



STUDENT LIFE

# THE CAREER CENTER

## Afroamerican & African Studies

### FROM STUDY TO SKILLS

All academic programs offered at the UM help students develop valuable transferable skills. In our increasingly global world, the interdisciplinary program offered by the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies (DAAS) makes it an ideal liberal arts concentration. As a DAAS concentrator, you will be analyzing historical and contemporary cultures, concerns, perspectives, and accomplishments of peoples of African descent, particularly those in Africa, the Americas, and the Caribbean. Thus, DAAS is a multi-disciplinary, interdepartmental program that will allow you to

integrate historical, sociological, cultural, psychological, economic, and political concepts and perspectives. You will be encouraged to bring a critical approach to your studies, and, whenever possible, current issues will be linked with classroom work. This interdisciplinary approach will help you develop a wide range of skills.

**Related fields include** History, Literature, Political Science, Economics, Sociology, Communication Studies, Cultural Studies, Art History, Linguistics, Anthropology, Latino and Caribbean Studies, Middle Eastern and North African Studies, and Museum Studies.

### SKILLS AND ABILITIES

#### Project Development Skills

Assessing needs and interests  
Generating ideas  
Identifying resources  
Developing sound research designs  
Evaluating results  
Translating theory into action  
Working with community groups

#### Research/Analytical Skills

Thinking and reading critically  
Identifying research topics  
Gathering information  
Examining evidence  
Comparing/contrasting ideas and concepts  
Solving problems  
Assessing alternative modes of analysis

#### Interpersonal/ Cross-Cultural Skills

Working with competing ideas  
Developing appreciation for racial, class, and gender differences  
Understanding society through culture  
Incorporating interdisciplinary methods  
Examining the relationships among historical, economic, political, and cultural forces  
Understanding the practical significance of academic experiences

#### Communication Skills

Writing clearly  
Expressing ideas through several media (e.g. film or music)  
Listening to others  
Challenging conventional ideas  
Conveying ideas systematically

### BUILDING YOUR SKILLS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Employers seek out individuals who can demonstrate excellent verbal and written communication skills, teamwork and interpersonal skills, initiative, and a strong work ethic. Student organizations and campus employment offer valuable opportunities to add to the skills you are developing in your classes. Most

concentrations sponsor specific student groups like an undergraduate organization or an honor society. Other options include study abroad, off-campus employment or volunteering in the community. Finally, a summer internship may be the best way of all to test out a career field and develop marketable skills.

---

## FROM SKILLS TO CAREER

DAAS concentrators develop both general and technical skills applicable to a wide range of careers. For example, examining evidence is a skill that professors, lawyers, health workers, or personnel directors use on a daily basis.

### Project Development Skills

Urban planner   
Museum curator   
Librarian   
Canvas director, organizer  
Export/import sales manager  
Administrative assistant  
Fundraiser

### Research/Analytical Skills

Health care professional  
Educational policy specialist   
Congressional staff member  
Public historian   
Lawyer   
Legal advisor  
Market researcher  
Bank management trainee

 = Further Study Required

For more career information, see O\*Net at [online.onetcenter.org](http://online.onetcenter.org)

Many concentrators go on to graduate or professional school. The list below is a sample of careers undertaken by DAAS graduates.

### Interpersonal / Cross-Cultural Skills

Social worker   
Consultant, cross-cultural relations  
Foreign service officer   
Affirmative action officer  
Staff training and development specialist  
Student services staff

### Communication Skills

Teacher, K-12  
College instructor   
Journalist  
Creative writer  
Visual/performance artist  
Media buyer, public relations  
Advertising copywriter  
Lobbyist  
Probation officer  
Community advocate

---

## CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS

DAAS offers either a concentration or a minor in Afroamerican and African Studies; students may also pursue Honors. Both concentrators and minors are required to take two core courses: AAS 111, "Intro to Africa and Its Diaspora" and AAS 495, "Senior Seminar." Honors Concentrators fulfill the same requirements and complete a 40-60 page senior thesis.

By taking a range of courses at the 200, 300, and 400 levels, students gain a broad understanding of the African Diaspora—the varied cultures of African-descended people around the globe—while at the same time developing specialized knowledge about one of three major

geographic areas: Africa, the Americas, or the Caribbean. For more information, contact [caasadvising@umich.edu](mailto:caasadvising@umich.edu) or consult the DAAS website (URL below).

### Department for Afroamerican and African Studies (DAAS)

4700 Haven Hall  
734-764-0332  
[www.lsa.umich.edu/daas](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/daas)

### Newnan Advising Center

1255 Angell Hall  
734-764-0332  
[www.lsa.umich.edu/advising](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/advising)

---

## NEXT STEPS / RESOURCES

To identify internships or job opportunities, visit Career Center Connector: [careercenter.umich.edu/article/c3](http://careercenter.umich.edu/article/c3)

To begin connecting to professionals in fields that interest you, create your own LinkedIn account: [careercenter.umich.edu/article/getting-started-linkedin](http://careercenter.umich.edu/article/getting-started-linkedin)

On campus jobs (work-study and non work-study jobs) are listed at: [studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX\\_Home.aspx](http://studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX_Home.aspx)

The Career Guide series was developed by the University of Michigan Career Center, Division of Student Affairs, in cooperation with the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. ©2011 Regents of the University of Michigan

The Maize Pages list hundreds of organizations for students to get involved in: [maizepages.umich.edu](http://maizepages.umich.edu)

Connect to Community lists volunteer opportunities in local organizations: [connect2community.umich.edu](http://connect2community.umich.edu)

### The Career Center

3200 Student Activities Building  
734-764-7460  
[careercenter.umich.edu](http://careercenter.umich.edu)  
[facebook.com/careercenter.umich](https://facebook.com/careercenter.umich)  
[twitter.com/careercenter](https://twitter.com/careercenter)  
[linkedin.com/company/the-career-center-at-the-university-of-michigan](https://linkedin.com/company/the-career-center-at-the-university-of-michigan)