

# AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

## College of Behavioral and Social Sciences

1119 Taliaferro Hall

301-405-1158

[www.bsos.umd.edu/aasd/](http://www.bsos.umd.edu/aasd/) (<http://www.bsos.umd.edu/aasd/>)

The Department of African American Studies (AASD) offers a Bachelor of Arts degree with two highly-regarded options: a general African American studies major with a focus on two areas: 1) Cultural and Historical Analysis and 2) Civic Engagement and Social Justice; or the Concentration in Public Policy with an emphasis on problem-solving, analytical decision-making, and practical applications of policy analysis and management skills. In addition, students who elect majors in other departments can earn a certificate in African American studies. In September 2004, we introduced the minor in Black Women's Studies which is a collaborative program with the university's Harriet Tubman Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; and in the fall of 2019, AASD added a minor in African Studies.

## Programs Major

- African American Studies Major (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/behavioral-social-sciences/african-american-studies/african-american-studies-major/>)

## Minor

- African Studies Minor (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/behavioral-social-sciences/african-american-studies/african-studies-minor/>)
- Black Women's Studies Minor (BSOS) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/behavioral-social-sciences/african-american-studies/black-womens-studies-minor/>)

## Certificates

- African American Studies Certificate (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/behavioral-social-sciences/african-american-studies/african-american-studies-certificate/>)

## Advising

The African American Studies Department has mandatory advising for all AASD majors.

Undergraduates in good academic standing may enroll in the African American Studies Department or obtain more information about available options and services by contacting Marshal Washington, the Undergraduate Academic Advisor, via email at [lashram9@umd.edu](mailto:lashram9@umd.edu), via phone at 301-405-1161, or in person at the African American Studies Department, 1119 Taliaferro Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742.

## Opportunities Undergraduate Research Experiences

African American Studies majors and certificate students have three opportunities to engage in undergraduate research and/or experiential learning opportunities:

- AASP399: Research in African American Studies (required for majors). Students must be an AASD major. Students will work with an AASD faculty member in their research lab. All majors must complete 2 credits of Research Lab.
- AASP386: Experiential Learning. The student must be in good standing and have at least 56 cumulative credit hours to apply. (details below)
- **Undergraduate Teaching Assistant (UTA)**. The student must have received a grade of A- or higher in the course and have at least 56 cumulative credit hours to apply. May also be taken through the TLTC.

Additionally, AASD majors with an overall GPA of 3.0 or above may enroll, with department permission, in the AASP397, Senior Thesis, working with one or more core AASD faculty members.

For more information and details, please call the AASD Academic Advisor at 301-405-1161.

## Fieldwork Opportunities

Experiential Learning, AASP386, in African American Studies is an academic seminar for majors and certificate students who are working at internship or service sites and organizations whose mission and goals related to the African American experience. Through course work and class discussions, students are challenged to integrate their experiential experiences with the interdisciplinary study of past and present African American communities. To successfully earn credit for experiential learning students must fulfill the requirements at the internship or service site, participate in a weekly seminar, and complete the assigned projects aimed at bringing together academic research, reflective work, and professional development.

The internship or service portion of the course requires students to work closely with their site supervisors. Students are required to fulfill the job responsibilities and work the number of hours per week that is outlined in their learning proposals. Site supervisors define specific job responsibilities and assignments, monitor their training, and evaluate their performance at the end of the semester by completing an evaluation form and submitting a letter of recommendation to be included in their portfolios.

Students are also required to participate in a weekly seminar and complete assignments that examine the relationship between classroom, work, and service experiences. The seminar will give students the opportunity to discuss their internships and how their experiences are enhanced by their understanding of African American studies. During the seminar, students will share information about assignments and give each other feedback. Students will evaluate their internship sites and the roles the sites play in black communities and in promoting social change.

## Internships

AASP386 was developed to enable majors and certificate students to formally link their academic studies to experiences as undergraduate

teaching assistants, undergraduate research assistants, and through external internships while doing so in a structured learning context.

Undergraduate teaching assistants and undergraduate research assistants work directly with an AASD faculty member who provides supervision and mentoring to the student in all aspects of their undergraduate assistantship.

Students participating in external internships work closely with their site supervisors. Students are required to fulfill the job responsibilities and work the number of hours per week that are outlined in their learning proposals. Site supervisors define specific job responsibilities and assignments, monitor their training and evaluate their performance at the end of the semester by completing an evaluation form and submitting a letter of recommendation to be included in their portfolios.

All students must participate in a weekly seminar and complete assigned projects aimed at bringing together academic research, reflective work, and professional development.

## Honors Program

AASD offers honors sections for many of our General Education and upper-level elective courses.

AASP397 is a capstone course that offers AASD majors who have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher the opportunity to work with a tenured or tenure-track AASD faculty member in an independent study to complete a senior thesis project.

Senior thesis students have the opportunity to research, write, and orally defend their thesis project before a panel of AASD faculty.

Please make an appointment to see the AASD Academic Advisor about the honors sequence by calling 301-405-1158.

## Student Societies and Professional Organizations

AASD majors have the opportunity of being well prepared for leadership positions in campus organizations. AASD majors have historically held notable positions at the University of Maryland in such organizations as the NAACP, Alpha Nu Omega Sorority, Incorporated, and the Black Student Union.

The Society of African American Studies is the student-run organization associated with and supported by the department. The Society provides community service in local schools, hosts on-campus programs and events, and annually has supported a local family through its "Adopt-a-Family" program.

The Society annually sponsors a "Saturday Freedom School" program which brings middle school children from a local Prince George's County Public School to campus for seven consecutive Saturdays. The program provides mentoring and academic support that seeks to foster the development of positive Black identities in the student participants while strengthening their academic performance.

Students are recruited from across the UMD campus to serve as mentors to Saturday Freedom School participants.

Please call 301-405-1158 to inquire about the Society of African American Studies.

## Scholarships and Financial Assistance

The Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) administers all types of federal, state, and institutional financial assistance programs and, in cooperation with other university offices, participates in the awarding of scholarships to deserving students. For information, please visit [www.financialaid.umd.edu](http://www.financialaid.umd.edu) (<http://www.financialaid.umd.edu>).

## Awards and Recognition

Graduating seniors with an overall GPA of 3.2 who have earned a 3.5 GPA within the major are recognized with departmental honors.

Graduating seniors with an overall GPA of 3.5 who have earned a 3.7 GPA within the major are recognized with departmental high honors.