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I. Introduction

Welcome to the Ph.D. program in the Department of Africana Studies. This handbook is intended to present the guidelines and expectations for the program, to provide answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about the program, and to help graduate students plan their graduate academic program effectively.

While this handbook presents the most comprehensive and complete information about the Ph.D. program, no such written guide can foresee every academic, administrative, or programmatic issue that might arise. Since each graduate student course of study in the program is highly individualized and many distinctive scholarly combinations are possible, you will also want to consult with the Director of Graduate Studies, your graduate faculty advisor, departmental faculty and staff, and fellow graduate students throughout your time in the program. More generally, you are urged to engage in regular and collegial conversations with other Brown University faculty and graduate students.

It is every graduate student’s responsibility to be aware of the contents of this handbook, and to consult it from time to time when questions arise and/or when preparing for the next stage of the program. Because the Department of Africana Studies faculty and the profession itself are continually changing, these guidelines may be revised. When changes have been approved, they will be introduced as quickly as possible.

II. Arrival on Campus

Your principal initial contacts in the Department of Africana Studies are the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), Professor Anani Dzidzienyo and the Academic Department Manager, Deborah Bowen. Introduce yourself to them when you arrive on campus. They will be helping you with the academic and administrative procedures of being a graduate student at Brown. Each of them is informed about the University, the Graduate School, the Department, and the graduate program.

Immediately upon your arrival on campus, please inform the DGS that you have arrived on campus and schedule an appointment to discuss your program and any other matters. The DGS will be an important person for you. In addition to being your first academic advisor, the DGS serves as chair of the department's Graduate Committee, which oversees graduate program policy and is the decision-making body for any special questions or issues affecting your graduate program experience. During your time in the Department of Africana Studies, the DGS may be involved with you on a number of important matters, ranging from how you fulfill course and language requirements to teaching assignments to the makeup of your preliminary examination and dissertation committees.

For the 2014-2015 academic year, Professor Anani Dzidzienyo will serve as the Director of Graduate Study.

III. About the Department

The Department of Africana Studies at Brown University is the intellectual center for faculty and students interested in the critical study of the artistic, cultural, historical, literary, and theoretical expressions of the peoples and cultures of Africa and the African Diaspora. Central to the intellectual work of the department is the close collaboration of artists and scholars in examining the relationships between academic and artistic modes of knowledge and representations of the world and human
existence. Unique in this respect, the Department’s forum for arts and ideas, Rites and Reason Theatre, brings together artists and scholars to collaborate on modes of expression in communicating new and innovative thoughts and ideas.

The Department of Africana Studies has one of the leading faculties in the discipline. Members of the faculty have received many prestigious honors and awards such as the Gish Award, the Guggenheim Fellowship, the MacArthur Fellowship, and the Man Booker International Prize. In addition, Africana Studies faculty members have successfully competed for fellowships and grants to support their research from such institutions as the Ford Foundation, Fulbright Program, National Endowment for the Arts, and National Science Foundation.

Asa Messer Professor John Edgar Wideman, Distinguished Visiting Professor Brenda Marie Osbey and Professors Olakunle George and Rolland Murray are known for their significant contributions to Africana literature, literary theory and criticism. Professors Anthony Bogues, Paget Henry and Tricia Rose are noted for their theoretical contributions to developments in Africana philosophy, critical theory, feminist theory, and political theory. Professor Françoise N. Hamlin has produced significant texts in African American history. Professor Anani Dzidziienyo, a foundational scholar of Afro-Brazilian and Latin American Studies, and Professor Keisha-Khan Perry have forged new boundaries in the transnational study of race, gender, culture and politics in the African diaspora in the Americas. Professors Lundy Braun and Geri Augusto have produced cutting edge scholarship in the intersection of race, gender and science studies and Professor Elmo Terry Morgan has produced innovative theoretical and pedagogical scholarship in the theatre arts. With this extremely talented and well respected faculty, the Department of Africana Studies readily attracts highly qualified, critical and creative undergraduate and graduate students to the department and to Brown University.

