

Africology and African American Studies PhD

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Learn more about the Doctor of Philosophy in Africology and African American Studies.

About the Program

The mission of the Department of Africology and African American Studies is to provide an intellectual arena in which students learn to critically examine, analyze and interpret the experiences, traditions and dynamics of people of African descent. The department's undergirding philosophy is that the specific historical experiences of a people must be the central axis guiding and informing any effective analysis and interpretation of that people's past, present and future.

Our graduate program is informed by the Afrocentric paradigms in relation to other perspectives in Africana studies. The program reflects a deeply ingrained commitment to the self-directed study of African peoples and has benefited from a variety of conceptual and political inputs from diverse, but fully committed, faculty participation as well as invaluable contributions from the community. It is the goal of the department that graduates of our PhD program be prepared to engage in a diverse range of intellectual issues that affect the lives of Africans on the continent and in the diaspora.

Time Limit for Degree Completion: 7 years

Campus Location: Main

Full-Time/Part-Time Status: The majority of courses are offered after 4:30 p.m. The degree program can be completed on a full- or part-time basis.

Interdisciplinary Study: Advisors may encourage or require students to take courses in other departments in order to enhance their research agenda. Students must obtain prior approval from their major advisor for any courses taken outside the Department of Africology and African American Studies that they want to use to fulfill departmental requirements. However, for personal and intellectual enrichment, a student may take as many external courses as desired.

Affiliation(s): Faculty are affiliated with a variety of professional organizations such as the African Heritage Studies Association (AHSA); African Literature Association; African Studies Association (ASA); American Anthropological Association (AAA); Association of Black Women Historians (ABWH); Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH); Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations (ASCAC); Black History Advisory Committee of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission; Caribbean Studies Association (CSA); College Language Association (CLA); Haitian Studies Association (HSA); Modern Language Association (MLA); National Council for Black Studies (NCBS); Pennsylvania Humanities Council; TESOL International Association; and Temple University's Young Scholars Program.

Study Abroad: The department offers study abroad in the Temple University Ghana program. A maximum of 6 credits may be applied toward the doctoral degree.

Accreditation: This program is accredited by the National Council for Black Studies.

Areas of Specialization: Applicants to the PhD program should have a clearly articulated research interest that fits within the department's faculty expertise. Africology and African American Studies is a discipline that draws from diverse academic fields. Most research areas fall into two general categories: the cultural aesthetic, which engages interests in the humanities, particularly history, literature and the performing arts; and the social behavioral, in which issues may be addressed under the broad domains of sociology, psychology, political science, philosophy, anthropology and the like. Faculty specialize, offer substantial coursework and mentor in a variety of areas, including:

- African and African American History
- African and African American Literature
- African American Drama
- African American Homeschooling
- African American Psychology
- African Civilizations
- African Languages
- African Spiritual Systems
- Afrocentric Education
- Afrocentric Theory
- Caribbean Culture and History
- Cultural Studies
- Ethnographic Methods
- Gender Studies

- Linguistics
- Mass Media
- Narrative Tradition
- Popular Culture
- Research Methods
- Social and Political Thought

Job Prospects: Graduates of the PhD program in Africology and African American Studies generally find employment based on their area of concentration in academia, college and university administration, or public and private high school administration; the entertainment industry; the fields of criminal justice, journalism, public relations or social work; local, state and federal government; or nonprofit organizations.

Non-Matriculated Student Policy: Non-matriculated students who desire to take courses at the PhD level in the Department of Africology and African American Studies must first submit an academic transcript to the department's Graduate Director for review. The prospective non-matriculated student then receives a letter stating whether or not they are approved to take courses in the department. A maximum of 9 credits may be applied toward a degree if the student later matriculates. Non-matriculated students may not take AAAS 9982 Individual Research in African American Studies.

Financing Opportunities: The department offers a limited number of assistantships on a highly competitive basis. The awards usually involve teaching or assisting one or more faculty with instructional duties. Teaching Assistants receive a stipend and full tuition remission of up to 9 credits. The applicant must have a grade point average of 3.5 or better and strong letters of recommendation.

Admission Requirements and Deadlines

Application Deadline:

Fall: January 15

Spring: November 1

Applications for admission are processed together shortly after the deadline date.

APPLY ONLINE to this graduate program.

Letters of Reference:

Number Required: 3

From Whom: Letters of recommendation are preferred from college/university professors who have taught or worked with the applicant in their major or minor area of concentration.

