

AFRICAN STUDIES

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The program in African Studies enables students to undertake interdisciplinary study of the arts, history, cultures, politics, and development of Africa. As a foundation, students in the program gain cross-disciplinary exposure to Africa. In the junior and senior years, students develop analytical ability and focus their studies on research in a particular discipline such as anthropology, art history, history, languages and literature, political science, or sociology or on topics such as global health, economic development, or human rights.

African Studies provides training of special interest to those considering admission to graduate or professional schools or careers in education, journalism, law, management, medicine, politics, psychology, international relations, creative writing, or social work. The interdisciplinary structure of the program offers students an opportunity to satisfy the increasingly rigorous expectations of admissions committees and prospective employers for a broad liberal arts perspective that complements specialized knowledge of a field.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

The African Studies program consists of twelve term courses, including (1) one African Studies course in the humanities and one in the social sciences; (2) two years of an African language (Arabic, Kiswahili, Twi, Wolof, Yorùbá, isiZulu, or others with permission of the director of undergraduate studies (DUS), unless waived by examination); (3) one research methods course, AFST 505 or an alternative course that either serves to deepen the concentration or provide methodological tools for the senior essay, selected in consultation with the DUS; (4) in a concentration of four term courses, in a discipline such as anthropology, art history, history, languages and literature, political science, or sociology, or in an interdisciplinary program such as African American Studies; Ethnicity, Race, and Migration; or Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; or in a cross-disciplinary area such as diaspora studies or development studies; and (5) AFST 491, the senior essay. The required courses represent the core of the program and are intended to expose the student both to the interdisciplinary nature of African studies and to the methodologies currently being brought to bear on the study of African cultures and societies.

Language requirement African Studies majors are required to complete two years of college-level study (or the equivalent) of an African language, and they are encouraged to continue beyond this level. For the language requirement to be waived, a student must pass a placement test for admission into an advanced-level course or, for languages not regularly offered at Yale, an equivalent test of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills administered through the Center for Language Study. Students should begin their language study as early as possible. If the requirement is

waived, students must substitute other African Studies courses for the four required language courses.

With permission of the DUS, students may count courses in an additional language, such as French or Portuguese, toward the major requirements. Students are encouraged to include upper-level courses, especially those centering on research and methodology.

Program in African languages The language program offers instruction in five major languages from sub-Saharan Africa: Kiswahili (eastern and central Africa), Twi (western Africa), Wolof (western Africa), Yorùbá (western Africa), and isiZulu (southern Africa). African language courses emphasize communicative competence, using multimedia materials that focus on the contemporary African context. Course sequences are designed to enable students to achieve advanced competence in all skill areas by the end of the third year, and students are encouraged to spend a summer or term in Africa during their language study.

Courses in Arabic are offered through the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Noncredit instruction in other African languages is available by application through the Directed Independent Language Study program at the Center for Language Study. Contact the director of the Program in African Languages (john.wanjogu@yale.edu) for information.

SENIOR REQUIREMENT

Students are required to complete a senior essay in AFST 491, working under the guidance of a faculty adviser. With prior approval by the DUS, a combined senior essay may be submitted for those pursuing a second major.

A preliminary statement indicating the topic to be addressed and the name of the faculty adviser must be submitted to the DUS by the end of the second week of the fall term in the senior year.

ADVISING

Students planning to major in African Studies should consult the DUS as early as possible.

Graduate work, M.A. program Students in Yale College are eligible to complete the M.A. in African Studies in one year of graduate work if they begin the program in the third and fourth undergraduate years. Students interested in this option must complete eight graduate courses in the area by the time of the completion of the bachelor's degree. Only two courses may be counted toward both graduate and undergraduate degrees. Successful completion of graduate courses while still an undergraduate does not guarantee admission into the M.A. program.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites None

Number of courses 12 term courses (incl senior req)

Distribution of courses 1 AFST course in humanities and 1 in social sciences; 2 years of African lang; 4 courses and 1 research methods course in area of concentration

Substitution permitted If language req is waived, 4 addtl African Studies courses

Senior requirement Senior essay (AFST 491)

The program in African Studies considers the arts, history, cultures, languages and literatures, politics, and development of Africa. Students in the program gain a cross-disciplinary exposure to Africa while focusing their studies in a particular discipline such as anthropology, art history, economics, history, languages and literatures, political science, or sociology, or in an interdisciplinary program such as African American Studies; Ethnicity, Race, and Migration; or Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Other areas of concentration (e.g., diaspora studies, development studies) may be chosen in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies (DUS). Yale has unusually rich resources for the study of Africa; the Yale Library, notably, has one of the world's largest collections of African materials.