With the dynamic growth and evolution of the discipline of Africana Studies, the Brown University Department of Africana Studies remains at the forefront of advancing the discipline through the comprehensive study of the peoples and cultures of Africa and the African Diaspora that leads to the production of critical knowledges about the world and human existence.

IV. About the Ph.D. Program in Africana Studies

The Ph.D. program in Africana Studies at Brown University builds on and expands the intellectual approach of the department to the discipline. The Department’s distinctive critical interdisciplinarity provides a firm base from which to respond to the opportunities and challenges within the discipline as well as develop cutting edge scholarship that contributes to the discipline, the academy, and the broader public.

The goal of the Brown Africana Studies Ph.D. program is to rigorously prepare students to develop new and innovative scholarship that explores and analyzes the distinct contributions of Africana cultural, intellectual, political, and artistic productions as well as critically investigate and develop new disciplinary and interdisciplinary methods and theories. The program trains students to become skilled and informed scholars and educators poised to make significant contributions to academic and nonacademic communities and initiate cultural and social policies with humanitarian objectives informed by critical thinking and global perspectives on social and human development.

Graduate students in the program will receive rigorous training in the discipline of Africana Studies and the theories and methods of interdisciplinary work, with an acute focus on race, class, gender, and sexuality, while being critically conversant with the methods and theories of other academic disciplines. Students will pursue their individualized research projects in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and other department and department-affiliated faculty.
The graduate program features three areas of emphasis: 1) Studies in History, Politics, and Theory; 2) Studies in Literary, Expressive, and Performance Cultures; and 3) Studies in Feminism, Gender, and Sexuality. Within these three areas, Africana Studies graduate students will be able to explore the breadth and depth of the discipline while developing capacity and competence in distinct areas of scholarship.

Studies in History, Politics, and Theory

Studies in History, Politics, and Theory focuses on the institutional, theoretical and material expressions of Africana culture, experience, and thought. Graduate students with research interests in this area will draw on theories, methods, and approaches in Africana Studies as well as Africana philosophy, critical theory, feminist theory, political theory, history, religious studies, and sociology in developing innovative research projects that engage past and present social and political formations, the production and reproduction of critical knowledges, and the representation of historical and political ideas and formations.

Studies in Literary, Expressive, and Performance Cultures

Studies in Literary, Expressive and Performance Cultures focuses on the critical study of visual culture, performance, and the literary arts that critique the contributions and (self) representations of people of African descent in global and contested societies. Graduate students with research interests in this area will draw on the methods and theories in Africana Studies as well as engage scholarship in aesthetic theory, cultural studies, literary theory and criticism, media studies, and performance studies.

Studies in Feminism, Gender, and Sexuality

Studies in Feminism, Gender, and Sexuality focuses on the cultural, ideological, political, and theoretical implications of feminist consciousness, practices, and theories, constructions of gender as well as critical understandings and analyses of sexuality throughout the Africana world. This area of emphasis also stresses the critical examination of the complex interrelationships between feminist theory, constructions of gender and sexuality, and the constructions and operations of legal systems and public policy. Graduate studies with research interests in this area will critically engage concepts, methods, and theories developed in critical theories of race, diaspora studies, feminist studies, masculinity studies, queer theory, and womanist theory to examine historical and contemporary forms and formulations of feminism, gender, and sexuality across various Africana social, cultural, economic, political, and theoretical formations.

