

**African & African Diaspora Studies
Graduate Student Handbook
Academic Year 2021-2022**



Dear African & African Diaspora Studies Graduate Students:

Welcome to the 2020 – 2021 academic year! Thank you for choosing African & African Diaspora Studies (AADS) at Florida International University (FIU) as your graduate program! Along with AADS Program Director, Dr. Valerie Patterson, I welcome you to our University! We have a wonderful cohort of incoming graduate students this year, with wide-ranging interests that complement the talents of current students and faculty. Our degrees provide interdisciplinary, graduate-level training where students master theoretical knowledge, gain training in research methods, become proficient with multidisciplinary analytical frameworks, and gain exposure to the fundamental principles and in-depth knowledge of the field of African and African Diaspora Studies. Students develop and use theoretical, analytical, and methodological approaches that they can apply critically to diverse fields of engagement in which they choose to specialize. The MA in AADS degree prepares graduates for further study at the Ph.D. level as well as for professional positions in the public, private, non-profit, and international arenas and for employment in education, public policy, public administration, journalism international organizations, and other fields. The program provides students with a strong grounding in research methods.

In the AADS Graduate Student Handbook, you will find the information you need to successfully complete your degree. The handbook is an invaluable resource that will guide you as you navigate through our program. Please take the time to read it in its entirety and familiarize yourself with its content. We are available to answer any questions you may have during your time in our program. Our graduate program coordinator, Reyni Valerio, is an excellent source of guidance. Her office is located in Labor Center (LC) 307. She can be reached via telephone at 305-348-8455, and via email at valerior@fiu.edu. My office is located in ZEB 255A. I can be reached via telephone at 305-348-6860, and via email at kemcinty@fiu.edu.

Wishing you a successful and enjoyable year!

Dr. Keisha McIntyre-McCullough
Graduate Program Director

** Please note that the content included in this handbook may be subject to change at any time without prior notice.

African and African Diaspora Studies Program

Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

Modesto A. Maidique Campus, LC 304, Miami, FL 33199 * Tel: 305-348-6860/2374 * Fax: 305-348-3270

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The African & African Diaspora Studies Program

AADS

Campus location: Labor Center 304, Modesto Maidique Campus

Departmental phone: 305-348-6860

Departmental email: africana@fiu.edu

Departmental website: Africana.fiu.edu

Departmental Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AfricanaFIU>

Departmental LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/africanafiu/>

Departmental Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AfricanaFIU>

Director, Dr. Valerie Patterson, patterso@fiu.edu

Graduate Program Director, Dr. Keisha McIntyre-McCullough, kemcinty@fiu.edu

Program Coordinator, Reyni Valerio, valerior@fiu.edu

Program Assistant, Lance Bennett, lbennett@fiu.edu

AADS Core Faculty

Dr. Jean-Robert Cadely, cadelyj@fiu.edu

Dr. Okezi Otovo, ootovo@fiu.edu

Dr. Andrea Queeley, aqueeley@fiu.edu

Master of Arts in African and African Diaspora Studies (MA in AADS)

The M.A. degree in African & African Diaspora Studies provides interdisciplinary, graduate level education and prepares students to develop and employ theoretical, analytical, and methodological approaches to the research of critical issues pertaining to African America, Africa and its diasporas. The objective of the M.A. program is to prepare scholars for professional positions in a range of fields and for further study at the Ph.D. level. The M.A. degree can be taken either on-site or online. Multidisciplinary in scope and diverse in approach, the M.A. program in AADS is ideal for candidates interested in a wide array of subjects pertaining to African America, continental Africa and the African diaspora. These include: Social and Public Policy, Cultural Studies, International Relations, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Literary Study, History, Globalization Studies, Education, Religious Studies, Trans-Atlantic Studies, Critical Race Studies, Sociology, and Anthropology. AADS offers both a terminal M.A. and three combined M.A./Ph.D. programs in partnership with International Relations, Atlantic History, and Global & Sociocultural Studies. These attract students from around the world interested in subjects that are geographically and disciplinarily diverse, including but by no means limited to: transnational policy analysis; African, African American and Caribbean history and culture; African environmental politics; transnational migrations; African and African diaspora nationalist struggles, and the Asian diasporas in Africa and the Caribbean. Our focus on African diaspora cultural studies facilitates research in Gender and Sexuality, Literatures, Popular Culture, and Religious syncretism. FIU's strong connections with Latin America and the Caribbean make it an ideal place to study Afro-Latin cultures, with a focus in these two regions. The M.A. degree prepares graduates for further study