Courses required for the major include one African Studies course in the humanities and one in the social sciences. Students must also complete the equivalent of two years of college-level study of an African language (Arabic, Kiswahili, Yorùbá, isiZulu, Twi, and Wolof, or others with permission of the DUS), as well as four courses in the field of concentration. In addition, students must complete a research methods course and write a senior essay.

Students should begin their language study as soon as possible. Those considering a major in African Studies should consult the DUS.

CERTIFICATES OF ADVANCED LANGUAGE STUDY

The Department of African Studies offers a Certificate of Advanced Language Study in three major African languages—Kiswahili, Yoruba, and isiZulu, and students may pursue a Certificate of Advanced Language Study in each of these languages. A certificate adviser, typically the director of undergraduate studies (DUS), advises students on the certification process and certifies to the University Registrar's Office that students have completed the stated requirements before the end of eight terms of study. The Certificate of Advanced Language Study, once certified, is listed on the student's transcript.

REQUIREMENTS

Students seeking to earn the certificate are required to take four courses beyond the L4 level in their chosen language, at least two of which must be Yale courses designated as L5. All courses must be taken for a letter grade, and students must achieve a grade of B or above. With the approval of the adviser, one advanced non-L5 Yale course, conducted in the target language, such as an independent study course, a graduate seminar, or an advanced seminar may count toward certification requirements.

The certificate adviser may allow one “language across the curriculum” (LxC) course taught in English to count toward the certification requirements provided the course includes at minimum a weekly discussion section conducted entirely in the target language. The discussion section must enroll a minimum of three students and the course must be designated as LxC in the course description.

The certificate adviser may also approve the substitution of up to two credits earned during study abroad and taught in the target language to count toward the certificate requirements. If the adviser approves courses taken outside of Yale for inclusion in the

certificate requirements, students must take the necessary steps to ensure that those courses appear on their transcripts.

Students are encouraged to complete and submit the Declaration of Candidacy for a Certificate Form found on the University Registrar's website. Once completed, the form sends notification emails to the certificate adviser(s) and to the Yale University Registrar's Office so that the student's Degree Audit can be updated to include the Certificate of Advanced Language Study.

FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM OF AFRICAN STUDIES

Professors Lea Brilmayer (*Law School*), John Darnell (*Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations*), Owen Fiss (*Law School*), Robert Harms (*History*), Daniel Magaziner (*History*), Roderick McIntosh (*Anthropology*), Christopher Miller (*African American Studies, French*), Catherine Panter-Brick (*Anthropology*), Jeremy Seekings (*Global Affairs*) (*Visiting*), Ian Shapiro (*Political Science*), Robert Thompson (*Emeritus*), Michael Veal (*Music*), David Watts (*Anthropology*), Elisabeth Wood (*Political Science*)

Associate Professors Robert Bailis (*School of the Environment*), Jonathan Wyrzten (*Sociology*)

Assistant Professors Katharine Baldwin (*Political Science*), Louisa Lombard (*Anthropology*)

Lecturers Lacina Coulibaly (*Theater Studies*), Anne-Marie Foltz (*Public Health*), David Simon (*Political Science*)

Senior Lectors II Sandra Sanneh, Kiarie Wa'Njogu

Senior Lectors Oluseye Adesola, Matuku Ngame

See visual roadmap of the requirements.

[View African Studies Courses](#) [View Kiswahili Courses](#) [View Twi Courses](#) [View Yorùbá Courses](#) [View Wolof Courses](#) [View Zulu Courses](#)