

# Curriculum and Requirements

## Interdisciplinary

The concentration has four central goals: (1) to offer students a structured program in the study of Africa and the African diaspora, (2) to help students explore the variety of cultural types and formations in the African diaspora, (3) to expose students to the connections between African studies and African-American studies, and (4) to promote curricular and extracurricular interest in and awareness of the cultures of the African diaspora for the campus as a whole.

## The Curriculum

The program in African diaspora studies consists of (1) AFDS 110 Introduction to African Diaspora Studies; (2) 1 unit of foundation courses (.5 unit in African studies and .5 unit in African-American studies); (3) 1.5 units of advanced courses (in no fewer than two departments); and (4) a .5 unit senior-level seminar course.

Courses approved for AFDS Senior Seminar Credit:

AFDS 410 Between Womanism and Feminism

ANTH 471 Ethnomedicine: Africa

ENGL 487 The Mulatto in American Fiction

ENGL 488 Richard Wright and Toni Morrison

SOCY 422 Topics in Social Stratification

SOCY 440 Blackface: The American Minstrel Show

SOCY 463 Intersection Theory

HIST 411 The Civil Rights Era

Each spring, the director of the concentration, in consultation with Crossroads, the program's advisory committee, will determine the courses offered during the upcoming academic year that will fulfill the various program requirements. Courses counted toward a student's major may be counted toward concentration requirements. For a complete list of courses fulfilling the various requirements, students should consult the African diaspora studies Web site on the Kenyon Web site.

Students who wish to declare a concentration in African diaspora studies should consult with the program director. The director is Theodore O. Mason, Jr. in the Department of English .

## For First-year and New Students

We offer two distinct introductory courses to orient students to the interdisciplinary nature of African Diaspora Studies at Kenyon College. These courses are AFDS 108: The Crossroads Seminar and AFDS 110: Introduction to African Diaspora Studies. Each course places a distinct emphasis upon critical thinking, oral presentation, and critical writing as integral components of the learning experience. The objective of each course is to introduce students to the wide range of approaches which exist to develop a firm grasp of African Diaspora Studies as it currently exists, as informed by past events, and as history continues to unfold.

## Transfer Credit Policy

Transfer credit may be applied toward fulfilling the 1.5 units of required advanced coursework. Students planning to study abroad should seek approval of transfer credits, in advance, from the director.

# African Diaspora Studies

**Note:** This page contains **all** of the regular courses taught by this department. Not all courses are offered every year. Check the [searchable schedule](#) to see which courses are being offered in the upcoming semester.

## AFDS 108 The Crossroads Seminar

*Credit: 0.5*

The Crossroads seminar is a course designed specifically with first-year students in mind. Crossroads is taught by an interdisciplinary group of Kenyon faculty members who have interests in teaching, researching, and engaging with others in the discussion of issues and concerns pertaining to African and African diaspora studies. The specific topic to be addressed each year in the Crossroads seminar is developed by the Crossroads faculty at the end of the preceding spring semester. The Crossroads seminar will typically be taught as a colloquium where several Crossroads faculty offer a set of lectures serving as discrete modules of the course. Within this format, the course is intended to be an exploration of the cultures of the African diaspora and their influences on the global culture. Students will also focus on analytical writing, scientific investigation, and public vocal expression. This course will typically be offered every other academic year. The Crossroads seminar will satisfy .50 unit of diversification in AFDS or AMST.

## AFDS 110 Introduction to African Diaspora Studies

*Credit: 0.5*

This discussion-based course introduces students to several of the most important approaches to the study of African diaspora experiences. Students taking this course will find themselves engaged with a variety of disciplines (e.g., anthropology, history, literary study, psychology, sociology, and visual and performing arts). Though some of the texts may change from year to year, the focus of this course will be to undertake a preliminary investigation into the connections and the relationship between Africa and other parts of the world. This course is typically offered each spring semester.

Instructor: Staff

## AFDS 388 Black British Cultural Studies

*Credit: 0.5*

One of the more important intellectual movements of the last decade, black British cultural studies deserves attention because it offers us important intellectual tools that are used to think about race, ethnicity, gender, class, and nationality in a rapidly changing world. This course

begins with a brief consideration of cultural studies as a general proposition, then turns to the specifics of black British cultural studies. One of the central threads of the course will be a consideration of how the various terms of analysis that were developed in the study of Great Britain and its former colonies might be usefully applied to the United States. Authors to be considered will include Hazel Carby, Paul Gilroy, Stuart Hall, and others. We will also read the work of thinkers who critically engage black British cultural studies, such as Aijaz Ahmad. English majors may count this course toward departmental major requirements. Open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors only. This course is typically offered every two years.

