AFRICAN STUDIES

www.afrst.illinois.edu (http://www.afrst.illinois.edu)

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Major: African Studies
Degrees offered: M.A.
Graduate Concentration: African American Studies
Graduate Minor: African Studies

Joint Degree Program: African Studies and Library and Information Science
Degrees offered: M.A. and M.S.

Graduate Degree Programs

The Center for African Studies administers a two-year program of area studies courses and intensive African language instruction leading to a Master of Arts degree designed to give students an interdisciplinary perspective on the study of Africa. The program provides both language and area training for three constituencies of students: those seeking to match area expertise with professional training; those proceeding to disciplinary-based doctoral work; and those for whom the degree would stand on its own. For more information about the Center’s graduate programs, please visit: www.afrst.illinois.edu/academics/grad.html (http://www.afrst.illinois.edu/academics/grad.html).

Admissions

The Center for African Studies admits students in the fall term only. Applicants to the Masters degree in African Studies should hold at least a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in the United States or from a recognized institution of higher education abroad. All graduate college admission requirements also apply. The Center does not require the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores, but it is highly recommended for students applying for the Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowship. Successful applicants should have a grade point average of at least 3.0 (4.0=A) calculated for the last 60 semester hours of undergraduate course work. International applicants or applicants whose native language is not English must have a minimum TOEFL score of 550 on the paper-based test (PBT) – 213 on the computer-based test (CBT) or 79 on the internet-based test (IBT). For more information about the Center’s admission requirements and procedures, and deadlines please visit www.afrst.illinois.edu/academics/grad/apply/ (http://www.afrst.illinois.edu/academics/grad/apply/)

Students interested in the minor must be in good standing in a graduate program, have permission from the major program, and demonstrate an interest in African Studies. For more information, contact the Center.

Faculty Research

The Center for African Studies’ has both core and affiliate faculty represented in over 34 units across campus encompassing various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, as well as in professional schools. The faculty is the backbone of the Center and constitutes the most critical element of the graduate experience. They excel in teaching at all levels and have a strong commitment to innovative research. Both Center faculty and teaching assistants have received numerous college and campus teaching awards. For more information about the Center faculty, please visit: www.afrst.illinois.edu/about/faculty.html (http://www.afrst.illinois.edu/about/faculty.html)

Facilities and Resources

Established since 1970, the Center for African Studies is one of the largest and most dynamic African National resource Centers in the country. The Center promotes excellence in research and teaching on Africa in all disciplines. The Center also exists to increase and disseminate knowledge about Africa to the larger community through various outreach activities to colleges, schools, community groups and businesses. At a time when the university of Illinois is expanding its international dimension, the Center for African Studies is dedicated to promoting a vibrant African Studies program and to fostering an understanding of Africa and African peoples through research, teaching and various Africa-related programs and events. The Center organizes a wide range of activities including conferences, lectures, film festivals, art exhibits, language institutes, workshops, and symposia. In addition, the Center regularly hosts visitors from the United States and abroad, namely Africa, and is strongly committed to developing linkages with individuals and institutions based in the African continent.

The Africana Library is among the finest in the world. The collection covers all African countries and includes materials in more than 150 African languages. The collections are interdisciplinary, in all formats, and concentrated mainly in the humanities, social sciences, and agriculture. The Library has an extraordinary collection of primary source materials for Africana, and has acquired approximately 100 printed sources and 85 microform collections (over 10,000 pieces) covering all areas of Africa. The collection also includes 120,000 pages of Arabic manuscripts and thousands of government documents. African materials in European and African languages at the University of Illinois Libraries include more than 180,000 books (including 15,000 in Arabic, and 3,000 in Bamana, Hausa, Lingala, Swahili, and Zulu); 2,800 journals; 46,000 maps; 10,000 microforms; over 250 videotapes, 37 newspapers, and several CD-ROMs.

The African studies bibliographer runs the Africana library and teaches LIS 530, one of the Center’s core courses and plays a key role in the Center's graduate program. For further information about the Africana library, please visit: www.afrst.illinois.edu/resources/africana.html. (http://www.afrst.illinois.edu/resources/africana.html)

Financial Aid

The Center for African Studies is a Title VI African National Resource Center funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Each year the center is generally able to assist a limited number of graduate students in area studies through awards of Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships. The Center evaluates and ranks incoming students on the basis on academic promise. Funding usually covers the fall and spring semesters. The center cannot guarantee multiple years of funding, but considers it a priority to provide financial support to eligible students until completion of their program. African Studies MA Students can also apply for the FLAS fellowship through the Center for Global Studies. The Center for African Studies has graduate assistantships which include a tuition and fee waiver, but they are very limited. Students may be eligible to compete for other fellowships on campus. Students are also
encouraged to check with the graduate fellowships office (https://www.grad.illinois.edu/fellowship) for funding opportunities. Students in the joint program that do not hold a FLAS fellowship are eligible for, but not guaranteed, fellowship or assistantship support in the semesters in which they are enrolled in GSLIS. Any assistantship awarded to these students provides a waiver of the base in-state tuition and service fee as well as a stipend. Non-Illinois residents must pay the difference between in- and out-of-state tuition. More information about funding opportunities is available at: www.afrst.illinois.edu/grants/index.html. (http://www.afrst.illinois.edu/grants).