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at the Ph.D. level, as well as for professional positions in the public, private, non-profit and international arenas and for employment in education, public policy, public administration, journalism, international organization and other fields.

The MA in African & African Diaspora Studies is cohort-based and only admits students to begin their studies in the Fall semester.

Admission Requirements

Each applicant to the African & African Diaspora Studies Graduate Program (AADS) must complete an online graduate application form and arrange to send transcripts of all prior undergraduate and graduate work and official reports of the TOEFL (if applicable) to the FIU's Office of Graduate Admissions. Each applicant should also send a separate statement of purpose to the director of the AADS Graduate Programs, along with copies of the above material, a resume, and writing sample. The statement of purpose should express the applicant's academic and professional objectives as well as specific interest in African and African Diaspora Studies. Please see below for more information regarding the statement of purpose. Applicants are strongly encouraged to include examples of academic or other relevant professional work that may support their application. Applicants must request three letters of recommendation from professors able to comment on their academic ability. The letters of recommendation should be sent directly to the Director of the African & African Diaspora Studies Graduate Programs.

The application file must be complete before the African & African Diaspora Studies Graduate Committee will consider the applicant for admission. For the admissions deadline please [click here](#). To be admitted into the AADS M.A. program a student must meet the University's graduate admission requirements (which can be found in Florida International [University's Graduate Catalog](#)), and the following minimum standards:

1. Applicants must have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university.
2. Applicants must have an undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0. Applicants must submit grade transcripts for consideration. The student must also have a GPA of 3.5 on any previous graduate work.
3. Applicants should request that three letters of recommendation from individuals able to judge their academic potential, preferably college professors.
4. Applicants should submit a writing sample and other supporting materials.
5. International graduate student applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit a score for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). A total score of 80 on the iBT TOEFL or 6.5 overall on the IELTS is required.
6. Applicants should submit a Letter of Intent (Statement of Purpose) detailing why they are applying for this program, what their research interests are, what they hope to accomplish with a degree in AADS, and any other pertinent information. Please see below for additional guidelines.
7. Applications should submit an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae or resume.

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Letter of Intent Guidelines

A clear letter of intent is needed for your application for the Master of Arts in African and African Diaspora Studies. This statement allows you to opportunity to discuss your interest in this program, your readiness for such a study, your academic skill, and your future goals. The following may be used as a guide.

1. **Why is this program attractive to you?** Discuss why you are interested in this program, your readiness academically and professionally, and motivating factors that led you to this decision.
2. **What are your interests?** Tell us about how this interdisciplinary program will tap into your interests. What do you think you would like to study specifically? Are there any professors with whom you would like to be working and if so, why? What abilities do you have to be successful in this program?
3. **What are your goals?** Are they academic, professional, both? How will this program be an asset to you in accomplishing your academic and professional goals?

*Applicants applying for a combined degree in the MA and PhD Programs please delineate how **both** programs will assist you. Especially taking care to discuss how you see the programs working together to support your future goals.

Once the file is complete, applicants should contact AADS to schedule a telephone interview with the AADS Graduate Program Director. Applicants whose files are complete and wish to receive an early admissions decision may contact the AADS Program Coordinator to submit their request for early evaluation.

