

African and African Diaspora Studies

Master of Arts
Doctor of Philosophy

For More Information

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Facilities for Graduate Work

Graduate students in the [African and African Diaspora Studies Department \(AADS\)](#) have access to four specialized units dedicated to Black Studies scholarship. All four units are housed within the Gordon-White Building (GWB), a newly renovated space dedicated to scholarship, community building, and art.

[African and African Diaspora Studies Department \(AADS\)](#), as an academic unit, promotes scholar-activism through the study of the intellectual, political, artistic, and social experiences of people of African descent throughout Africa and the African diaspora. The more than 30 full-time departmental faculty members and jointly-affiliated faculty members represent the interdisciplinary nature of Black Studies.

[The John L. Warfield Center for African and African American Studies \(WCAAAS\)](#) supports the research and programmatic initiatives of faculty affiliates and students, and collaborates with local organizations in the investigation and enhancement of Black peoples' lives. Through research, programming, and community engagement, the Center supports scholarship and creative work that fosters social justice for people of African descent.

[The Institute for Urban Policy Research and Analysis \(IUPRA\)](#) produces cutting-edge policy and legal research aimed at strengthening Black communities, promoting social justice, and combating anti-Black racism. The institute's staff, academic fellows, and graduate students generate publications, reports, briefs, grants, and contracts with the aim of shaping policy that will lead to societal and institutional change beneficial to the lives of African Americans and other people of color in the state of Texas.

[The Art Galleries at Black Studies \(AGBS\)](#), formerly known as the Warfield Center Galleries, is the sole on-campus entity dedicated to showcasing narratives of the African and the African Diaspora. Comprised of two galleries—The Christian-Green Gallery and the Idea Lab—AGBS spaces serve as platforms for critical exchanges concerning the experiences, narratives, and histories of the Black Diaspora. AGBS is a living arts space that encourages, promotes, and sustains Black artistic expression.

Black Studies graduate students also have access to the University's extensive and world-renowned research library system, including the Perry-Castañeda Library with over 2.5 million volumes, the Human Rights Documentation Initiative, the Benson Latin American Collection, and the Harry Ransom Center. Additionally, the Black Diaspora Archive (BDA), the only archive of its kind at a higher education institution in the U.S., collects documentary, audiovisual, digital, and artistic works related to

the Black Diaspora. While the geographic collecting area for the Black Diaspora is global, this collection is focused on materials generated in and/or describing experiences from the Americas and the Caribbean. Through a partnership between Black Studies, The University of Texas Libraries, and the Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies (LLILAS), the archive continues to grow into a collection sought after by researchers and students throughout the world. Another collection, The Black Queer Studies Collection, features, promotes, and increases the discoverability of The University of Texas at Austin libraries' unique holdings in the area of Black Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) Studies. This groundbreaking project in librarianship addresses standard obstacles posed by the Library of Congress Subject Headings and information retrieval systems used to locate materials by and about Black diasporic LGBTQ people. Students are also encouraged to utilize campus-wide arts facilities including the Fine Arts Library, the Texas Performing Arts Center, and the Blanton Museum of Art.

Areas of Study

The graduate program in AADS provides students with the skills and analytical frameworks necessary to engage interdisciplinary approaches for examining the lives of people of African descent throughout Africa and the African Diaspora, including the United States, the Caribbean, and Latin America.

AADS students interrogate understandings of Blackness and how it is expressed throughout the Diaspora, while engaging in subfields of critical race theory, Black queer theory, Black political theory and economics, Black arts and performance studies, Black diaspora history and anthropology, and Black feminisms. Students also critically engage Black Studies within the contexts of areas such as healthcare, education, psychology, and sociology. The program's objective is to provide students with the broad foundational knowledge necessary to pursue an academic career or conduct scholarly research in Black Studies, African and African Diaspora Studies, Africana Studies and/or related fields.

Doctoral Portfolio Program in African and African Diaspora Studies

University of Texas at Austin doctoral students enrolled in other departments who are interested in African and African Diaspora Studies are invited to apply to the AADS Doctoral Portfolio Program. The program engages students in an advanced approach to interdisciplinary studies and provides tools for mapping of the intellectual, political, and creative breadth of African and African Diaspora Studies. Students in the program sustain a rigorous dialogue about African and African Diaspora Studies from an interdisciplinary methodological standpoint, become familiar with the diversity of faculty specialties within African and African Diaspora Studies, and are instructed in the application of the theoretical and conceptual tools of analysis and research on African-descended peoples.

Applicants to the portfolio program must submit a research statement along with their application. This statement will help the AADS Portfolio Administrator guide the student in the completion of 12 hours of graduate-level AADS coursework, including at least one AADS core course. All portfolio students are required to present their field-related research to an open audience prior to graduation.

The certification requirements for the doctoral portfolio program differ from the requirements for graduate degrees and should be undertaken only with the approval of the student's supervising advisor and the student's departmental graduate advisor. With the consent of a graduate student's home department, courses used to satisfy portfolio requirements may be included in the program of work for the doctoral degree. Applicants must be in good standing in an approved doctoral

program, maintain a grade point average of 3.3 or better, and receive approval to join the portfolio program from their faculty advisor, their department's graduate advisor, and the African and African Diaspora Studies Portfolio Steering Committee. Although students can enter the African and African Diaspora Studies Portfolio Program at any point in their doctoral work, it is recommended that they complete the portfolio requirements before being admitted to candidacy.

Additional requirements and application information are available [here](#).

Graduate Studies Committee

The following faculty members served on the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) in the spring 2025 semester.

Abimbola Adunni Adedokun	Yasmiyn Irizarry
Omoniye Afolabi	Monica A Jimenez
Bedour Alagrar	Stephen H Marshall
Jossianna Arroyo Martinez	Chelsi West Ohueri
Anthony L Brown	Marcelo Paixao
Keffrelyn D Brown	Samantha Nicole Pinto
Simone Arlene Browne	Richard J Reddick
Nathaniel Bryan	Ashante M Reese
Michael Ray Charles	Cherise Smith
Danielle P Clealand	Eric Tang
Amira Rose Davis	Kevin J Thomas
Nessette Falu	Lisa B Thompson
Ashley Farmer	Shirley E Thompson
Kevin M Foster	Pavithra Vasudevan
Lyndon K Gill	Patrick F Walter
Edmund T Gordon	Jennifer M Wilks
Nneka R Ibekwe-Okafor	Hershini Young