follows is a sample plan that meets the prescribed requirements within a four-year course of study at VCU. Please contact your adviser before beginning course work toward a degree.

Freshman year

Fall semester		Hours
AFAM 111	Introduction to Africana Studies (satisfies general education BOK for humanities/fine arts and/or AOI for global perspectives)	3
UNIV 101	Introduction to the University	1

UNIV 111	Introduction to Focused Inquiry: Play course Investigation and Communication (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
UNIV 111	Introduction to Focused Inquiry: Investigation and Communication	
	Experiential fine arts	1-3
	General education course	3
	General education course (select quantitative foundations)	3-4

Term Hours:**14-17****Spring semester**

HUMS 202	Choices in a Consumer Society	1
UNIV 112	Focused Inquiry II (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
UNIV 112	Play course video for Focused Inquiry II	
	General education course ¹	3
	General education course ¹	3
	General education course ¹	3
	Open elective	3

Term Hours:**16****Sophomore year****Fall semester**

AFAM 201	Theories and Foundations of Africana Studies	3
UNIV 200	Advanced Focused Inquiry: Literacies, Research and Communication (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
	Foreign language 101	3
	Open electives	6

Term Hours:**15****Spring semester**

AFAM 211	Africana Social and Political Thought	3
	Approved cooperating department elective	3
	Foreign language 102	3
	General education course ¹	3
	Open elective	3

Term Hours:**15****Junior year****Fall semester**

AFAM 311	African Diaspora Experiences	3
AFAM 330	Blackness and Media: Representations of Race, Gender and Culture	3
	Approved cooperating department elective	3
	Open electives	6

Term Hours:**15****Spring semester**

AFAM 310	Black Health Matters: Social Determinants of Health in the African American Community	3
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AFAM 399	Interdisciplinary Research Methods ²	3
Open electives		9
Term Hours:		15
Senior year		
Fall semester		
AFAM 493	Internship in Africana Studies	3
Open electives		12
Term Hours:		15
Spring semester		
AFAM 499	Capstone Seminar in Africana Studies	3
Open electives		12
Term Hours:		15
Total Hours:		120-123

1

Students are required to complete courses in all three breadth of knowledge areas and in three of the four area of inquiry categories. Select general education courses in consultation with an adviser.

2

Any one of GSWS 393, POLI 320, PSYC 317, SOCY 320 or SLWK 380 may be substituted for this course if completed with a minimum grade of C.

The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 120.