Africana Studies

The concentration in Africana Studies critically examines the artistic, historical, literary, and theoretical expressions of the peoples and cultures of Africa and the African Diaspora. Central to the work of students and faculty in the concentration is the close collaboration of artists, scholars, and writers in examining relationships between academic and artistic knowledge about the world and human experience. Concentrators work closely with faculty members in developing new knowledge about the world and human existence through the critical and comprehensive study of the peoples and cultures of Africa and the African Diaspora. Concentrators are encouraged to study abroad in Africa, the Caribbean, and/or Latin America and to acquire language competency in a language other than English spoken in Africa and the diaspora.

In order to develop requisite competency, Africana Studies concentrators must complete eight (8) semester-long courses offered by or cross-listed with the Department. Concentrators may also petition the Department to accept other appropriate courses.

Of these courses, the following two Africana Studies courses are required:

- AFRI 0090 An Introduction to Africana Studies (Fall ONLY)
- AFRI 1360 Africana Studies: Knowledge, Texts and Methodology—Senior Capstone Seminar (Spring ONLY)

The Department strongly encourages foreign study in Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America, during the student's junior year. While the department actively supports programs in South Africa, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Brazil, and the English-Speaking Caribbean, concentrators must complete at least six (6) courses in residence at Brown (that is, they must carry AFRI prefixes).

The Department also encourages the acquisition of language competencies, in addition to English, which are spoken in Africa and the Diaspora. Since no continental African language is currently offered at Brown, concentrators who study abroad and acquire certified competency in any African language are welcome to petition the department for competency credit.

For more information about the concentration, please contact Professor Lundy Braun (https://vivo.brown.edu/display/lbraun), Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Honors

Africana Studies' concentrators with outstanding records may be admitted to the department's Honors Program.

Students interested in pursuing honors should identify a faculty sponsor in Africana Studies in their 6th semester and begin working on their thesis project during the summer before their senior year. By the end of the second week of Semester I of their senior year, while working in consultation with a faculty advisor, the student must prepare a work plan/proposal. Please visit department website for proposal guidelines. This plan should include a timeline for completion of the thesis and is not to exceed (3) typewritten pages. The student should also identify a second reader at this point. The work plan/proposal must be approved and signed by a committee, comprised of the faculty advisor who is to direct the Honor’s thesis, the second reader, and the concentration advisor. The thesis sponsor should inform the Director of Undergraduate Studies by email after approval of the proposal.

By the time the proposal is submitted, the Honor’s candidate should be familiar with the secondary works in the field. (Secondary readings should be extensive and be incorporated into the proposal.) The Honor’s candidate is also expected to complete research paper of distinguished quality while enrolled in an independent study with their faculty advisor during the first semester of the senior year. In most cases, this paper will be one or two chapters in their thesis. Students must enroll in at least one, preferably two, semesters of independent study to work on their thesis.

For students completing graduation requirements by the end of Semester I (Fall), a first complete draft of the thesis should be submitted by March 14, 2016. The final draft of the thesis should be submitted by April 20, 2016. Students must submit bound copies of the final thesis to the department and to each of the readers, along with an electronic copy of the completed thesis to Ms. Deborah Bowen. All students will present their thesis projects to the Department of Africana Studies on the last Friday of April at a time to be determined. After this presentation, a department committee will make recommendations for honors to the Director of Undergraduate Studies and students will receive notification of the recommendation.