Morehouse College

AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES

DIVISION OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Relevance, Objectives and Goals:

The African-American Studies Program (AASP) relates directly to the mission of Morehouse College in its emphasis on the intellectual and character development of its students and its special responsibility for teaching the history and culture of black people. As a discipline in the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences, the AASP helps its students develop skills in oral and written communications, analytical and critical thinking, and interpersonal relationships. The program helps to foster an understanding and appreciation of world cultures, artistic expression and creative production. The AASP promotes understanding and appreciation of the specific knowledge and skills needed for the pursuit of professional careers and/or graduate studies. Likewise, the program cultivates the personal attributes of self-confidence, tolerance, morality, ethical behavior, spirituality, humility, a global perspective and a commitment to social justice.

The African-American Studies Program’s objectives include:

- providing a course of study that will help students to better understand the world in which they live, how it works, and the dynamics of social change;
- emphasizing the cultural heritage of black people in the African Diaspora;
- enhancing the ability of students to understand and coordinate knowledge from other disciplines;
- attaining an informed, scholarly understanding of the history, heritage and holism of African-American people;
- demonstrating the ability to read, write, speak, listen, research and reason cogently, effectively, and correctly; and
- encouraging a commitment to community service.

The African-American Studies Major requires the development of critical thinking, creative thinking, effective writing, and effective oral communication skills, as well as value awareness. Computer literacy and usage, and quantitative analysis are also emphasized.


Major, Minor and Concentration Requirements:

The Major in African-American Studies:

A total of sixty (60) hours are available to the major in the AASP. Thirty (30) of those hours are required courses; twenty-one (21) hours will come from approved electives; and nine (9) hours are free electives.

The Minor in African-American Studies:

Eighteen (18) hours are required for the minor in AASP. The required courses for the minor are History 221 and History 222; African-American Studies 100 and African-American Studies 200. The remaining six (6) hours are approved electives.

The Concentration in African-American Studies:

Requirements are similar to the minor, but must have the approval of the major department of the student who is interested in the concentration.

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THE REQUIRED COURSES IN AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES ARE:

- Introduction to African-American Studies
- Theories of Afrocentricity or Africentricity
- History of African-Americans I and II
- History of Africa to 1800
- History of the African-American Church
- Survey of African-American Literature I and II
- The Practicum (two semesters)

All courses are valued at three (3) hours each.
The primary mission of the African-American Studies Program (AASP), an independent, free-standing program in the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences, is to provide an academic and scholarly course of study centered on the black male in particular, and all blacks in general, that will enlighten both scholars and laymen, and affirm black males and black society. The ultimate goal of the AASP is to provide an academic course of study that leads to a baccalaureate degree in the discipline which prepares the students who major or minor in the field for a life of rewarding and fulfilling work. Students of African-American Studies, while at Morehouse and after they graduate, will contribute to the betterment of humankind through professional work and community service.

The student who majors or minors in African-American Studies at Morehouse College, is expected be able to recall major events, dates and persons in the chronology of the African-American experience – especially black history. The serious student would also manifest an appreciation for the totality of the experience, and show the linkage between the African legacy, European history and the African-American experience. They must be able to give evidentiary demonstrations of how the experiences of African-Americans are linked to the experiences of other blacks in the African Diaspora; and show how the experiences of blacks have been an integral part of American and world history.

Graduates of African-American Studies at the College are expected to be able to read comprehensively, write lucidly and cogently, speak effectively, listen intently, research thoroughly, and reason logically. Upon completion of the major in African-American Studies, it is expected that graduates will enter graduate or professional school, or the world of work. Again, all graduates of the discipline are encouraged to continue their involvement in community service.

The Mission

The African-American Studies major is holistic (multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary) and directly relates to the mission of Morehouse College in that it assumes a special responsibility for teaching students about the history and culture of black people. It also encourages students to appreciate the ideals of brotherhood, equality, spirituality, human values, and democracy. Special emphasis will be given to the culture of black males, including their history and philosophy, and social behavior and athletics. It also teaches students to think clearly and critically; to make logical and ethical judgments; and to communicate effectively with others. African-American Studies searches for truth as a liberating force and provides an environment which encourages students to develop a zest for living, learning and contributing as men in society.