Coursework Required for Admission Consideration: An applicant is expected to have a sound academic background in Africology and African American Studies.

Master's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline: All applicants must present credentials that are the equivalent of the appropriate master's degree at Temple University.

Bachelor's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline: All applicants must present credentials that are the equivalent of the appropriate baccalaureate degree at Temple University.

Statement of Goals: In approximately 500 to 1,000 words, share your specific interest in Temple's Department of Africology and African American Studies; your research goals as they relate to Africology and African American Studies and to the social relevance of the discipline; your future career goals; and your academic and research achievements.

Standardized Test Scores:

GRE: Optional. Scores may be submitted if available.

Applicants who earned their baccalaureate degree from an institution where the language of instruction was other than English, with the exception of those who subsequently earned a master's degree at a U.S. institution, must report scores for a standardized test of English that meet these minimums:

- TOEFL iBT: 100
- IELTS Academic: 7.0
- PTE Academic: 68

Resume: Current resume required.

Interview: An interview may be required.

Writing Sample: The writing sample should demonstrate the student's ability to conduct research and to write a scholarly paper relevant to the discipline. The paper should be no more than 20 pages in length and fully referenced according to a professional, scholarly style manual.

Transfer Credit: During the first term of enrollment at Temple, incoming graduate students may apply to have graduate credits taken at other accredited institutions count toward completion of the degree. Grades of transfer courses must be "B" or better. After consultation with and approval of the advisor, the student must submit to the Graduate Committee:

1. a letter specifying the course(s) the student wishes to have considered for credit toward the PhD as well as the corresponding Temple course related to the transfer course; and
2. supporting documents (i.e., syllabi, course descriptions from college catalogs, a letter from the transfer course instructor or department) showing the overlap by which the course covers material from Temple courses.

The maximum number of credits a student may transfer is 18.

Program Requirements

General Program Requirements:

Number of Credits Required to Earn the Degree: 51

Required Courses:

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Core Courses		
AAAS 8002	African Civilizations	3
AAAS 8004	Theories and Methods in African American Studies	3
AAAS 8008	Ethnographic Methods	3
AAAS 8009	The Afrocentric Paradigm	3
AAAS 9642	Seminar in African American Social Philosophy	3
Electives		30
Research Courses		6
AAAS 9994	Preliminary Examination Preparation	
AAAS 9998	Pre-Dissertation Research	
AAAS 9999	Dissertation Research	
Total Credit Hours		51

Language Examination: The language requirement in Africology and African American Studies is intended to ensure that students have a working familiarity with a language and culture other than English and/or their native language. The PhD student may take the exam at any time, but must pass it before taking the preliminary examination. The student who has English as a second language may use English to fulfill the language requirement. With the recommendation of the advisor, a student may demonstrate competency in Statistics to fulfill the language requirement. The language examination must be administered and graded by a college/university affiliated or certified instructor in the exam language, but may not be from the Department of Africology and African American Studies. The results must be forwarded on letterhead attesting to the examiner's credentials. Temple University's various language departments offer non-credit language courses and administer examinations for graduate students needing to fulfill the language requirement.

Culminating Events:

Preliminary Examination:

The preliminary examination is intended to probe the student's knowledge of content, literature, theory/methodology and methods in Africology and African American Studies and to test the student's ability to apply theoretical issues to praxis. It is a proctored, closed-book, 12-hour written examination administered by the student's Examination Committee. Students are expected to take the preliminary examination upon completion of the coursework component of the program and upon satisfactory completion of the language requirement.

The student is strongly advised to choose an Examination Committee at the beginning of the term in which the last course is taken. The student should consult with their graduate advisor in selecting members of the Examination Committee and in setting the date for the exam. The student should then write to prospective members requesting that they serve on the committee. In the letter, the student should mention the course(s) taken with the professor, and include a copy of their statement of research interests and career goals. The faculty member should notify the student's advisor in writing of their agreement to serve on the committee.

The subject areas are chosen by the Examination Committee. Particular reading lists or specific materials may be suggested for review before the exam. The student's major advisor composes six hours of the examination, and the other members compose the balance. Examiners submit exam items directly to the Graduate Director. In order to take the exam, the student must register for AAAS 9994 Preliminary Examination Preparation.

