

African American Studies-1

African-American Studies

Faculty: Fisher (*Chair*); Dickinson, Sow, Williams

African-American Studies (AAS) at The College of New Jersey involves the study of persons of African descent in Africa, the USA, and the rest of the Diaspora. Through the arts, humanities and social sciences, courses in AAS explore the complex questions of racial and ethnic difference in ways that place the story of persons of African descent at the center of human events and scholarly discourse. AAS courses also reach beyond the shores of the US to give TCNJ students a global perspective on those questions that frame national debate and their personal lives.

AAS student-scholars learn theoretical and applied skills that are central to a liberal arts education. The department's interdisciplinary and diasporic focus provides a comprehensive understanding of global Africana culture and history as well as US political, social, and cultural development.

AAS students and faculty are committed to community outreach. To that end, the department and its curriculum have a long tradition of service to, and leadership in, "community-engaged learning" activities.

Students who complete concentrations or minors in African-American Studies gain skills that they can employ in any vocation, as well as any cultural, social, political, or intellectual endeavor. The department's emphasis on critical thinking, technological proficiency, writing skills and ability to do research, bridges the broader content of TCNJ's curriculum and prepares students for the challenges of their chosen career as well as post-baccalaureate studies.

A minor consisting of five course units is offered.

Awards are presented annually to outstanding students in the department.

African-American Studies Minor

Required Courses:

AAS 201/African and Diaspora Religious Traditions	1 course unit
AAS 205/African-American History to 1865	1 course unit
AAS 206/African-American History Since 1865	1 course unit
Options (by advisement)	2 course units
Total	5 course units

COURSES

AAS 201/African and Diaspora Religious Traditions **1 course unit**
(occasionally)
(same as HON 220)

This course chronicles the religious traditions of African, Caribbean, Latin American, and African-American people by exploring the links among indigenous African religious beliefs, values, rituals, and worldview, and the practices extant throughout the African Diaspora. The ways in which African religions have informed global preservations of an African worldview and the worldview's subsequent fusion with African, European, and American Islam and Christianity will be emphasized.

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AAS 202/Global Perspectives: African Diaspora Arts and Culture **1 course unit** (occasionally)

This course chronicles the artistic expressions of African, Caribbean, Latin American, and African-American people by exploring the links among indigenous African religious values, rituals and worldview, and the visual arts, musical, literary, and dramatic practices created throughout the African Diaspora. The ways in which African religions have informed global artistic preservations of an African worldview and the worldview's fusion with European and American cultures will be emphasized.

AAS 205/African-American History to 1865 **1 course unit** (annually) (same as HIS 379)

An examination of the history of African Americans from their ancestral home in Africa to the end of the United States Civil War. The course encompasses introducing the cultures and civilizations of the African people prior to the opening up of the New World and exploring Black contributions to America up to 1865.

AAS 206/African-American History Since 1865 **1 course unit** (annually) same as HIS 380

An examination of the history of African Americans from the end of legal slavery in the United States to the civil rights revolution of the 1950s and 1960s. The course is designed to explore the history of African Americans since the Reconstruction and their contributions to the civil rights revolution of the present era.

AAS 221/Early African-American Literature **1 course unit** (annually) (same as LIT 281)

A survey of selected African-American literature from the colonial period to the Harlem Renaissance, this course will build students' knowledge and confidence as readers and critics of African-American culture and society in the United States. The course will also explore the canon of African-American literature, its literary tradition, and the intersections with and diversions from the canon of American Letters.

AAS 222/Contemporary African-American Literature **1 course unit** (annually) (same as LIT 282)

A study of literature in the African-American tradition, focusing on the realist, naturalist, and modernist writings of the 1940s, the prose, poetry, essays, and speeches of the Black Arts Movement and contemporary African-American literature. The course will also explore the canon of African-American literature, its literary tradition, and the intersections with and diversions from the canon of American Letters.

AAS 235/African-American Film **1 course unit** (occasionally)

This course will explore African-American film and television through a comprehensive analysis of the meaning behind race and representations. We will discuss the social, political, and historical milieu in which Black film emerged and how the genre evolved. We will learn about the connections between filmic representations and theater.

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AAS 240/History of Jazz

1 course unit

(annually)

(same as MUS 245)

A course designed to cultivate an understanding of and feeling for jazz. Emphasis is on the nature and processes of jazz and its historical development in the United States. Analysis of the more influential soloists, groups, and composers through the use of recordings, cassettes, CDs, and videos. The course stresses listening skills.

AAS 243/History of African-American Theater

1 course unit

(occasionally)

An analysis of the historical development of African-American theater beginning in the 1820s and tracing its progress to the present; particular emphasis on contemporary innovations and the establishment of the relationship between Black/American theater and African culture. Student may have to attend, and pay for, field trips.

AAS 251/Harlem Renaissance

1 course unit

(occasionally)

A survey of the philosophical, political, literary, and artistic activities and celebrated figures from the Harlem Renaissance era, 1920 to 1935.

AAS 280/Africana Women in Historical Perspective

1 course unit

(annually)

(same as WGS 260)

A global and cross-cultural survey of the lives and contributions of women of African ancestry. Emphasis will be placed upon the shared elements of African culture that, when impacted by colonialism and/or the Atlantic slave trade, resulted in similar types of resistance to oppression and analogous cultural expression among the women of four locales: Africa, South America, the Caribbean, and Europe. Theoretical methodologies, historical narrative, literature, demographic data, material culture, representations of self, and representations by others will be explored to illuminate/explain these women's history, cultural artifacts, cultural retentions and, self concept.

AAS 282/History of Race Relations in the United States

1 course unit

(occasionally)

(same as HIS 390)

A socio-historical examination of race as a category in the United States. The course approaches the United States as a multiracial society and discusses how the various racial groups negotiate their differences politically, economically, intellectually, socially, and culturally.

