

Annual Academic Assessment Report

African and African American Studies Graduate Certificate and BA Programs

(6/1/2024)

The African and African American Studies Program is an area studies program within the J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences. The program boasts faculty of over 18 disciplines contributing to its interdisciplinary curriculum. University of Arkansas students can declare a combined major or a minor in African and African American studies. The AAST program supports its highest-achieving students with scholarships that can be used throughout their academic career at the University campus or toward a study abroad program.

AAST program alums are accepted to graduate programs and professional schools across the nation, as well as securing employment with some of the most successful corporations in the country. In addition, the African and African American Studies Program continues to seek new and exciting ways to expand its academic offerings with the campus and the community.

The Graduate Certificate Program and BA degree in African and African American Studies at the University of Arkansas features a curriculum designed to facilitate the following goals:

- Demonstrate knowledge of multi and interdisciplinary research techniques, documentation, organization, and different writing styles used in AAST
- Develop an appreciation of African and African diaspora cultures, including African American, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Indigenous, Afro-Latinas, and all others.
- Apply African and African diaspora-centered theories, approaches, concepts, and empirical research from multiple disciplines.
- Understand ideas of oppression, resistance, power, and intersectionality as they apply to Africa and the diaspora.

University Learning Goals, Outcomes, and Indicators

General Education Course Assessment

AAST has one course in the University core: AAST 2023 -The African American Experience. We have been conducting course assessments in this course for Learning outcomes 3.2 and 4.2.

Learning Outcome 3.2

Upon reaching this goal, students can articulate at least three vital concepts of aesthetic, humane, and ethical sensibilities embodied in the humanities.

Learning Indicators for Learning Outcome 3.2: To successfully achieve this outcome, students will complete at least three of these five Indicators:

- Identify fundamental concepts, structures, themes, and principles of the discipline being introduced
- Analyze texts and other created artifacts using theories and methods of the discipline
- Produce a reasonable short essay about the material introduced in the course

- Interpret texts and other created artifacts within multiple historical, intellectual, and cultural contexts.
- Draw connections among cultural achievements of various groups of people of different ethnicities, religious backgrounds, racial origins, and sexual identities.
- **Assessment Strategy**
- According to the Provost's office report, faculty teaching AAST 2023-002, which teaches the General Education Learning Outcome GELO 3.2 and GELO 4.2, will develop assignments to serve as assessment instruments. Scores for this assessment will be reported on a 4.0 scale as a column in the Blackboard gradebook for the respective courses.

Learning Outcome 4.2

Upon reaching this goal, students will have developed familiarity with concepts of diversity in the United States.

Learning Indicators for Learning Outcome 4.2: To successfully achieve this outcome, students will complete at least three of these five indicators:

- Identify and describe examples of historical and present-day issues related to diversity and inclusion in the United States.
- Explain the historical and/or contemporary construction of difference through analysis of power structures, privilege, and explicit or implicit prejudice, as well as their roles in fostering discrimination and inequalities in the United States, whether cultural, legal, political, or social.
- Describe the advantages of inclusion by identifying and analyzing notions of inclusivity and pathways for cultivating inclusion at all levels of society, whether cultural, legal, political, or social.
- Analyze the group agency's historical and/or contemporary development and assess its role in addressing discrimination and inequalities in the United States.
- Demonstrate problem-solving and change management skills for achieving social equity.

Core Assessment Strategy

According to the Provost's office report, faculty teaching AAST 2023-002, which teaches the General Education Learning Outcome GELO 3.2 & GELO 4.2, will develop assignments to serve as assessment instruments. Scores for this assessment will be reported on a 4.0 scale as a column in the Blackboard gradebook for the respective courses.

Program Learning Goals, Outcomes, and Indicators

In addition to its curricular outcomes and assessments in the core course – AAST 2023 - The African American Experience, the AAST Program also plans to pursue objectives designed to evaluate undergraduate success in the program. In Fall 2024, we will initiate a new assessment process in our introductory classes (AAST 1003 - Introduction to African and African American Studies and AAST 2023) as well as our Graduate Certificate and upper-level courses (AAST 5003 – Graduate Readings in African and African American Studies and AAST

3673/5673—Distant Relatives) will complement existing assessments conducted by departments in cross-listed courses such as (AAST/HIST 3233)—African American History to 1877 and (AAST/HIST 3243) —African American History since 1877. Data collection for this assessment commenced in the Fall of 2023.