Master of Arts in African Studies

Thesis Option

LIS 530  Info Needs of Part Communities (Section M)  4
AFST 515  Practicum in African Studies (recommended)  2
AFST 522  Development of African Studies  4
Eelective area studies courses, drawn from at least three different academic units  16-18
Independent Study (4 max applied toward degree)  4
Language Requirement: Must study or demonstrate proficiency in a language indigenous to Africa at the advanced (third-year) level, but these hours cannot count toward the degree requirements.
AFST 599  Thesis Research ((8 max applied toward degree))  8

Total Hours  34

Other Requirements 1
Other requirements may overlap
Minimum 500-level Hours Required Overall: 16
Minimum GPA: 3.25

1 For additional details and requirements refer to the department’s Graduate Programs (http://www.afrst.illinois.edu/academics/grad/masters) and the Graduate College Handbook (http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook).

Non-Thesis Option

LIS 530  Info Needs of Part Communities (Section M)  4
AFST 515  Practicum in African Studies (recommended)  2
AFST 522  Development of African Studies  4
Eelective area studies courses, drawn from at least three different academic units  16-18
Independent Study (4 max applied toward degree)  4
Language Requirement: Must study or demonstrate proficiency in a language indigenous to Africa at the advanced (third-year) level, but these hours cannot count toward the degree requirements.

Total Hours  34

Other Requirements 1
Other requirements may overlap
Minimum 500-level Hours Required Overall: 16
Minimum GPA: 3.25

1 For additional details and requirements refer to the department’s Graduate Programs (http://www.afrst.illinois.edu/academics/grad/masters) and the Graduate College Handbook (http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook).

M.S. African Studies and M.S. Library and Information Science

This joint master’s degree includes a program of language and area studies courses leading to an interdisciplinary Master of Arts degree in African Studies as well as a program of study leading to the Master of Science in Library and Information Science. The joint degree matches area expertise with professional education, and prepares students for professional careers in all types of information organizations, including libraries. Students will enroll in LIS their first semester and thereafter be enrolled as students in African Studies.

Thesis Option

LIS 501  Info Org and Access  4
LIS 530  Info Needs of Part Communities (Section M)  4
LIS 590  Advanced Problems in LIS (Section IL)  4
LIS 502  Libraries Info and Society  2 OR 4
LIS elective courses selected in consultation with an advisor who is a member of the GSLIS faculty. (LIS 591, 2 hours and LIS 592, up to 4 hours, may be included)
AFST 522  Development of African Studies  4
African language proficiency at level of 6 semesters of coursework (includes Arabic) NOTE: Hours for language cannot be applied toward degree requirements
Elective courses from the approved African Studies course list selected in consultation with an advisor who is a member of the African Studies faculty (coursework must be from 3 different disciplines; 8 hours must be at the 500-level, excluding AFST 550 and AFST 599; Maximum 4 hours of AFST 550 may be used) Electives and thesis must total at least 24 hours.

Total Hours  56

Other Requirements 1
Other requirements may overlap
Minimum 500-level Hours Required Overall: 24
Minimum GPA: 3.25

1 For additional details and requirements refer to the department’s Graduate Programs (http://www.afrst.illinois.edu/academics/grad/masters) and the Graduate College Handbook (http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook).

Non-Thesis Option

LIS 501  Info Org and Access  4
LIS 530  Info Needs of Part Communities (Section M)  4
LIS 590  Advanced Problems in LIS (Section IL)  4
LIS 502  Libraries Info and Society  2 OR 4
LIS elective courses selected in consultation with an advisor who is a member of the GSLIS faculty. (LIS 591, 2 hours and LIS 592, up to 4 hours, may be included)
AFST 522  Development of African Studies  4

African language proficiency at level of 6 semesters of course work (includes Arabic) NOTE: Hours for language cannot be applied toward degree requirements

Elective courses from the approved African Studies course list selected in consultation with an advisor who is a member of the African Studies faculty (coursework must be from 3 different disciplines; 8 hours must be at the 500-level, excluding AFST 550 and AFST 599; Maximum 4 hours of AFST 550 may be used) Electives must total at least 24 hours.  24

Total Hours  56

Other Requirements 1
Other requirements may overlap

Minimum 500-level Hours Required Overall: 24
Minimum GPA: 3.25

For additional details and requirements refer to the department's Graduate Programs (http://www.afrst.illinois.edu/academics/grad/degree) and the Graduate College Handbook (http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook).

Graduate Minor in African Studies

The interdisciplinary graduate minor in African Studies promotes training in African Studies for masters and doctoral students in other disciplines interested in complementing their degree program with an interdisciplinary perspective on Africa.

Note: Students within the major cannot minor in the same program.

AFST 522  Development of African Studies  4

Electives hours that relate to Africa that are outside the student's major department. At least four hours must be at the 500 level.  8

A minimum of four semesters of college level study of an African language. NOTE: Hours for language cannot be applied toward minor requirements.

Total Hours  12

Other Requirements 1

If the student's thesis deals in whole or in part with Africa, it is strongly recommended that a faculty member from the Center be a formal member of the student's committee.

In addition to the minor requirements, students must also complete the requirements of their major degree.

Hours counted toward completion of a minor may not also be applied toward any other transcripted credential.

For additional details and requirements refer to the department's Graduate Programs (http://www.afrst.illinois.edu/academics/grad) and the Graduate College Handbook (http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook).