Colby

# AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES

**Director**, *Professor Cheryl Townsend Gilkes*
**Program Faculty and Advisory Committee**: *Professors Catherine Besteman (Anthropology), Cedric Gael Bryant (English), Cheryl Townsend Gilkes (African-American Studies and Sociology), Jill Gordon (Philosophy), Paul Machlin (Music), Phyllis Mannocchi (English), James Webb (History), and Robert Weisbrot (History); Associate Professor Margaret McFadden (American Studies); Assistant Professor Chandra Bhimull (African-American Studies and Anthropology)*

The African-American Studies Program is an interdisciplinary program of courses organized to provide an overview and introduction to the experiences of peoples of African descent in the United States and to connect those experiences to the literatures, histories, and cultures of Africa and of Latin America and the Caribbean. Courses in the program expose students to classical and contemporary literature, to issues of public policy, to critical debates in history and social science, and to main currents of historical analysis and contemporary cultural expression. Students may elect a major or a minor in African-American studies built upon courses in American studies, anthropology, art, history, literature, economics, government, music, philosophy, religious studies, and sociology. The program exposes students to the history, literature, and cultures of African Americans and people of African descent throughout the Americas and requires exploration of African history and cultures. While the African-American Studies Program's use of the phrase African-American includes persons and peoples of African descent throughout the Americas, the program's primary focus is on the literature, history, and culture of African Americans in the United States.

## Requirements for the Major in African-American Studies

Twelve courses selected from courses specifically focused on African Americans and on peoples and cultures of Africa and the Caribbean. Seven required courses: American Studies 276, English 343 or its equivalent (e.g., English 426), History 247; at least one course focused specifically on Africa (e.g., Anthropology 237); at least one course focused specifically on the Caribbean or African-derived cultures in Latin America or the African diaspora (e.g., Anthropology 231); at least one course focused on music or other aspects of expressive culture (e.g., Music 239); and American Studies 493. Four electives from among the relevant courses in the social sciences, humanities, and relevant interdisciplinary studies programs (e.g., American Studies, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, English/Creative Writing, Latin American Studies); at least one of the courses should be taken at the 300 or 400 level. Courses not specifically listed may be counted toward the major with permission of the director if substantial relevance can be established during a particular semester or in an off-campus program. At least one seminar at the 400 level with a member of the African-American Studies Program faculty where a substantial final paper or equivalent project explores in depth and engages significant debates about an aspect or aspects of African-American life and culture in the United States or the African diaspora. Such courses could include, when the subject material is appropriate and with the permission of the program director, American Studies 493, English 413, 426, and 493, Music 493, and Sociology 493. Course substitutions and exchanges may be made in consultation with the advisor.

## Requirements for the Minor in African-American Studies

Seven courses including African-American Studies 276; English 343; History 247; one course selected from Music 238, 239 or American Studies 275, 493; at least one course focused on Africa or the Caribbean; and two courses selected from American Studies 493, Anthropology 231, English 346, 413 (when appropriate), Philosophy 213, Religious Studies 256, or Sociology 252, 355, 357, 358, 359. Course substitutions and exchanges may be made in consultation with the advisor.

Interested students also may consider an independent major in Africana studies (a selection of courses combining study of the Caribbean, the Americas, and Africa) or an independent major that combines African-American studies with another relevant discipline or program, especially American studies, anthropology, Latin American studies, or music. Majors and minors are instructed to inform faculty in various programs and departments that they are African-American studies majors or minors when seeking the permission of an instructor to register for courses restricted to majors in other disciplines or when asking that prerequisites be waived.