V. Ph.D. Requirements

The Ph.D. in Africana Studies requires the successful completion of fourteen (14) semester courses, of which six must be in the student’s chosen field of research emphasis and three should be completed in the other two chosen fields. Four of the required courses consist of the year-long first and second year seminars. Students entering the program with a master’s degree may petition the graduate program for advanced standing after one year of residency in the program. The Ph.D. program is designed to be completed in five years. Financial support for Ph.D. students does not generally extend beyond the fifth year.
First Year

Students must take eight (8) courses in the first year, four (4) in the Fall and also in the Spring to be in good standing. Students must take the year-long seminar “Theories and Histories of Africana Studies.” This seminar introduces students to the field of Africana Studies, the central questions and concepts within the field, prominent texts and thinkers in the discipline, and the relation of the field to the other academic disciplines and the broader society. Students must also satisfactorily complete six other courses, half of which should be in the chosen field of research emphasis. By the end of the first year, students should satisfactorily complete the language requirement for the program.

Second Year

Students must take six (6) courses in the second year, three (3) in the Fall and also in the Spring to remain in good standing. During the second year students will take the year-long seminar “Methods in Africana Studies.” This seminar introduces students to the different methodological approaches in the discipline of Africana Studies. Students will be introduced to the critical interdisciplinarity of the discipline as well as methodological approaches from other disciplinary fields that are appropriate for research and study in Africana Studies. With the approval of the DGS, students have the option of completing these 14 courses using the model of 4 and 3 courses in the first year and 4 and 3 courses in the second year. However, they will have to TA in the second year. Students must also satisfactorily complete four (4) other courses, half of which should be in the chosen field of emphasis. By the end of the second year, students will have chosen their research advisor and will begin preparing for their candidacy or preliminary examinations.

Third Year

During the third year students will prepare for their candidacy or preliminary examinations. Students will not be required to take any courses unless they desire to do so. However, all third year students must register for AFRI 2970, the preliminary exam preparation course. If students desire to do a course with a committee or faculty member as part of the preparation for their exams, they can register for AFRI 2980, the graduate independent reading and research course. All three examinations are normally scheduled by the student’s committee for the Fall of the third year. Students must satisfactorily complete these examinations in their chosen fields of emphasis along with any additional examinations in secondary fields of research and teaching competence. After the successful completion of the candidacy examinations, students will begin preparation of the dissertation proposal in the spring of the third year. The dissertation proposal must be presented to the faculty and successfully defended no later than May 15th if the student is to remain in good standing.

Fourth Year

During the fourth year students will research and begin to write their dissertations. During this year, students may be away on fellowships or may choose to stay here. In the latter case, students will have to register for AFRI 2990, the thesis preparation course and TA while they do the research for their dissertation. Students will also participate in the department’s dissertation colloquium where they will receive critical feedback on their projects from department and department-affiliated faculty to ensure the successful completion of their projects.

Fifth Year

In the fifth year students are expected to be done with researching and to be focused on writing their dissertations. Students will register for AFRI 2990, the thesis preparation course, and will be fully funded by a dissertation fellowship from the Graduate School. With the approval of the DGS,
students may apply to the Graduate School for their dissertation fellowship in the fourth year and finish up writing while doing a TA in the fifth and final year.

Language Requirement

Ph.D. students must demonstrate competency in one of the following languages: French, German, Portuguese, or Spanish. Depending on the student’s research interests, the language requirement may also be fulfilled by demonstrating competency in an indigenous African language or another language relevant to their area of scholarly interest. The language requirement may be fulfilled either through appropriate coursework or by examination and may be met by one of the following methods:

1.) Passing a translation exam administered by Africana Studies faculty or qualified faculty in other Brown University departments;

2.) Earning a grade of B or better in a 1000-level or higher course offered by a Brown University foreign language department, for which the professor attests that teaching and reading assignments were preponderantly in that language. (This course may count towards the 16 required courses if the course content coheres with the student’s research interests);

3.) Passing a graduate level reading course offered by a Foreign Language Department.

Summer Foreign Language reading courses are offered by Brown University for graduate students. Graduate students should satisfy the foreign language requirement as early as possible in the program. In no case will a student be allowed to take qualifying examinations without satisfying this requirement.