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Expected Outcome

Description

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The African-American Studies major prepares students to become better citizens, and leaders in society. It prepares students to go to graduate and professional school, and to enter the world of work; providing a course of instruction which aids students to better appreciate the world in which they live. They grow to understand how the world works, and the dynamics of social change, emphasizing the cultural heritage of black people and preparing them to attain an informed, scholarly understanding of this legacy. The ability to understand is enhanced, and we seek to coordinate knowledge from other disciplines, reinforcing the student’s academic skills—reading, writing, speaking, listening, researching and reasoning.

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The African-American Studies Program teaches the seven skills required by Morehouse College. These skills are critical thinking, creative thinking, effective writing, effective oral communication, value awareness, computer literacy and quantitative analysis. Commitment to community service is strongly encouraged. African-American Studies at Morehouse College gives the students who study here another option among many quality majors from which they may launch a professional or service career.

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The Quintessential Liberal Arts Major

The African-American Studies Program in the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences offers a major, minor, and concentration in the discipline. African-American Studies is one of the quintessential liberal arts fields in that it is interdisciplinary in its scope; multi-disciplinary in its scope; and transdisciplinary in its philosophy. There is no discipline in the academy that cannot be subsumed under the rubric of African-American or African Studies. African-American, and black people everywhere, effect, and are effected by all areas of life: medicine and science, business and economics; and, of course, the humanities and social sciences.

The African-American Studies Program and its major, minor and concentration relate directly to several of the College’s educational objectives, including an appreciation of the past, an appreciation of cultures other than one’s own, and an appreciation of the major people, events, discoveries, political thought, economic theories and geographical factors that have shaped the way we live.

The major objectives of the African-American Studies Program include, but are not limited to:

- preparing students to become better citizens and leaders in society;
- preparing students to go to graduate and professional school;
- preparing students to enter the world of work and activism;
- providing a curriculum that will aid students to better understand the world in which they live, how it works, and the dynamics of social change;
- emphasizing the important cultural heritage of people of African heritage;
- enhancing the ability to understand and coordinate knowledge from other disciplines;
- demonstrating the ability to effectively, cogently and correctly read, write, speak, listen, research and reason; and
- encouraging a firm commitment to community service.

Critical thinking, computer literacy, quantitative analysis, and value awareness are also strongly emphasized in the major.

Note: Students do not have to major, minor or concentrate in African-American Studies to take courses in the discipline.

The African-American Studies Major:

The question that African-American Studies majors are most frequently asked is: “What are you going to do with your major?” There is no single answer to that question, because the options for the student with a baccalaureate degree in African-American Studies are many. It must be understood from the outset that the African-American Studies course of study is, perhaps more than any other course of study, a liberal arts major. By its very nature African-American Studies is an interdisciplinary major. And the student who earns such a degree, and has an outstanding academic record and excellent scores on the requisite standardized tests for the post-baccalaureate degree he seeks, should have no problem getting into graduate or professional school. From all indicators, most students with degrees in African-American Studies continue their academic and scholarly preparation in graduate school.

Graduate School

Students who graduate from Morehouse with a major in African-American Studies may pursue graduate work in history, art, economics, English, government affairs, international studies/international affairs, journalism, music, political science, psychology, religion, sociology, and theology. In order to be accepted into the graduate schools at the top-rated universities and receive a fellowship, you need to have at least a 3.50 grade point average and at least a combined score of up to 346 on the three sections of the general Graduate Record Examination (GRE). You may also be required by some graduate schools to take the subject-area examination. The documents in your application to graduate school over which you have control are the personal statement, which is of paramount importance, and letters of recommendation, which are also extremely important. For more information on understanding your scores, please visit: http://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/scores.

Professional School

A few students who major in African-American Studies at Morehouse may decide to pursue professional degrees in law, medicine, dentistry or technology. These students must be aware of all the prerequisite courses needed for acceptance into these fields and complete them with distinction. They should also take the requisite standardized test in the field of their choice: Law School Admission Test (LSAT), Medical College Aptitude Test (MCAT), Dental Aptitude Test (DAT), etc. These students should also make sure they are advised by the Morehouse pre-professional advisors in their chosen field, for they will have the latest information pertinent to pursuance of professional school in their areas.

The World of Work

An African-American Studies major is a good degree to carry into the world of work. Employers are recruiting solid college graduates who are articulate, have excellent communication skills, have cosmopolitan world views, have strong groupings in the liberal arts, who are ambitious, who fit their business or corporate profiles, who have a very good understanding of the business and corporate cultures, and who are quick studies and eager learners. You must also have good grades and a track record of involvement in and commitment to the organizations you have been associated with at Morehouse. You should also have a clean record with the Office of Student Affairs at the College, and with the local authorities in the places where you have lived, including Atlanta. You may be successful in getting a job with one of the major or minor companies with a mildly negative personal record, but a clean record will certainly work in your favor. Prospective employers are not hiring personnel who bring a whole lot of negative baggage into their employ. A track record of community service will also be a plus when applying for employment in the world of work.

