

# Dual Degree: MA in Museum Studies and African and African-American Studies

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Museum Studies and African and African-American Studies offer dual master's degrees with coordinated curricula so a student can complete 2 M.A. degrees in 3 years. Students completing the dual degree take all of the required courses in both programs, as well as fulfill each program's requirements to gain a breadth of knowledge. Coordination in advising between the two programs enables students to take courses that satisfy the degree needs for both programs. To earn both degrees, students complete 54 graduate credit hours, 15 of which are applied to both programs.

This program of study enhances and diversifies opportunities for graduate students who are motivated to enter the cultural heritage field as specialists in African and African-American Studies. It also allows students to expand their contacts with faculty, enhance their professional networks, and deepen their knowledge of both fields of study.

## Admission to Graduate Studies

### Admission Requirements

- All applicants must meet the requirements outlined in the Admission to Graduate Study (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/admission-to-graduate-study/>) policy.
- Bachelor's degree: A copy of official transcripts showing proof of a bachelor's degree (and any post-bachelor's coursework or degrees) from a regionally accredited institution, or a foreign university with equivalent bachelor's degree requirements is required.
- English proficiency: Proof of English proficiency (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>) for non-native or non-native-like English speakers is required. There are two bands of English proficiency, including Admission and Full proficiency. For applicants to online programs, Full proficiency is required.

We only offer fall entry, and the application deadline is **February 1**. If February 1 falls on a weekend, the deadline will extend to the following business day.

Students seeking admission to the dual degree will complete just 1 application but must meet the admission requirements for both programs. Admission into one program does not guarantee admission to the other.

Students who have begun coursework in either Museum Studies or African & African-American Studies can apply to be a dual degree student prior to completing all coursework requirements for the first degree. In consultation with each department's Director of Graduate Studies, they may be able to receive credit for coursework already completed. However, the student may be required to take more than the required 54 credit hours of coursework to obtain both degrees if the application for admission to the second degree program is submitted after the student has completed courses that will not count toward the second program's requirements.

## Museum Studies Admission Requirements

1. A copy of your official transcript, issued by the Registrar's Office of the institution from which you have (or will have) earned your bachelor's degree (and master's degree, if applicable).
2. One essay not to exceed three single-spaced pages. A fourth page can be added for a bibliography, if needed.  
Please respond to this prompt: How has a museum experience shaped your outlook on the function and relevance of museums? Explain how you have seen museums engage with their various audiences, stakeholders, or communities.

Feel free to draw from personal experiences, visits to museums or volunteer/paid positions you have held, or current events or other instances of museum engagement you have learned about in your studies. Be analytical. Use your essay to help the Admissions Committee to better understand your worldview and how you think about museums, and your career objectives in them in critical, comparative, and aspirational terms. We realize you may not have museum work experience so we want to know how you envision approaching museum studies and your unique perspective as an emergent scholar. We also want to see how well you write. Feel free to cite and support your essay with representational examples from museums, related socio-cultural or political events, and/or interventions that you see are necessary in the field.

We evaluate your work based on the clarity of your vision, the evidentiary support for your perspective and claims, and your passion for the field as an incoming scholar. We want to know who you are and realize your subject position greatly impacts how you navigate the academy and the field. Therefore, we encourage you to think critically about your areas of interest and how your particular subject position and experience, broadly conceived, offers a fresh perspective to an incoming graduate cohort in Museum Studies at KU. Cogency and clarity are at least as important as content.

Topics you might consider (but are not limited to): ethical responsibility to the community; programming surrounding collections and holdings; repatriation of collections; decolonizing museum collections; ecology; environmental justice concerns; natural history and ethics of collecting; places and people; the role of objects in deepening people's capacity for self-awareness.