MA in African & African Diaspora Studies

The MA in African & African Diaspora Studies (AADS) curriculum is to be completed over three terms: fall, spring, and summer C (May-July). The full curriculum comprises 30 credits and consists of two core courses, the colloquium course to be taken each semester, and a set schedule of elective courses that will be determined prior to the commencement of the program. To graduate on time, students are expected to enroll in courses for 10 credits every term. Enrolled students work closely with their assigned AADS faculty mentor to prepare for their exit requirement. Students will be assigned such a faculty mentor by the AADS Graduate Program Director (GPD) upon admission. The faculty mentor will monitor and mentor the student's progression from enrollment to graduation. Students may request to work with a specific AADS faculty member. Such selection must be requested by the third week of the fall semester. Before placing such request to the AADS Graduate Program Director, a student must approach and get the approval of the chosen AADS faculty member. Either the Graduate Program Director or the AADS faculty mentor will serve as the chairperson of the student's capstone project. The last session of AFA 6911, always during summer C terms, will culminate with the oral defense of the capstone (Exit Requirement) project.

AADS Graduate Colloquium and AADS Events

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Students must enroll in AFA 6920 AADS Colloquium for one credit every semester. AADS organizes numerous events throughout the academic year, and students must attend as part of their grade for AFA 6920. If a student is not able to attend, he or she must inform the graduate coordinator ahead of time. AADS is committed to providing our students with professional development opportunities. Each semester in collaboration with the Green School Career and Talent Development team, AADS hosts several professional development workshops tailored to our students' interests and needs. Students will receive a list of the workshops at the beginning of the semester. Furthermore, students are encouraged to attend professional development seminars and workshops hosted by other FIU units that are relevant to AADS students.

Capstone Project *(Exit Requirement)

To fulfill this exit requirement, students must write a research paper, a research proposal, or a portfolio of their writing over the course of the AADS degree year. Students will write the paper/proposal/portfolio under the supervision of an AADS graduate faculty member. The capstone project committee must be comprised of three members, at least two of whom must serve as AADS graduate faculty (core or affiliate). The student will work closely on their exit requirement with the chairperson of the capstone project committee. The capstone chairperson must approve of the project prior to submission of the final draft to the other members of the committee. The FIU faculty eligible to serve on a capstone committee must have achieved graduate standing as established by the University Graduate School. Other non-FIU AADS faculty not identified in that list may be considered to serve on a capstone committee based on research, identified interest, and publications after approval from the Director of AADS Graduate Programs.

Graduation Requirements

Candidates must obtain a grade of "B" or higher in all courses and achieve a cumulative point average of at least 3.0 (based on a 4.0 scale) and present a satisfactory capstone project that contains both written and oral components. The students must defend their capstone project in front of their capstone committee in their final semester.

Language Requirement

Students will be asked to demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English according to the nature of their capstone project. Credit hours earned in meeting the language requirement will not count toward the 30 credit hours required for the degree and are not covered by the TA tuition waiver. Students should coordinate their language exam with the AADS graduate program coordinator.

Curriculum: 30 credit hours total

Term 1 (Fall)

- AFA 5005 African and African Diaspora Studies Theory (3 credits)- online
- AFA 5855 Research Methods and Scholarly Writing in Africana Studies (3 credits)-online
- One Elective from the List (3 credits)
- AFA 6920 African and African Studies Diaspora Graduate Colloquium (1 credit)

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Term 2 (Spring)

-One Elective from the List (3 credits)

-One Elective from the List (3 credits)

-One Elective from the List (3 credits)

-AFA 6920 African and African Studies Diaspora Graduate Colloquium (1 credit)

Term 3 (Summer)

-One Elective from the List (3 credits)

-One Elective from the List (3 credits)

-AFA 6911 Research Proposal Writing in AADS

-AFA 6920 African and African Studies Diaspora Graduate Colloquium (1 credit)

-Oral defense of exit requirement in Summer. Any revisions recommended by the committee must be completed and a final copy of the capstone project must be provided to the AADS graduate program coordinator.