Teaching

At least two semesters of teaching is required of all Ph.D. students. Students usually serve as teaching assistants in undergraduate courses offered by the department during their second year. Students may also petition the faculty to teach their own small courses/seminars focused on their research areas in the fourth or fifth years of study.

Annual Review

The faculty will meet once a year, usually in April at a meeting called by the DGS, to review the progress of each of the current Ph.D. students enrolled in the program. Faculty will discuss overall student progress, proposed examinations and dissertation proposals, and dissertation writing to ensure that students are satisfactorily progressing through the program and possess the breadth and depth of scholarly knowledge and skill to certify expertise in Africana Studies. The faculty may suggest to the DGS possible publication or presentation of projects, highlight potential problems and suggest possible resolutions; and consider changes to the graduate curriculum.

VI. M.A. Requirements

Students are admitted to the graduate program for study leading to a terminal M.A. degree only under exceptional circumstances. The M.A. requires eight semester courses. For those students who opt to complete a thesis, two of these courses will be directed reading and research courses for the completion of the master’s thesis. The M.A. can normally be obtained in one academic year inclusive of requisite summer research for the completion of the writing and defending of the M.A.
thesis. The master’s degree must be completed within two years from the date of entering the program.

Students admitted to the master’s program are required to take the year-long graduate seminar, “Theories and Methods of Africana Studies.” Students must also take two courses in their area of research emphasis as well as up to four additional graduate courses. For example, a graduate seminar on gender and sexuality; a graduate seminar on Africana Thought; and/or a graduate seminar on Africana literary and expressive culture. Students may choose courses offered by department faculty, appropriate graduate courses in other Brown departments or programs as well as reading and research courses under the guidance of department and affiliated faculty.

The En Route MA

Students enrolled in our PhD program can receive an “en route MA”. This degree can be conferred after the successful completion of two years of designated course work. The student must apply for this degree. The application must be supported by his/her committee and approved by the faculty at a meeting in the spring of the students second year.

VII. Qualifying Exams

All three qualifying examinations are normally scheduled for the Fall of the third year by the student’s committee. Students must satisfactorily complete these major examinations in their three chosen fields of emphasis along with any additional examinations in secondary fields of research and teaching competence by December 20th to remain in good standing. The qualifying examination committee consists of a chair from the department of Africana Studies, who may also serve as the student’s dissertation advisor, and two members of the faculty in the department or one from without.

The qualifying exams will consist of a written essay in each of the candidate’s three chosen fields. Each committee member will be responsible for generating the set of questions from which the student will pick one, and also for the final evaluation of student’s answer to that particular question after inputs from the other members of the committee. In preparation for these exams, the student should have an agreed upon reading list of approximately 60-100 books with each member of his/her committee. These three reading lists should serve as the basis for the questions that will be asked and also for the parameters within which they should be answered. Answers for these exams should be somewhere between 15 and 20 typewritten pages. At the end of the third exam, the committee should meet with the student for an oral discussion and evaluation of the candidate’s performance. Finally, the committee will meet and make an overall evaluation of the candidate using the categories of pass, high pass, and pass with distinction. The results should be filed with the DGS and the department manager using the appropriate form.

VIII. Dissertation Proposal

After passing the preliminary examination, the candidate proceeds to the dissertation proposal. The dissertation proposal must be presented to the faculty and successfully defended no later than one semester after May 15th or the completion of the qualifying examinations. The dissertation proposal will indicate the original scholarly contribution to the discipline of Africana Studies and will make clear the problems or issues as well as the scholarly concerns of the proposed work, the scholarly context within which it positions itself, the structure and organization of the study, and a preliminary bibliography.
Each graduate student is responsible for asking faculty members to serve on the dissertation committee and for designating a dissertation committee chair. The dissertation committee normally consists of three faculty, at least two of whom must be Africana Studies faculty. Candidates may request additional faculty members, even faculty from another university, when it is necessary to adequately cover the candidate’s research interests.