## Courses that apply to the African-American studies major

- *American Studies*
  - 276 African-American Culture in the United States
  - 493 Seminar in American Studies
- *Anthropology*
  - 211 Indigenous Peoples and Cultures of North America
  - 217 Race, Class, and Ethnicity
  - 231 Caribbean Cultures

- 237 Ethnographies of Africa
- 238 Religions of Africa and the African Diaspora
- 297A Music and Culture in the Americas
- 341 Culture, Mobility, Identity: Encounters in the African Diaspora
- 343 African-American Literature

- *English*
  - 343 African-American Literature
  - 346 Culture and Literature of the American South
  - 413 Authors Courses (when appropriate)
  - 426 African-American Women Writers
  - 457 American Gothic Literature
  - 493 Seminar: Toni Morrison
- *French*
  - 236 Introduction to the Francophone World: The Americas
- *History*
  - 247 African-American History, from Slavery to Freedom
  - 261 African History
  - 342 Crisis and Reform: American Society and Politics in the 1960s
- Music
  - 114 Jazz Improvisation
  - 118 African Music
  - 136 Tradition, Experiment, Action: America's Postwar Music, 1945-1970
  - 238 Burnt Biscuits and Green Onions: From Rhythm and Blues to Soul
  - 239 Mythologizing African-American Music in Film
- Philosophy
  - 213 Philosophical Inquiries into Race
  - 360 African Philosophies, 1945 to Present
- Religious Studies
  - 256 The African-American Religious Experience
- Sociology
  - 214 African-American Elites and Middle Classes
  - 252 Race, Ethnicity, and Society
  - 355 African-American Women and Social Change
  - 357 Civil Rights, Black Power, and Social Change
  - 358 The Sociology of W.E.B. Du Bois
  - 359 Slavery and Slave Communities in the United States

*Note: Additional courses, often taught by visiting faculty, may be available from time to time as temporary offerings and may be counted toward the major with permission of the program director.*

## Course Offerings

**[AA214] African-American Elites and Middle Classes** Listed as Sociology 214. *Three credit hours.* **S, U**

**AA231s Caribbean Cultures** Listed as Anthropology 231. *Four credit hours.* **I** HOPE

**AA236s Religions of Africa and the African Diaspora** Listed as Anthropology 238. *Four credit hours.* **I** HRISKOS

**[AA238] Burnt Biscuits and Green Onions: From Rhythm and Blues to Soul** Listed as Music 238. *Four credit hours.* **A**

**AA239s Mythologizing African-American Music in Film** Listed as Music 239. *Four credit hours.* **U** MACHLIN

**AA247f African-American History, from Slavery to Freedom** Listed as History 247. *Four credit hours.* **H, U** BATTISTI

**AA252f Race, Ethnicity, and Society** Listed as Sociology 252. *Four credit hours.* **U** GILKES

**[AA258] Anthropology, History, Memory** Listed as Anthropology 258. *Four credit hours.*

**AA276s African-American Culture in the United States** Listed as American Studies 276. *Four credit hours.* **S, U** GILKES

**AA341f Culture, Mobility, Identity: Encounters in the African Diaspora** Listed as Anthropology 341. *Four credit hours.* **S, I** BHIMULL

**[AA355] African-American Women and Social Change** Listed as Sociology 355. *Four credit hours.* **U**

**[AA357] Civil Rights, Black Power, and Social Change** Listed as Sociology 357. *Four credit hours.*

**AA358f The Sociology of W.E.B. Du Bois** Listed as Sociology 358. *Four credit hours.* **S, U** GILKES

**[AA359] Slavery and Slave Communities in the United States** A multidisciplinary exploration of the experience of enslaved African Americans and the impact on culture and social institutions in the United States. Using the insights of sociology and anthropology, attention is paid to slave communities and the strategies developed for physical and psychic survival as well as for resistance. Slavery is examined as a social institution and cultural force and as a site for the construction and reproduction of "race" and durable inequalities in the United States. Attention to the varieties of cultural inheritance generated, especially music, folklore, and religious expression, and their persistent impacts on American popular culture and African-American consciousness. *Prerequisite:* American Studies 276 or Anthropology 112 or History 247 or Sociology 131. *Four credit hours.* **S, U**

**AA491f, 492s Independent Study** Individual study of special problems in African-American studies in areas where the student has demonstrated the interest and competence necessary for independent work. *Prerequisite:* Permission of the instructor and of the program director. *One to four credit hours.* FACULTY