The list of electives will be given to the students in advance. Students may enroll in other electives but must first receive the approval of the Graduate Program Director. Prior to the enrollment period for each semester, students will meet with the AADS Graduate Program Director to discuss their course schedule. The Graduate Program Director must approve all electives before the student enrolls.

FIU Library

There are two FIU Libraries- Green Library is located on the Modesto Maidique Campus and the Hubert Library in the Biscayne Bay Campus. Students must be registered and swipe their active PID card to enter and to reserve materials.

AADS students attend a library tour in the fall semester facilitated by Head of Special Collections Vicky Silvera. This tour will provide students with an in-depth look at the FIU resources available to conduct research in AADS. Students may contact Vicky at any time with questions related to research. Her email is silverav@fiu.edu.

Registration

Prior to enrolling in their courses, all AADS students must meet with the AADS Graduate Program Director to discuss their course schedule. Once the schedule is approved, the student may enroll through the MyFIU portal. If the student wishes to make any changes to their course schedule, they must discuss the changes with the AADS Graduate Program Director prior to adding or removing any course(s). We encourage all students to enroll early to avoid the 100\$ late registration fee.

If the student has any hold that prevents them from enrolling, they must clear the holds before they can enroll. The student may view their holds in the Holds section of their MyFIU portal. Students that are paying for tuition out of pocket must ensure that payment is made on time to avoid being dropped from their classes.

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How to Add Classes

1. Log into [MyFIU](#). See [Access MyFIU](#) for help logging into your student account
2. Select 'Manage Classes' tile
3. Select 'Enrollment' from left navigation menu
4. Select 'Class Search & Add to Cart'
5. Select the term for enrollment
6. Search for classes using the course number, course prefix, department, class number or topic. See [Courses Available](#) to learn how to find course details.
7. Click on the returned search results to expand on class option available. The hyperlink provides the class information (class details, meeting information, enrollment information, class availability, and textbook/other information).
8. Click on the class to select the class
9. Complete the Introduction, Registration Prerequisites (available first time adding a class in a term), Review Class Selection, Review and Submit to add the course to your shopping cart. **Adding the course to the Shopping Cart does not officially enroll you into the course(s).**
10. Click on the 'Shopping Cart' hyperlink
11. Select the courses to finalize enrollment.
12. Click 'Enroll'
13. Click 'Yes' to the enrollment message "Are sure you want to enroll?"
14. View the confirmation. Successfully added courses will have a green checkmark and a confirmed add message. If not, read the error message to see why the error occurred. For more information see [Holds & Errors](#).

MA Committee

Students will be provided a research paper/proposal/portfolio committee (three members) with a least two AADS graduate faculty members. The student will work closely with the chairperson of the committee, who must be chosen from the list of AADS graduate faculty (all either AADS Core or Affiliate Faculty). The committee chairperson is responsible for approving the final draft of the paper/proposal/portfolio. Approval of the final draft is required before moving to the final approval of the paper/proposal/portfolio by the committee and the oral defense of the capstone project.

The FIU faculty eligible to serve on a research paper/proposal/portfolio committee are the faculty members who have achieved graduate faculty standing as established by the University Graduate School. Other FIU faculty not identified in that list may be considered to serve on a committee (but not as chairperson of that committee) based on research, identified interest, and publications after approval from the Director of AADS Graduate Programs.

Funding

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Assistantships

All applicants that checked they are interested in funding in the program application will be considered for funding. AADS Graduate Assistantships (GA) are offered to selected students for one academic year (fall, spring, and summer) unless the selected student has explicitly specified alternative arrangements for funding. Prior to the beginning of each semester, each of these students will be informed of their GA assignment. They will then meet with the instructor of the course to discuss expectations. Students must maintain satisfactory academic performance of a grade of B or higher in all their courses and must meet all of the requisite demands and standards in their functioning as a GA. Faculty supervisors will complete an evaluation of GA performance at the end of the assigned term that will be placed in the GA's AADS file.