Community Service/Activism

African-American Studies majors are expected to be involved in their communities and to help better the condition of human-kind. Community service by African-American Studies, and which endorse community service, are the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History (ASAALH), the Association of Social and Behavioral Scientists (ASBS), and the Southern Conference on Afro-American Studies, Inc. (SCASS). As an African-American Studies major in the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences at Morehouse College, you will complete a year-long Practicum where you will work with a community-based organization in the metropolitan Atlanta area. But once you have earned your degree, you might decide to work full-time with a community organization, particularly one having to do with African-Americans. Your major in African-American Studies should ably prepare you for this type of work.
The William Tucker Society: The African-American Studies Majors and Minors Club is the student organization of the African-American Studies Program. Ankh Maat Wedjau: This is the honor society for the National Council of Black Studies (NCBS), of which Morehouse College is a member. The John Henrik Clarke Honor Society: The African-American Studies Program is open to all students and faculty at Morehouse College who meet the qualifications. The society is approved by the National Council of Black Studies. Special Programs: The William Tucker Society: The African-American Studies Majors and Minors Club is the student organization of the African-American Studies Program. Ankh Maat Wedjau: This is the honor society for the National Council of Black Studies (NCBS), of which Morehouse College is a member. The John Henrik Clarke Honor Society: The African-American Studies Program is open to all students and faculty at Morehouse College who meet the qualifications. The society is approved by the National Council of Black Studies. FACULTY: Dr. Marcellus C. Barksdale Director, African-American Studies Chair, 150th Morehouse Anniversary History Project Professor, History mbarksda@morehouse.edu Dr. Clarissa Myrick-Harris Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences Professor, African-American Studies cmharris@morehouse.edu Dr. Samuel L. Livingston Director, Honors Program Associate Professor, African-American Studies slivings@morehouse.edu Dr. Vicki Crawford Director, Morehouse College Martin Luther King, Jr. Collection Professor, African-American Studies vcrawford@morehouse.edu The African-American Studies Program is also enhanced by adjunct faculty in the various disciplines. Currently, there are over 50 approved courses that meet the requirements for the major, minor or concentrate in African-American Studies. Basheer Jones ’06 • President/CEO of B.J. Unlimited • Radio/TV Talk Show Host • Author/Spoken Word Performer • Nationally-acclaimed Speaker Trenton H. Bailey ’08 • Member, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. • Member, Honor Society, NCBS • Doctoral candidate at Clark Atlanta University (Humanities/African-American Studies) Expected date: 2014 • Optimistically plans to teach African-American Studies at Morehouse College Daron L. Calhoun II ’10 • Former Office Manager for the 150th Morehouse Anniversary History Project • Pursuing Master of Arts at College of Charleston (SC) Expected date: Dec. 2013 • Member of NCBS and SCAASI QUALIFICATIONS for Special Programs 1. Must have successfully completed twelve hours of course work in the African, African-American or Diasporan experiences with no grade below B. 2. Must have an overall grade-point-average (GPA) of 3.0 or better, and a GPA of 3.0 or better in the courses on the black experience. 3. Must submit an application to the Director of African-American Studies Program. 4. Must indicate a willingness to continue to study, promote and disseminate knowledge about the black experience, while at Morehouse and after graduation. 5. Must be willing to abide by the Constitution and by-laws of the honor society. Marguerite Bryant Administrative Assistant for the African-American Studies Program Brawley Hall, Room 94-B 404-215-2603 mbryant@morehouse.edu "A human being is not attaining his full heights until he is educated." Horace Mann "The Morehouse Pan-African Global Experience (MPAGE) Program was established in 2008 to offer Study Abroad and courses designed to facilitate the experience of contemporary African cultures and societies shaped by different geo-political forces in a global world. MPAGE is an opportunity to see across African diversity to what may be common to African cultures. In July 2012 Dr. Livingston (AASP), Dr. Cynthia Hewitt (Sociology) and Dr. David Rice (Psychology) took eleven students on an eye-opening experience of Ghanaian culture. The students’ reflections and experiences are captured on the blog, mpage1867.wordpress.com."