3. A personal statement, not to exceed three double-spaced pages. The statement should cover: (a) aspects of museums and museum studies that particularly interest you; (b) your professional goals, including the area of museum work that most attracts you; (c) your relevant experience and background, (d) how you believe KU's Museum Studies Program matches your interests; and (e) anything else you think is important for us to know. If you believe your academic record does not reflect your potential to perform well in the KU Museum Studies Program, please provide an explanation.
4. Three letters of recommendation. At least two of your letters should come from professors, instructors, or other individuals who can speak directly to your academic ability.
5. A resume or curriculum vitae that lists your education, employment history, volunteer experience, internships, scholarships/fellowships, and academic awards. Please calculate your junior/senior GPA and include it on your resume.

## African & African-American Studies Admission Requirements

1. A copy or scan of official transcripts (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/apply/#section366>) from each college and post-secondary institution you have attended. Copies of official transcripts should be uploaded directly to the online application. If admitted, applicants will be required to submit official, sealed transcripts directly to the Office of Graduate Admissions within the first semester of enrollment.
2. Statement of Purpose: A professional narrative explaining your background, academic interests, and reason for applying to the M.A. program in African and African-American Studies at KU. Please indicate the faculty member(s) (<https://afs.ku.edu/faculty/>) with whom you would like to work in your statement. (maximum 3 pages double-spaced)
3. A resume or curriculum vitae listing your education, employment history, volunteer experience, internships, scholarships/fellowships, academic awards, knowledge of foreign languages, and any other relevant information
4. Three letters of recommendation from qualified individuals, preferring most recent professors
5. A sample of your writing or creative work that could be an academic paper or a combination of written work and a portfolio of creative work (maximum 15 pages)

Please see the Admission to Graduate Study (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/admission-to-graduate-study/>) policy for additional information on admission requirements.

Students completing the dual degree take all of the required courses in both programs, as well as fulfill each program's requirements to gain a breadth of knowledge. Coordination in advising between the two programs enables students to take courses that satisfy the degree needs for both programs. To earn both degrees, students complete 54 graduate credit hours, 15 of which are applied to both programs. Because the required courses are offered regularly, students are able to complete the required courses in the first four semesters of the program, using the final two semesters to complete the remaining credit-hour requirements. The programs' curricular requirements follow; further details on program expectations are available in the respective Graduate Student Handbooks (Museum Studies Handbook (<https://museumstudies.ku.edu/graduate-student-handbook/>), AAAS Handbook (<https://afs.ku.edu/graduate-student-handbook/>)).

## Dual M.A. Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
<b>1. Museum Studies Core</b>		
The Museum Studies Core ensures that all Museum Studies students gain a comprehensive understanding of the theories, history, techniques, and problems common to museums, historical agencies and related institutions. MUSE 803, taken in a student's third semester of study, provides training for students to conduct research or other creative activities that advance the discipline of museum studies in preparation to write and defend their capstone project or thesis.		
MUSE 801	The Modern Museum: Institutions, Knowledge and Audiences	3
MUSE 802	The Museum Profession: Ethics, Standards and Cultural Awareness	3

MUSE 803	The Contemporary Museum in Practice: Debates and Research Methodologies	3
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### 2. Museum Professional Courses 9

Students will develop expertise in the principal specialties of museum work by completing at least 3 of the following courses. Courses incorporate training in best practices, policy development, and legal and regulatory concerns, as well as future trends.

MUSE 699	Anthropology in Museums	
MUSE 701	Managing Museums	
MUSE 703	Introduction to Museum Exhibits	
MUSE 704	Introduction to Collections Management and Utilization	
MUSE 705	Museum Education and Public Engagement	
MUSE 706	Preventive Conservation in Museums	
MUSE 707	Archival Theory and Practice	
MUSE 710	Natural History Curation and Collections Management	
MUSE 780	Special Topics: _____ Depending on the topic of the course	

### 3. Museum Experience

While enrolled in the Museum Studies Program, students are required to gain at least 500 hours of museum experience, of which at least 250 hours must be in an approved, professionally supervised internship. Students enroll in 3 credit hours of MUSE 799: Museum Internship to meet this requirement.