Students enrolled in a combined MA/Ph.D. program may be offered compensation for her/his Graduate Assistantship at the equivalent level for PhD students rather than for M.A. students. The offer of funding for a combined M.A./PhD degree will be determined by the PhD program to which the student has been admitted. Students who do not meet the academic and GA performance requirements will not be considered for GA funding at the doctoral level.

GAs provide a stipend that is paid biweekly through direct deposit. It includes health insurance benefits that may be waived if students provide evidence of current enrollment in an alternative health insurance program. The GA comes with a tuition waiver that removes all tuition fees. However, students are expected to pay other fees out of pocket, including online class fees. Just prior to the beginning of the fall semester, AADS will email you a document with the exact amount of additional outstanding fees for the upcoming academic year. To view the fees for the 2020-2021 academic year, please [click here](#). Students are responsible for making payments on time to avoid being dropped from the program. A payment plan may be arranged with the FIU Financial Aid office. Please contact them for more information at 305-348-7000.

Obligations

The requirements for those with Graduate Assistantships include a maximum of 20 hours of teaching duties per week and full-time enrollment. Please note that because of AADS' one-year MA program, all students must be enrolled for ten credits per semester.

Students may be asked to:

- Attend all class sessions for the course to which they are assigned;
- Do the readings and be prepared to answer questions from undergraduate students;
- Enter all the students' grades and record students' attendance;
- Proctor exams for the course to which they are assigned;
- Teach two sessions of the course for which they are assigned.
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Students are expected to:

- Be on campus until all exams are given and grades are entered at the end of each semester.
- Check with their assigned faculty member on the earliest date that they may leave campus at the end of the semester.
- Meet with the assigned faculty course instructor as soon as possible before classes start.
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Discuss their obligations with the faculty member and request that all assignments be clearly spelled out.

- Remain in communication with the faculty member throughout the semester.

Faculty members must provide GAs with textbooks by the start of the course. If the student feels that he/she is asked to do more than a reasonable amount of work then s/he is encouraged to discuss the problem with the professor and, if not resolved, with the Graduate Program Director.

Other funding

There are other forms of funding available to students. These include scholarships, fellowships, and student loans. The AADS program coordinator will share that list with applicants during the admissions process. However, students can request the list at any time via email.

Academic standing, dismissal, and readmission policies

All students are required to maintain good academic standing in order to remain active in the program. They must receive a “B” or higher in all courses to maintain a 3.0 GPA (on a 4.0 scale). Failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA will result in the student being placed on academic warning, probation, or dismissal. The student will be informed via email by University Graduate School when they are placed on warning, probation, or are dismissed.

Academic warning and probation: A student whose cumulative graduate GPA falls under 3.0 will receive an academic warning. They will be notified of this warning via email. Students who do not meet the good academic standing requirement must meet with the AADS Graduate Program Director to create an academic plan detailing how they will meet the good academic standing requirement. A copy of this plan will be kept in the student’s file and may be shared with the Dean of Green School Graduate Studies and Innovation and University Graduate School if necessary. If their GPA remains under 3.0 the following semester, they will be placed on academic probation. They will receive notification of their probation status via email.

A graduate student on academic probation who does not meet the required 3.0 GPA will be automatically dismissed from AADS and the University. A graduate student will not be dismissed prior to attempting a minimum of 12 hours of coursework as a graduate student. The student will have 10 working days to appeal the dismissal.

Re-admission: A period of at least one academic year must elapse after the date of dismissal before an application for admission will be accepted for consideration. During this year the student is prohibited from enrolling as a non-degree seeking student.

A student who has been dismissed from a graduate program for failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA may re-apply to the same program or apply to any other graduate program at FIU under the program requirements and policies in force at the time of re-application. In applications for re-admission, to the same program or admission to another program, admission criteria shall include consideration of previous performance at the graduate level in addition to the normal admission requirements.

