

African & African American Studies

The Department of African & African American Studies (AFAS) offers students opportunities to explore the social, political, and intellectual history as well as the literature, culture, and artistic life of Black people and communities worldwide.

Recognizing that today's most pressing challenges demand interdisciplinary thinking, the Department of African & African American Studies offers students the opportunity to explore a wide range of experiences, issues, debates, and theories that are not only central to Black communities but vital to understanding humanity and the human condition as a whole. Courses draw from the humanities, social sciences, and performing arts, ensuring that students gain a rich, multidimensional understanding of Africa and its diasporas. AFAS emphasizes both the diversity of the African continent and the distinctive impact of people of African descent on the Americans, Caribbean, Europe and global histories and cultures. Majors graduate with critical tools for analyzing and addressing complex problems — skills that are essential not only within Black Studies but in the broader world. In addition to intellectually engaging classroom experiences, AFAS fosters a vibrant intellectual and social community through sponsored programs, events, and travel opportunities that help students cultivate shared purpose, belonging, and leadership.

Specialized Tracks: Students majoring in African & African American Studies are encouraged to design a course of study that focuses on a particular area of interest or a more comprehensive examination of Black culture and life. Students can also choose one of our specialized tracks, which include:

- Health & Medicine
- Law & Policy
- Humanities
- Environment, Geographies, and Design

Senior Capstone: The major culminates in a Senior Seminar, where students pursue a Capstone Project on a topic of their choosing and with guidance from faculty. Projects often grow out of previous coursework, independent research with a faculty or an internship experience with a community partner and are presented individually and as part of a collective Senior Showcase. Students are encouraged to use the capstone to deepen an existing area of interest while making an original contribution to the field. In addition to serving as a culmination of their academic journey, the capstone is designed to produce a polished project that can strengthen graduate school applications or serve as a portfolio piece for future careers.

Opportunities Beyond the Classroom: A cornerstone of AFAS is an experiential, hands-on learning approach, allowing students to apply critical analyses to real-world issues. Beyond the Classroom opportunities include conducting research with esteemed faculty

members, interning with a community partner, studying aboard, or receiving funding to design their own projects. These experiences develop students' professionalism and help prepare them for future careers and graduate studies.

Website: <https://afas.wustl.edu/>