AAS 310/Great Lives African-American History I

1 course unit

(occasionally)

A biographical study of notable African American contributions to, and participation in, the struggles for justice and freedom from colonial times to the present.

AAS 321/Race, Gender, and the News

1 course unit

(occasionally)

(same as JPW 321)

Through interactive discussion, case study analysis, ongoing research, and "old-fashioned reporting," this class explores the role and influence of the news media as it covers stories related to race, gender, and religion.

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AAS 335/Caribbean Women Writers

1 course unit

(occasionally)

(same as LIT 335)

Anglophone and English translations of Hispanophone and Lusophone writings by Caribbean women writers of African descent will be examined. Post Colonial and Africana feminist literary criticism will be used to explore the intersectionalities of race, gender, class, and sexuality on this literature as well as its connection to the writings African and other Diaspora women.

AAS 348/African-American Music

1 course unit

(occasionally)

A survey of African-American music as a social document. The types of music discussed in the course include Negro spirituals, the work song, blues and jazz, various forms of religious music, and popular music. Field trips may be required at student expense.

AAS 351/Ancient and Medieval Africa

1 course unit

(fall and spring)

(same as HIS 351)

This introductory course surveys ancient and medieval African history through the eyes of male and female royalty, archaeologists, peasants, religious leaders and storytellers. While the course reconstructs the great civilizations of ancient Africa including Egypt, Zimbabwe, Mali, and others, it is not primarily focused on kings and leaders. Rather, the course explores how ordinary Africans ate, relaxed, worshiped, and organized their personal and political lives.

AAS 352/Colonial and Modern Africa

1 course unit

(fall and spring)

(same as HIS 352)

This course explores African history from 1800 up to the present. Using case studies, it will examine how wide-ranging social, political, and economic processes, the slave trade, colonial rule, African nationalism, independence, and new understandings of women's rights changed local people's lives.

AAS 353 Advanced Criminology: Race and Crime

1 course unit

(annually)

(same as LWJ 352)

Prerequisite: LWJ 205 or permission of instructor

A critical examination of the correlation between race and crime in America. The course will focus on four major areas: race and the law, race and criminological theory, race and violent crime, and myths and facts about race and crime. Through critical examination of readings and official statistics, students will come to understand the complexity of the relationship between race and crime within the American criminal justice system and broader social context.

AAS 365/African Cinema: Francophone African Experience Through Film

1 course unit

(annually)

(same as INT 365)

An in-depth exploration of Francophone African cinema by Africans in front of and behind the camera. Cinema, as an ideological tool, has played a major role in Africa during colonial times and after the independence of African nations. It extends the spectrum of choices for students as well as laying the foundations of African history and culture from a filmic perspective. Does not count toward a French minor, but can be taken for Language Across the Curriculum (LAC.)

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AAS 370/Special Topics in Africana Studies

1 course unit

(occasionally)

Focuses on different topics of significance to Africa and the African diasporas. May be repeated as topic/instructor varies.

AAS 371 Topics in African-American Literature

1 course unit

(same as LIT 371)

(occasionally)

This course promotes intensive study in the field of African-American literature through focused inquiry into particular themes, genres, time periods, or movements in the field. As a topics course, its content will vary from semester to semester and from instructor to instructor.

AAS 375/Womanist Thought

1 course unit

(annually)

(same as WGS 365)

Prerequisites: AAS 280, WGS 280, or WGS 375, or by permission of the instructor

This course traces the evolution of feminist consciousness among Africana women. Students will trace the thoughts, social and political activism and ideologies generated by women of African ancestry from the early 19th century free Black “feminist abolitionists” to contemporary times. “Womanist,” “Feminist,” “Critical Race Feminist,” and “Black Feminist” ideologies will be emphasized through course readings and assignments that explore the emergence and perpetuation of an Africana women’s feminist consciousness.

AAS 376 African-American Women’s History

1 course unit

(occasionally)

(Same as WGS 361 and HIS 365)

A study of the experience of African-American women in the United States, from both historical and contemporary perspectives. Through a survey of critical time periods, key social institutions, and crystallizing experiences, the course will explicate the role of African-American women in shaping present American society. Readings, lectures, discussions, recordings and movies will be used to present a comprehensive and cohesive understanding of African-American women.

AAS 390/Advanced Research in African Studies

1 course unit

(occasionally)

Seminar or lecture based format specific to interdisciplinary research in African and Diaspora studies.

AAS 391/Independent Study

Course units vary

(occasionally)

Individual pursuit of topics in African and/or Diaspora studies that transcends the regularly available curriculum. Faculty direction and evaluation required but not intensive mentoring.

AAS 392/Guided Study in Africana Studies

1 course unit

(occasionally)

A faculty member leading a small group of students or assisting the students in leading themselves through a shared topic.

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AAS 393/Independent Research

(occasionally)

Intensively mentored undergraduate research in Africana studies.

Course units vary

AAS 399/Africana Studies Internship

(occasionally)

This course seeks to develop occupational or professional competence in an actual work setting after competence in Africana studies has been developed in the theoretical aspect of the discipline.

Course units vary

AAS 470/Advanced Special Topics in African Studies

(occasionally)

1 course unit

AAS 477/Honors in Africana Studies

(occasionally)

Prerequisites: HON 220, HON 243, or by invitation

Special projects for those in the Honors Program and for other highly qualified students. For more information, see the department chair.

1 course unit

AAS 493/Independent Research II

(occasionally)

Second semester of 393.

Course units vary

AAS 495, 496/Senior Thesis/Projects I/II

(occasionally)

Culminating project or thesis in Africana studies.

1 course unit each