The candidate will present the dissertation proposal during a meeting of the committee at which time the committee will discuss the proposal with the candidate and either approve the proposal or recommend revisions. A copy of the approved proposal, with a cover sheet signed by all members of the committee, will be filed with the Department.

IX. Ph.D. Program Summary Chart – See Appendix A.

X. Financial Support

While decisions about who to support are those of the Department, the funding actually comes from the Graduate School. Therefore, Graduate School regulations and budgeting govern the administration of this support.

The Graduate School offers incoming doctoral students five years of guaranteed financial support, including a stipend, tuition remission, a health-services fee, and a health insurance subsidy. Beginning in September 2010, the Graduate School started to offer incoming doctoral students four summers of support, up from three.

This general approach to support took effect with the cohort of students who matriculated in the fall of 2006, and made explicit the fact that, in general, doctoral students at Brown had been receiving five years of support for some time. (The fourth summer of support was added more recently.) Under this model, steady funding for graduate study is no longer a concern. We hope that our longer commitment, combined with the substantial increase in our base stipend (nearly 50% since 2001), allows students the time and energy they need to apply to their research and scholarship. As always, any guarantee of support is conditional upon students maintaining satisfactory academic progress in their programs.

The Graduate School allots each doctoral program a pre-set number of support units that are assigned to continuing students as teaching assistantships, proctorships, and, in consultation with the dean, dissertation fellowships.

These allotments are tied to a wide complex of needs within these units, including undergraduate enrollments and the professional development of graduate students as future faculty (in the case of teaching assistantships), technical and programmatic support (proctorships), and graduate students’ research and scholarship (research assistantships and fellowships). Upon recommendations from academic programs and other units at Brown, student appointments are then processed by the Graduate School according to the original allotments and to these criteria, among others.

For more information on funding and support, please visit the Graduate School website or send questions or comments to Graduate_Dean@brown.edu.
XI. Graduate Student Travel, Exchange Programs, Leaves and Lectures

Graduate Student Travel Support

Graduate Student Travel Funds for Presenting Papers at Conferences: The Graduate School makes $500 available to support travel to one conference per year at which the student presents a paper. Although funding comes from the Graduate School, application for it must be made through The Department of Africana Studies well in advance of the conference as it requires the signature of the Director of Graduate Studies. The student will have to submit a travel expense form and all original receipts to the Graduate School after travel is completed.

Exchange Programs

The Graduate School has negotiated the following exchange arrangements with some of Brown’s peer institutions. Department of Africana Studies graduate students may participate if the exchange permits types of coursework unavailable at Brown, and if the coursework is especially useful for the student’s plan of study. A student should only engage in an exchange arrangement if it is approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Exchange Scholar Program: After completion of one year at Brown, graduate students are eligible to enroll for one or two semesters in the Graduate Schools of the following universities: University of California at Berkeley, University of Chicago, Columbia University, Cornell University, Harvard University, MIT, Princeton University, Stanford University, and Yale University. You will continue to pay tuition at Brown. Note that participation in this program may affect your financial support from Brown; for example, if your support is in the form of a teaching assistantship and you cannot fulfill your teaching responsibilities while studying at the other institution, you will not receive your stipend.

Cross-Registration at Harvard: There is a long-standing agreement between Harvard and Brown to allow cross-registration of graduate students without paying tuition to the host institution. To do this, you must get the proper forms from the Registrar’s office at each university, and signatures from the Director of each graduate program and a Dean at each Graduate school. If instead of one course you want to take an entire semester’s course work at Harvard, then you need to enroll in the Exchange Scholar Program.

Traveling Scholar Status and Leaves of Absence

The university defines a Traveling Scholar as a graduate student whose research (for example, on a dissertation) requires that he or she must be away from Brown in order to pursue studies full time. The advantages include a very modest registration fee and health insurance support. There is a time limit of one year, though it may be extended in exceptional cases.