AAST will measure three goals in specific courses within the AAST program to achieve the previously mentioned outcomes:

Goal 1: Cultivate, critically engage, and connect the inter- and multi-disciplinary skills.

Learning Outcome: Upon reaching this goal, students will be able to understand the different practices, methodologies, and interrelationships of different disciplines but also between distinct categories of intersectional identities and how they reflect specific relations both to dominant or hierarchical power structures and to each other. Students will be able to grapple with critical identity characteristics/ markers such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and location (geographic regions, nation, space).

Learning indicators:

- A. Students will demonstrate an awareness of the range of approaches, methods, and source-types Black Studies practitioners use to answer research questions.
- B. Students will familiarize themselves with different methods of using primary sources and use them to make accurate and relevant interpretations about a historical era, event, or theme.
- C. Students can analyze and evaluate interpretations within multi- and interdisciplinary secondary sources. They will improve their interdisciplinary analysis through readings from literature, law, sociology, films, and other media, keeping in mind the heterogeneity of the African diaspora.
- D. Students will be able to assess sources that incorporate multiple disciplinary perspectives and make sound judgments based on analysis and evaluation of differing and/or competing interpretations.

Assessment Strategy: Learning Outcome 1 will be assessed across the curriculum as part of the Introduction to African and African American Studies and African American Experience requirements in the AAST BA degree and the Graduate Certificate level course. Faculty teaching these AAST courses will develop assignments to serve as assessment instruments. Scores for this assessment will be reported on a 4.0 scale as a column in the Blackboard gradebook for the respective courses.

Goal 2: Diasporic Perspectives and Comparative Analyses

Upon reaching this goal, students will be able to understand that any geographical location does not bind blackness and that it is necessary to study black experiences within global processes of racial ordering in the Americas, Europe, Africa, the Pacific, and Asia. Black studies scholars connect, draw parallels, and chart discontinuities between people of color in diverse locations at disparate times or eras.

Learning Indicators:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- A. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the critical origins of the African diaspora, key concepts, texts, historical and political developments, and the diversity of Black

experiences across the African diaspora and demonstrate a high degree of cultural competency concerning the African diaspora.

- B. Students will be able to compare different perspectives about politics, arts and culture, religion, the experience of social inequality, and effort towards diasporic connections in the African diaspora from Brazil to the Hispanic Antilles, the British Caribbean, and the USA.
- C. Improve their interdisciplinary analysis through readings from literature, law, sociology, films, and other media, keeping in mind the heterogeneity of the African diaspora.
- D. Understand and analyze Black absence, presence, and ways of knowing by interrogating the archive, knowledge production, and producers and developing their research skills through analyzing and evaluating primary and secondary sources.

Assessment Strategy: Learning Outcome 3 will be assessed as part of the AAST BA degree. Faculty teaching AAST 3673/5673 and the Study Abroad course will use an African-centered cultural competence test to assess students and students' final research project. These assessments will be reported on a 4.0 scale as a column in the Blackboard gradebook for the course.

Goal 3: Oppression and Resistance, and non-linear thinking

Upon reaching this goal, students will be able to understand the mechanisms of oppression and the primary social, cultural, and political movements and actors in African and African American Studies from Abolition through to the present. They will excavate the affected population's myriad forms of resistance, such as developing specific counter-narratives, distinctive cultural practices, and belief systems executed to preserve collective and individual humanity in the face of genocidal conditions. Students will probe the significance of incremental change to the overthrow of oppression, injustice, exploitation and end to both psychological and physical terror. They will understand silences, gaps, and erasures of resistance by probing not only the outspoken performances but also those often veiled or dissembled practices.

We unravel and reveal the myriad rituals and cultural creations that nurture and sustain oppositional consciousness while appearing to signal acquiescence, accommodation, and adaptation. Students will recognize that revolutions can and often do turn backward and occur with interrupted irregularity. Thus, understanding previous historical eras is especially important or relevant to developing strategies and goals to sculpt an improved future.