Instructor: Mason

### **AFDS 410 Between Womanist and Feminist Theories**

*Credit: 0.5*

The objective of this interdisciplinary upper-level seminar is to offer a clear understanding of what feminist theory is, what womanist theory is, and how the two often overlap in history, social commentary, and methodology. As such, the materials used in the course make explicit reference to the many academic and social contexts that have given rise to both feminist theory and womanist theory. During the course of the semester, we will trace several elements of the African American experience, predominantly pertaining to women, in order to understand how disparate voices have been informed by each theoretical paradigm. We will specifically discuss fictional and academic texts, films, audio-clips, and several other examples of womanist and feminist discourses to cement your understanding of these theoretical paradigms. Prerequisites: AFDS 110 and one mid-level course that may be counted toward the AFDS concentration or permission of the instructor.

Instructor: Kohlman

### **AFDS 490 Senior Seminar**

*Credit: 0.5*

The senior seminar will be offered each year by a member of the AFDS faculty. Students should consult with the director to find out which courses are being taught in any given year that satisfy the AFDS Senior Seminar requirement.

### **AFDS 493 Individual Study**

*Credit: 0.5*

The individual study option is a flexible concept to be negotiated between students and faculty members along with the director of the African Diaspora Studies Program. Typically, an individual-study course emerges from student initiative and depends on faculty interest and availability. Less frequently, individual study can be offered when students need to take a

particular course in order to fulfill the requirements of the concentration and can draw on the expertise of a faculty member. Even in this circumstance, however, the option depends upon faculty availability. While we expect that students will broach the possibility of doing individual study, faculty will have the ultimate authority in determining how any individual study course is to be conducted. We view this option as an exceptional, not routine, opportunity. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the program, and the fact that aspects of the program change from year to year, the director has the right to decline requests for individual study. Individual study courses in African Diaspora Studies will typically run for one semester and carry .5 unit of credit. In those very rare cases where the course has to be halted mid-semester, .25 unit of credit will be awarded.

### **Additional courses that meet the requirements for this major/concentration**

AMST 110: August Wilson and Black Pittsburgh  
ANTH 113: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology  
ANTH 471: Ethnomedicine: Africa  
DRAM 257: Dramatic Literature of the African Diaspora  
ENGL 281: Fictions in Black  
ENGL 288: Introduction to African-American Literature  
ENGL 316: Postcolonial Poetry  
ENGL 366: African Fiction  
ENGL 378: Race in the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination  
ENGL 388: Studies in Twentieth-Century African-American Literature  
ENGL 487: The Mulatto in American Fiction  
HIST 102D: United States History, 1865-Present  
HIST 145: Early Africa  
HIST 146: Modern Africa  
HIST 175: Early Black History  
HIST 176: Contemporary Black History  
HIST 210: History of the South, 1607-Present  
HIST 242: Americans in Africa  
HIST 310: The Civil War  
HIST 312: Blacks in the Age of Jim Crow  
HIST 313: Black Intellectuals  
HIST 316: Jazz Age: 1900-1930  
HIST 341: African Women in Film and Fiction  
HIST 349: Contemporary West African History through Fiction and Film  
HIST 350: Race, Resistance, and Revolution in South Africa  
HIST 373: Women of the Atlantic World  
HIST 411: The Civil Rights Era  
HIST 412: Race, Politics, and Public Policy  
HIST 444: Faith and Power in Africa  
PSCI 332: African-American Political Thought  
PSYC 424: Research Methods in Cross-Cultural Psychology  
RLST 232: Afro-Caribbean Spirituality  
RLST 342: Religion and Popular Music in the African Diaspora

SOCY 230: Sociology of Race and Ethnicity in the United States  
SOCY 232: Sexual Harassment: Normative Expectations and Legal Questions  
SOCY 244: Race, Ethnicity, and American Law  
SOCY 250: Systems of Stratification  
SOCY 421: Gender Stratification  
SOCY 440: Blackface: The American Minstrel Show  
SOCY 463: Intersectional Theory