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A student who has been dismissed for failure to make sufficient progress toward degree completion or for non-compliance with the continuous enrollment policy may submit an application for re-admission at any time prior to their time limit for degree completion.

Departmental Deadlines for Signatures

There are several forms that students must submit to the AADS graduate program coordinator by specified deadlines. Students will be informed of these deadlines in advance. It is the student's responsibility to know these deadlines and to ensure that all are met in a timely fashion. There are also additional forms that require the approval and signature of the Graduate Program Director at least a week before the deadline for their submission. The AADS program coordinator will provide students with an academic calendar at the AADS Graduate Student Orientation, which takes place the Friday before the fall semester begins.

AADS Graduate Students Association

All AADS graduate students are expected to be active members of the AADS Graduate Students Association (AADSGSA). The AADSGSA provides a space for students from all majors to partake in initiatives and events on matters relevant to AADS. Graduate students are encouraged to consider running for the offices of President, Vice President, and Treasurer.

Graduation

All students must apply for graduation during the semester in which they intend to graduate. The exact deadline is in the academic calendar the students will receive during the AADS Graduate Student Orientation. The AADS program coordinator will send email reminders. We encourage students to apply for graduation early as some experience issues applying. To apply for graduation, students must log into their MyFIU portal, select "Apply for Graduation" from the drop-down menu in the Academics section. Please contact the AADS program coordinator if you are not able to apply for graduation.

Pre-Graduation Exit Questionnaire

Graduating students must complete an exit questionnaire provided by the AADS graduate program coordinator. The purpose of the questionnaire is threefold: (1) to receive feedback from the graduate, (2) obtain information for a mandatory report AADS has to submit annually, and (3) obtain future contact information needed to comply with Florida requirements for assessing post-graduation career tracks. The questionnaire will be sent to graduating students via email. The responses are anonymous. Participation in this questionnaire does not affect the students' grades or graduation status.

Degree

Students who successfully complete the program will receive their degree from FIU. The degree posts on the student's transcript approximately one month after the semester ends. The diploma will be sent to the address on the student's MyFIU portal after their degree posts on their transcript.

We encourage all AADS alumni to remain engaged with our program by subscribing to the AADS Alumni listserv and following AADS on Facebook and LinkedIn. The best compliment an alumni can give us is to refer others to our program!

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Additional Resources

Tuition Fees for 2021-2022 academic year

[GA-Summary-Chart-Summer-2021-2022.pdf \(fiu.edu\)](https://onestop.fiu.edu/_assets/calendars/2021-2022-academic-calendar.pdf)

Academic Calendar for 2021-2022

https://onestop.fiu.edu/_assets/calendars/2021-2022-academic-calendar.pdf

FIU One Stop (Admission, Registration, and Financial Services)

<https://onestop.fiu.edu/>

FIU University Graduate School

<http://gradschool.fiu.edu/>

Green School of International and Public Affairs

<https://sipa.fiu.edu/>

Green School Office of Graduate Studies and Innovation

Associate Dean, Dean Shlomi Dinar

Manager, Cheryl Johnson

FIU Modesto Maidique Campus Map

<https://facilities.fiu.edu/images/pdf/Site/MMC.pdf>

FIU Biscayne Bay Campus Map

<https://facilities.fiu.edu/images/pdf/Site/BBC.pdf>

FIU Online (How to access FIU Online Courses, technical support, and more)

<https://fiuhelp.force.com/canvas/s/categories-student>

FIU Student Health Services

<https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/health-and-fitness/student-health/>

FIU Counseling and Psychological Services

<https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/health-and-fitness/counseling-and-psychological-services/>

FIU Wellness and Recreation Centers

<https://wrc.fiu.edu/>

Parking and Transportation

<https://parking.fiu.edu/>

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