Learning indicators:

- A. Participants will have an opportunity to openly discuss race, class, ability, religious oppression, and power/privilege in a staff-only space.
- B. Participants will learn specific vocabulary used on campuses and within academia to describe everyday life experiences and perspectives.
- C. Participants will be educated on microaggressions to reduce and attempt to eliminate the racist, classist, sexist, heterosexist, ableist, and privileged attitudes on our campus (from the Strategic Plan).
- D. Participants can engage in meaningful conversations with their colleagues around multiple topics and learn about multiple perspectives in a brave space.

The University of Arkansas' 150 Forward strategic planning process is a campuswide, collaborative effort to map out where we are as a land-grant institution and how to tease out more and better outcomes in achieving the university's mission.

Assessment Strategy

Learning Outcome 3 will be assessed across the curriculum as part of the Introduction to African and African American Studies and African American Experience requirements in the AAST BA degree. Faculty teaching these AAST courses will develop assignments to serve as assessment instruments. Scores for this assessment will be reported on a 4.0 scale as a column in the Blackboard gradebook for the respective courses.

Student Learning Goals	Embedded Exam Questions and Assignment Activities	Essay Writing	Research Paper Writing	Exit Interviews
Students will identify the primary social, cultural, and political movements and actors in African and African American Studies from Abolition to the present.	Summative assessments in the AAST course			Questions included in an oral exit interview.
Students will identify the primary questions and methodologies employed by scholars of the African American experience, including literary, historical, sociological, anthropological, and religious studies analysis.	Research assignment question in AAST 1003 Intro to African and African American Studies And AAST 2023 The African American Experience			Questions included in the oral exit interview.
Students will analyze the		Research paper written in		Questions included in oral

<p>nature and extent of contributions made by African Americans to host nations through resistance, protest movements, labor, expertise, political negotiations, and cultural contributions.</p>		<p>the course of fulfilling Graduate Certificate and upper-division course electives requirements.</p>		<p>Exit interview.</p>
<p>Students will identify the metaphor that best interprets the African and African American experience and support their choice.</p>				<p>Questions included in the oral exit interview.</p>
<p>[Graduate Certificate and Honors designation] Students will develop an argument based on new research and synthesize their class learning about a fundamental problem in studying African and African American Studies.</p>			<p>15-page research paper written as part of a final research and or Independent Study</p>	

AAST Exit Interview Instrument

Discuss the following questions:

Based on your AAST major or minor learning, which metaphor(s) do you think most effectively frames the African and African American experience: resistance, movement, accommodation, renewal, or a metaphor/theme of your choosing? Explain why. How have blacks contributed to their host nations?

Imagine you are a first-year student considering a major or minor in African and African American Studies. Describe the questions students in African and African American Studies classes study and how researchers have studied them. How would you respond?

Based on your classes in the major or minor, what are the most influential movements in which African Americans have taken part? What is the most important thing you learned?

**Results of Core Assessment: AAST 2023 The African American Experience
Caree Banton**

Fall 2023	AAST 2023	
Goals	3.2	4.2
0	1	5
1	2	14
2	0	0
3	8	1
4	22	28
No Assessment value	18	5

Kimberly Janssen

Fall 2023	AAST		Fall 2023	AAST	
	<u>2023-002</u>			<u>2023-001</u>	
Goals	3.2	4.2		3.2	4.2
0	2	2		0	0
1	0	0		0	4
2	3	10		4	13
3	14	20		13	3
4	14	1		16	12
<u>Spring 2024</u>	<u>AAST 2023-907</u>		<u>Summer 2023</u>	<u>AAST 2023-901</u>	

Goals	3.2	4.2			3.2	4.2	
	0	0			2	2	
	0	0			0	0	
	4	19			4	4	
	13	5			3	8	
	16	0			5	0	
<u>Summer</u> <u>2023</u>	<u>AAST</u> <u>2023-</u> <u>903</u>						
Goals	3.2	4.2					
	0	0					
	1	1					
	0	5					
	7	9					
	10	3					