Traveling Scholar status should not be confused with a Leave of Absence. A Leave of Absence assumes that the candidate is suspending his or her studies. If a student believes he or she may have to suspend studies for any reason, that student should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies as soon as possible. A Leave of Absence should only be taken for the most serious of reasons, and in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies. Regulations regarding such leaves, readmission, tuition consequences, and so forth are summarized on the Graduate School website.
Department of Africana Studies Graduate Student Lecture

Each year, provided that demands on the Department’s budget permit, the Department of Africana Studies will provide money to graduate students to bring to campus a scholar of their choice. The graduate students will meet as a group to discuss whom they would like to bring to campus. Graduate students are encouraged to consider emerging voices in the discipline and to consult with the Director of Graduate Studies and other department faculty before submitting the proposal to the Chair. The lecture will usually be scheduled for the spring semester.

XII. Facilities, Offices, Contacts and Important Websites

Faculty and Administrative Offices: The Department of Africana Studies’ faculty and administrative offices are located in Churchill House at 155 Angell Street.

Graduate Student Carrels: Graduate student work spaces are located in the Lower Level of Churchill House and are available for student use.

Mail: Every graduate student is assigned a mailbox in the department office. Significant notices and information from the department and other university offices such as the Graduate School are sent there, so you should check your mailboxes regularly. Mailboxes are located on the 2nd floor of Churchill House.

Your Brown mailing address is:

Your Name
Department of Africana Studies
Brown University
Box 1904
Providence, RI 02912

Building Access: You will have access to Churchill House during our normal business hours, however, if you need to use the work carrels outside of open hours, please see Deborah Bowen, Academic Department Manager to request keys.

Libraries: The main library is the Rockefeller Library, 10 Prospect Street, whose holdings include Humanities and Social Sciences. The other large general use library is the Science Library, 201 Thayer Street, which includes materials on psychoanalysis and the history of science and technology among other things. If you wish, you may apply for carrel assignment in the Rockefeller Library. Ask about this at the circulation desk of the library.

Please visit http://library.brown.edu/ for more information about Brown libraries.

Brown students also have borrowing privileges at the RISD Library located at 2 College Street. Ask about this at the Rockefeller Library, as the RISD Library requires a letter of introduction from Brown.

The Brown library participates in various Ivy League, area, and national library consortium arrangements. Furthermore, inter-library loan has become quite fast and can sometimes deliver journal articles to you electronically. You should explore the library website to become more familiar with these resources.
Department of Africana Studies Contacts

**Professor Paget Henry**
Department Chair
paget_henry@brown.edu
(401) 863-3898

**Professor Anani Dzidzienyo**
Director of Graduate Studies
anani_dzidzienyo@brown.edu
(401) 863-1711

**Deborah Bowen**
Academic Department Manager and
Graduate Program Administrator
deborah_bowen@brown.edu
(401) 863-1705
Graduate Program Planning Sheet  
Ph.D. in Africana Studies

Name  
___________________________________________________________  

Date Entered Ph.D. Program  ____________________________________  

Core Graduate Seminars (4 required courses)  

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Semester</th>
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<td><em>Theories in Africana Studies</em></td>
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Core Concentration Seminars (12 required courses; 6 at 2000 level and above)  

Area of Concentration  ________________________________________________  

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**Reading Seminars (included in 12 required courses)**

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Consult with the Director of Graduate Studies to determine which seminars would best fit your scholarly and research goals.

**Language Requirement**

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**Qualifying Exams**

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**Prospectus**

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**Thesis**

Advisor

Department Reader

Department Reader

Outside Reader

Dissertation submitted Graduate School

Date
Faculty

B. Anthony Bogues, Lyn Cros Professor and Director, Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice, African Intellectual History and Political Thought ......................................................... 863-5477
Lundy Braun, Royce Family Professor, Pathology, Medicine and Science Studies .................................. 863-3308
Anani D zdizienyo, Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies,
African/Latin American History and Politics .......................................................... 863-1711
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