

AFRICAN STUDIES

Graduate Program Head	Sinfree Makoni
Program Code	AFRST
Campus(es)	University Park
Degrees Conferred	Dual-Title
The Graduate Faculty	View (https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/?searchType=fac&prog=AFRST)

Students electing this program through participating departments will earn a degree with a dual-title at the Ph.D. level, that is, a Ph.D. in (graduate program name) and African Studies.

The following graduate programs offer dual-title Ph.D. degrees in African Studies: Comparative Literature, French, Geography, and Political Science.

The primary objective of the dual-title degree program in African Studies is to expand teaching, research, and scholarship on Africa and African societies at Penn State. This is accomplished by providing multidisciplinary training for Penn State doctoral students, who are undertaking graduate studies on Africa-related topics in a number of allied disciplines, such as geography, history, political science, sociology, comparative literature, public health, forestry, agricultural sciences, and international studies. The program complements training on Africa for graduate students in other areas such as business, law, and engineering. The program provides these various disciplines with an intellectual and physical location at which their African scholarship can be put to the most effective use. The program uses the research projects and institutional networks of core and affiliate African Studies Graduate Faculty to provide research opportunities and links in Africa for Penn State doctoral students. The program aims to produce Penn State doctoral graduates, who have a comparative advantage for African Studies-related employment in academia, bilateral and multilateral agencies and international think-tanks.

Admission Requirements

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-208 Dual-Title Graduate Degree Programs (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-208-dual-titles/>).

Students must apply and be admitted to the primary graduate program and the Graduate School before they can apply for admission to the dual-title degree program. Applicants interested in the dual-title degree program may make their interest in the program known clearly on their applications to the major program and include remarks in their statement of purpose that address the ways in which their research and professional goals reflect an interest in African Studies-related research.

To be enrolled in the Dual Title Doctoral Degree Program in African Studies, a student must submit a letter of application and transcript, which will be reviewed by an African Studies Admissions Committee. An applicant must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4 point scale) to be considered for enrollment in the dual-title degree program. Students must apply for enrollment into the dual-title degree program in African Studies prior to taking the qualifying examination in their primary program.

Degree Requirements

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-208 Dual-Title Graduate Degree Programs (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-208-dual-titles/>).

The Dual-Title Doctoral Degree in African Studies is awarded to students who are admitted to a Ph.D. program that has adopted the dual-title degree program in African Studies. The minimum course requirements are as follows.

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
AFR 501	Key Issues in African Studies	3
or AFR 505	African Studies Methodology	
15 credits of Africa-centered coursework at the 400 or 500-level:		15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a minimum of 6 of these credits must be taken from a list of courses maintained by the African Studies program chair • as many as 6 of the 15 credits may come from other units as approved by the Director of Graduate Studies in the African Studies Program • no more than 6 credits may be taken at the 400-level and no more than 6 combined credits may come from individual studies courses and/or foreign studies courses 		
Communication and foreign language requirements will be determined by the student and the academic advisers and the African Studies Program		
Total Credits		18

The choice of electives in African Studies is to be proposed by the student and is subject to approval by the academic advisers from the primary program and the African Studies Program. The suite of selected courses should have an integrated, intellectual thrust that probes a thematic, national or regional issue and that is complementary to the student's specialty in the primary program.

Language Requirement

The language requirement for the dual-title degree program is determined by the academic advisers in the primary program and the African Studies Program, in accordance with the existing language requirements of the primary program.

qualifying Examination

The dual-title degree is guided by the Qualifying Exam procedure of the primary program. Dual-title graduate degree students may require an additional semester to fulfill requirements for both areas of study and, therefore, the qualifying examination may be delayed one semester beyond the normal period allowable. There will be a single qualifying examination, containing elements of both the major discipline and African Studies.

Ph.D. committee Composition

In addition to the general Graduate Council requirements for Ph.D. committees (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/phd-dissertation-committee-formation/>), the committee must include at least one member of the African Studies Graduate Faculty. Faculty members who hold appointments in both programs' Graduate Faculty may serve in a combined role. The chair of the committee is typically from the primary program. If the chair is not also

a member of the Graduate Faculty in African Studies, the member of the committee representing African Studies must be appointed as co-chair.

Comprehensive Examination

After completing all course work, doctoral students must pass a comprehensive examination that includes written and oral components. Written components are administered in the student's primary discipline and in African Studies. The African Studies representative on the student's Ph.D. committee develops questions for and participates in the evaluation of the comprehensive examination. The African Studies component of the exam is based on the student's thematic, national or regional area of interest and specialization in African Studies.

Dissertation and Dissertation Defense

Upon completion of the doctoral dissertation, the candidate must pass a final oral examination (the dissertation defense) to earn the Ph.D. degree. Students enrolled in the dual-title program are required to write and orally defend a dissertation on a topic that reflects their original research and education in both the primary discipline and African Studies.

Minor

A graduate minor is available in any approved graduate major or dual-title program. The default requirements for a graduate minor are stated in Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>) and GCAC-700 Professional Degree Policies (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>), depending on the type of degree the student is pursuing:

- GCAC-611 Minor - Research Doctorate (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/gcac-611-minor-research-doctorate/>)
- GCAC-641 Minor - Research Master's (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/gcac-641-minor-research-masters/>)
- GCAC-709 Minor - Professional Doctorate (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-700/gcac-709-professional-doctoral-minor/>)
- GCAC-741 Minor - Professional Master's (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-700/gcac-741-masters-minor-professional/>)

Student Aid

Graduate assistantships available to students in this program and other forms of student aid are described in the Tuition & Funding (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-funding/>) section of The Graduate School's website. Students on graduate assistantships must adhere to the course load limits (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gsad/gsad-900/gsad-901-graduate-assistants/>) set by The Graduate School.

Courses

Graduate courses carry numbers from 500 to 699 and 800 to 899. Advanced undergraduate courses numbered between 400 and 499 may be used to meet some graduate degree requirements when taken by graduate students. Courses below the 400 level may not. A graduate student may register for or audit these courses in order to make up deficiencies or to fill in gaps in previous education but not to meet requirements for an advanced degree.

African Studies (AFR) Course List (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/graduate/afr/>)

Learning Outcomes

1. Graduates will demonstrate command of historical and current socioeconomic developments of Africa.
2. Graduates will demonstrate command of applying social science and humanities methodologies in the advancement of knowledge about Africa's broad socioeconomic developments.
3. Graduates will demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate major issues in the study of Africa.
4. Graduates will have command of critical thinking and interdisciplinary analysis of developments in Africa.
5. Graduates will master the highest ethical standards required in conducting research and in applying their discipline.

Contact

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