

BOARD OF REGENTS
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM

ACTION REQUESTED

It is recommended that the Board of Regents approve a New Academic Program: **Africology and African American Studies, Master of Arts**

SUMMARY

The *Master of Arts in Africology and African American Studies* is designed to prepare students from any cultural background for professional and academic careers in pertinent areas, by offering a combination of practical and theoretical training.

PROPOSAL ELEMENTS

Rationale Over the past forty-nine years, major universities throughout the United States have instituted undergraduate and graduate programs, including doctoral degrees in African American Studies/Africology. As the United States has become increasingly urban and the African American population has moved into large cities from the rural regions of the South, the culture of the United States, especially in areas of culture, art, popular entertainment, music, literature, and other forms of human ingenuity, continues to be influenced by the abundance and creativity of the African American population. Any university that views itself as a regional or national institution in the United States, is expected to have a strong program that speaks to the intellectual traditions, cultural contours, and philosophical and social issues that comprise the African American community in order to be sufficiently capable of preparing and equipping students with resources for understanding the implications of living in a multiracial, democratic, pluralistic, and diverse society.

The program provides Eastern Michigan University's academic community with a two-year graduate program whose innovative design seeks to prepare students from any cultural background across college curricula for professional careers in relevant areas. It is intended for either students who aspire to pursue administrative positions in industry, government, finance, social work, healthcare, and various community organizations, or for students who plan to engage in a life-long scholarly development of the discipline as teachers, professors, researchers, or creative artists.

The program will consist of a rigorous study of the theoretical and methodological aspects of the discipline. Most students are expected to enter the program with a strong knowledge base. The overall objective of this program is to develop ways in which theory and methodology can be blended to create a cohesive cross-disciplinary program of study. This across-the-curriculum two-prong Master of Arts degree offers a concentration in Africology & African American Studies courses, but students can choose a complementary focus from among the participating disciplinary programs/departments based upon their

vocational orientation or undergraduate degrees. Africology and African American Studies scholarship is comparable to that found in advanced academic programs in other disciplines. With that said, the innovative stance of program faculty is that applied and cross-disciplinary orientation sets the program apart and furthermore, reflects the University's commitment to interdisciplinary teaching, excellence, and diversity.

Program Distinction The Master of Arts in Africology and African American Studies program will be the first of its kind in the state of Michigan.

Curriculum Design The Master of Arts degree in Africology & African American Studies offers two optional tracks, an applied and thesis-based. The two tracks offer a concentration in Africology & African American Studies courses, but, in each case, students are required to choose a complementary focus according to their vocational orientation or their undergraduate degrees—from among participating disciplinary programs/departments across academic disciplines and programs of Eastern Michigan University. To complete the applied or thesis-based track, students must complete 33 credits broken down as follows, 24 credits in Africology & African American Studies and nine credits in a complementary focus elected from other disciplines or co-operating academic programs. However, the students will have an option of completing a complementary focus within Africology and African American Studies itself. In that case, instead of 24 credit hours of AFC courses, such students will complete 33 credit hours of AFC courses.

Projected Enrollment Each of the first three cohorts is expected to enroll at least 12 students.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Program costs will be absorbed by the current Academic Affairs budget.


ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The proposed Board action has been reviewed and is recommended for Board approval.


University Executive Officer

5-25-2018
Date

**EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM**

To: Chris Shell, Registrar
Victor O. Okafor, Department Head, Africology and African American Studies 

From: Michael Tew, Associate Provost & Associate Vice President for Academic Programming and Services

Subject: Africology and African American Studies, Master of Arts (New Program)

Date: April 25, 2018

The attached proposal from the Africology and African American Studies Department and the College of Arts & Sciences for a new graduate program **Master of Arts in Africology and African American Studies**, is approved.

The effective date will be determined following consideration by the Academic Officers Committee, Michigan Association of State Universities and the Eastern Michigan University Board of Regents.

If you have any questions, please contact Evan Finley, Academic Catalogs & Curriculum Development (487-8954, efinley2@emich.edu).

cc: Rhonda Longworth, Provost & Executive Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs
Wade Tornquist, Interim Associate Provost & Vice President of Graduate Studies and Research
Tana Bridge, Faculty Associate, Graduate School
Julia Nims, Faculty Associate, Graduate School
Kathleen Stacey, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
W. Douglas Baker, Interim Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Faculty Senate
Ana Monteiro-Ferreira, Africology and African American Studies
Antoinette Pressley Sanon, Africology and African American Studies
Original, Course and Program Development

Master of Arts in Africology & African American Studies

New Program | Effective date TBD

The effective date will be determined following consideration by the Academic Officers Committee, Michigan Association of State Universities and the Eastern Michigan University Board of Regents.

The **Master of Arts in Africology & African American Studies** offers two optional tracks: Applied or Thesis-based.

The two tracks offer a concentration in Africology & African American Studies courses, but, in each case, students are required to choose a complementary focus according to their vocational orientation or their undergraduate degrees—from among participating disciplinary programs/departments across academic disciplines and programs of Eastern Michigan University.

Applied Track

Integrates theoretical perspectives and disciplinary knowledge with practical skills and training required to serve constituent organizations, enterprises, companies, and businesses in diverse communities of the United States and beyond.

A capstone internship seminar will serve as the major element of the second-year's field experience phase of the program. Typically, the project will involve working with companies and/or organizations in the region or elsewhere that serve a diverse clientele. During the internship period, the student will work under the guidance of two supervisors: the DAAAS internship director through a capstone internship seminar ([AFC 603](#)) and a representative of the internship placement institution who will oversee the student's activities and will report periodically to the AAAS Dept's internship director.

Thesis-based Track

Theoretically oriented, the main goal of this track is to ensure that the theoretical, methodological, and functional dimensions of the degree will complement one another, and thus, increase the students' preparedness to tackle a diverse range of issues that affect the lives and experiences of the African world, particularly the African Diaspora. The ultimate goal is to help promote democratic, pluralistic, and multicultural approaches to phenomena in contemporary society.

The track encompasses a composite knowledge of African peoples' historical and contemporary experiences and of the discipline of Africology in relation to other areas in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. This is an intensive academic, writing and researching track aimed at students' acquisition of (1) a deep insight into the particular nature of the African American and African experiences in the American social tissue, and (2) knowledge and skills for meeting the challenges of a racially and ethnically diverse society in every dimension of human interaction respectful of human dignity. Coursework and guided research will be developed and assessed in accord with both prescribed departmental standards and applicable standards of the Graduate School.

Program Admission

Minimum requirements for admission

- A completed [graduate admissions application](#) with application fee
- Meet the [Graduate School admission requirements](#)
- A B.A. or B.S. degree from an accredited college or university
- A cumulative 3.0 undergraduate Grade Point Average (GPA)
- A statement of purpose
- Two (2) letters of recommendation from college professors attesting to the student's ability to pursue graduate-level work
- Writing sample

- A Curriculum Vitae/Resume

International Applicants

- TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score
- *International Transcripts* - Post-secondary transcripts from a non-U.S. institution must be submitted directly to one of four approved evaluation services for a detailed, course by course report. See [International Admission Checklist](#) for additional information. *Applicants should allow 2-6 weeks for the evaluation to be completed.*

Graduate Assistantship application (optional)

- For additional information, see emich.edu/graduate/financial_assistance/assistantships

Transfer Credit (optional)

- With the approval of the AAAS Director of Graduate Studies, a student may apply to have up to 9 graduate credits completed at other accredited institutions counted towards completion of the Master of Arts in Africology & African American Studies.
- The intended transfer credit courses cannot date back more than five (5) years before matriculation in the Department of Africology & African American graduate program. The application for these credits is to be made during the first semester of the student's enrollment in the AAAS graduate program. The student should discuss with the AAAS Director of Graduate Studies advisor, the specific courses she or he wishes to transfer and then submit:
- A letter specifying each course the student wishes to have considered for credit toward the AAAS MA program,
- Supporting documents (e.g., syllabi, course descriptions from college catalogs, a letter from the transfer course instructor or department) showing the overlap, relevance, or similarity-in-content between the intended transfer course and a specific AFC graduate course, and
- An official transcript from the previous institution.

Department Information

Africology & African American Studies, College of Arts and Sciences

Victor Okafor, Ph.D. | Department Head | 620 Pray-Harrold | 734.487.3460 | vokafor@emich.edu

Advisor Information

Please contact the department for advisor information

Degree Requirements: 33 hours

The Master of Arts in Africology and African American Studies requires students to complete 33 credit hours broken down as follows:

Core Courses: 12 hours

- [AFC 501 - Foundational Issues in Africology and African American Studies](#) 3 hrs
- [AFC 502 - African Philosophical Thought and Aesthetics](#) 3 hrs
- [AFC 601 - Theory and Analytical Methods in Africology](#) 3 hrs
- [AFC 602 - Researching Black Communities](#) 3 hrs

Applied or Thesis Track: 3 hours

Applied Track (Internship & Final Project Report)

Upon completion of their internship and the concurrent capstone internship course, each student will defend their cumulative final project report before a committee consisting of three faculty members (One faculty member from AAAS Dept, the Internship Director, and one faculty member representing the cognate discipline, who is a

project reader). *If a student chooses a cognate within AAAS (that is, by completing an additional nine credit hours of Restricted Electives), the third member of the committee will be an AAAS faculty member.*

- AFC 603 - Capstone Internship Seminar in Africology & AAS 3 hrs

Thesis Track (Thesis Research & Oral Defense)

Being a writing intensive track, the thesis-based track merges the disciplinary theoretical foundation and methodologies of research. Full-time graduate work and supervised individual thesis research will be required and assessed in accord with both prescribed departmental standards and applicable standards of the Graduate School.

During their second year, subject to consultation with their Faculty advisor and the department faculty's permission, and depending upon their anticipated volume of thesis-related research in a given semester/term, students will have the flexibility of enrolling 1, 2, or 3 credit hours of "Developing a Master's Thesis" courses as follows:

- AFC 690 - Developing a Master's Thesis 1 hr
- AFC 691 - Developing a Master's Thesis 2 hrs
- AFC 692 - Developing a Master's Thesis 3 hrs

At any of the preceding credit-hour levels of supervised thesis research, the thesis research instrument serves as a faculty-supervised study that guides students through the steps of generating a thesis question or hypothesis, literature review, a methodological design, data collection, quantitative and/or qualitative, content or literary analysis, discussion and completion of a master's thesis.

A student is required to submit a thesis, followed by an oral defense, whose evaluation will be conducted by a committee consisting of three faculty members (one faculty member from AAAS, the student's thesis advisor, and one faculty member representing the cognate discipline, who is a thesis reader). *If a student chooses a cognate within AAAS (that is, by completing an additional nine credit hours of Restricted Electives), the third member of the committee will be an AAAS faculty member.*

Restricted Electives: 9 hours

Based on their subject area of interest, the regional area of interest (such as Africa, North America, or the Caribbean), career goals, and cognate/complementary focus, the student will select and complete three courses from the following:

- AFC 503 - Public Policy and African Americans 3 hrs
- AFC 504 - Politics in the African American Experience 3 hrs
- AFC 505 - The African Political Economy 3 hrs
- AFC 506 - Advanced Studies in African Civilization 3 hrs
- AFC 540 - Contemporary African Womanhood 3 hrs
- AFC 541 - Law, Race and Community 3 hrs
- AFC 542 - Race and Crime and the African American Experience 3 hrs
- AFC 543 - Civil Rights and the African American Experience 3 hrs
- AFC 544 - African Caribbean Worldviews 3 hrs

Cognate: 9 hours

The student will select and complete nine credit hours of coursework as part of a complementary focus in another discipline. The selection of a cognate will be done in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Africology and African American Studies, as well as, the other discipline.

Alternatively, a student may also choose to establish a cognate within the Department of Africology and African American Studies by completing an additional nine credit hours of AFC restricted electives.