The preliminary examination is offered twice a year: during the first week of April and the first week of November. The hours of the exam are from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The student should notify the Graduate Secretary of their intention to take the examination at least one month in advance after consultation with their advisor. The Graduate Secretary checks to ensure the student's records are free of encumbrances that would prevent them from meeting University requirements for taking the exam. If the student meets all requisites, the Graduate Secretary advises the student's Examination Committee that the exam will take place on the planned date.

Each member of the Examination Committee evaluates the student's exam question(s). The Graduate Director notifies the student of the preliminary exam results no later than five weeks after completion of the exam. Based on the quality of the examination results, the Examination Committee may make one of the following determinations:

1. Pass: The student passes the exam and may now write their dissertation proposal.
2. Fail: The student fails the written and/or oral examination, but may retake part or all of the examination once.
3. Fail/Termination: The student fails the written examination for the second time, may not retake the exam, and is dismissed from the program.

Dissertation Proposal:

The formal research proposal, usually at least 30 pages long, presents a plan for increasing the knowledge base in the discipline. The student works in concert with the Chair of the Doctoral Advisory Committee (DAC) to fine-tune the proposal. With the Chair's approval, the student submits the proposal to the other committee members who make suggestions for changes. When the entire committee is satisfied with the proposal, the student makes an oral presentation and defends the proposal, where other suggestions to strengthen the proposal can be made. After a successful oral defense, the proposal is submitted to the Graduate School, along with the "Dissertation Proposal Transmittal for Elevation to Candidacy" form, found in TUportal under the Tools tab within "University Forms."

Dissertation:

The dissertation is an original and definitive empirical study that makes a significant contribution to the field of Africology and African American Studies. It should add to the knowledge of one or more areas either by uncovering new information, providing an innovative synthesis of existing information, propounding a new theory, fine-tuning an existing theory, or offering a new interpretation substantiated by data. The length of the dissertation varies but should be in excess of 150 pages.

The DAC guides the candidate's doctoral research. This committee offers regular advice and expertise as the student collects data, researches, and writes the proposal and dissertation. The DAC must include at least three Graduate Faculty members from Temple University; two of them, including the Chair, must be from the Department of Africology and African American Studies. The DAC may be expanded to include other Temple University faculty (from within or outside the department) and/or doctorally prepared experts from outside the University, provided that a majority of the committee members are Graduate Faculty members.

The function of the Dissertation Examining Committee (DEC) is to evaluate the dissertation and the student's performance in the oral defense to decide whether the candidate passes or fails. All members of the DEC must be physically present for the oral defense. Exceptions must be specifically approved in writing by the Graduate School. The DEC is composed of the DAC plus at least one additional reader who may be a Graduate Faculty member from Temple or another university, but cannot be a member of the Department of Africology and African American Studies.

A student must have an advisor at all times. However, it is possible that as the student's interests develop, they may find it desirable to change major advisors and/or advisory committees. The advisee/advisor relationship can be terminated by mutual consent with a note to the Graduate Director signed by both parties or by either party through negotiation with the Graduate Director, who must not at the time be serving as a member of the DAC. When the Graduate Director is also a member of the committee, then another member of the Graduate Faculty, appointed by the Department Chair, should serve as the negotiator between the student and the committee member. The student must complete a "Change of Advisor" form, which may be obtained from the Graduate Secretary. Once a defense date is set, no changes can be made in major advisor or committee membership.

When the Chair of the committee is satisfied with the dissertation draft, the Chair advises the student to distribute it to the other members of the committee. When the entire committee is satisfied with the draft, the student and Chair decide on an examination date. At the conclusion of the dissertation defense, the DEC may recommend either that the candidate passes or fails. After the student passes the dissertation defense, certification forms are signed by the committee members and forwarded to the Graduate School. Failure may call for substantial revisions and a new defense.

Students who are preparing to defend their dissertation should confirm a time and date with their DEC and register with the Graduate Secretary. The Graduate Secretary arranges for the room; prepares the appropriate forms; sends copies of the announcement to the Graduate School and departmental Graduate Faculty; and posts the announcement on public bulletin boards. Every dissertation defense must be publicly announced in writing at least 10 working days prior to the defense and must be open to the academic community.

Contacts

Program Web Address:

<https://www.temple.edu/academics/degree-programs/africology-and-african-american-studies-phd-la-aaas-phd>

Department Information:

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afam@temple.edu
215-204-8491

Submission Address for Application Materials:

<https://apply.temple.edu/CLA/>

Department Contacts:

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