MUSE 799	Museum Internship	3
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### 4. African & African-American Studies Core

AAAS 801	Introduction to Africana Studies: African-American	3
AAAS 802	Introduction to Africana Studies: African	3
AAAS 803	Research Methods in Africana Studies	3
AAAS 804	Seminar in Africana Studies	3

### 5. African & African-American Studies Electives 6

Students select 2 courses in consultation with their faculty advisor(s) and the AAAS Director of Graduate Studies. See the below table for course options.

### 6. Dual Degree Supplemental Program of Study 12

Students design a unique program of study in consultation with their faculty advisor(s), the Graduate Program Coordinator - Advising, the Museum Studies Director, and AAAS Director of Graduate Studies. Courses are selected based on the student's research and professional goals and should inform the capstone project or thesis. Courses may be taken within or outside MUSE and AAAS.

### 7. Capstone Project or Thesis with Oral Defense 3

Students completing the dual degree program are required to defend either a capstone project or thesis in their final semester. The student should consult with their African & African-American Studies and Museum Studies faculty advisors to identify a project or thesis topic that effectively incorporates both areas of study. Faculty advisors from both programs will oversee and evaluate the project or thesis. Students who choose to complete a thesis must enroll in 3 credit hours of AAAS 899 in their final semester. Students who complete a capstone project must enroll in an additional program of study course according to the above guidance.

Each student will successfully defend their capstone project or thesis as their master's examination. The final exam committee, chosen by the student, must have at least four members; at least two from the Museum Studies area and at least two from the African & African-American Studies area.

**Total Hours** **54**

*If a student decides to complete only the MUSE M.A. or AAAS M.A. and withdraw from the other program, they must complete all requirements for the stand-alone degree.*

## Course-Level Requirement and Selection Process

Students pursuing a Dual M.A. in Museum Studies and African & African-American Studies must take 50% or more of their coursework at the 700-level or above.

All courses, aside from the MUSE and AAAS core, must be selected in consultation with the student's faculty advisors (one in MUSE, one in AAAS).

## Graduate Policy

Students are encouraged to review Graduate Studies' policies (<https://ogs.ku.edu/policies/>) related to master's degree programs for information about other requirements that may apply.

Code	Title	Hours
<b>African &amp; African-American Studies Elective Options</b>		
AAAS 502	Directed Language Study: _____	5
AAAS 503	Directed Language Study: _____	3
AAAS 504	Directed Language Study I: _____	3
AAAS 505	Directed Language Study II: _____	3
AAAS 511	The Civil Rights Movement	3
AAAS 518	Capitalism and the Black Experience	3
AAAS 520	African Studies in: _____	3
AAAS 523	African-American Studies in: _____	3
AAAS 534	The Rhetoric of Black Americans	3
AAAS 555	African Film	3
AAAS 574	Slavery in the New World	3
AAAS 584	Black American Literature	3
AAAS 598	Sexuality and Gender in African History	3
AAAS 600	Politics in Africa	3
AAAS 630	The Life and Intellectual Thought of W.E.B. Du Bois	3
AAAS 657	Women and Gender in Islam	3
AAAS 690	Investigation and Conference	1-3
AAAS 701	Politics in Africa	3
AAAS 716	Women in Islam	3
AAAS 720	Intercultural Communication: The Afro-American	3
AAAS 723	Special Topics in Africana Studies: _____	3
AAAS 727	African-American Culture	3
AAAS 730	Black Leadership	3
AAAS 731	African Literature	3
AAAS 732	Francophone African Literature	3
AAAS 733	Islamic Literature	3
AAAS 749	Islam	3

AAAS 760	Topics and Problems in African and African-American Studies	3
AAAS 770	Language and Society in Africa	3
AAAS 788	The Black Woman	3
AAAS 811	The Civil Rights Movement	3
AAAS 830	The Life and Times of W.E.B. Du Bois	3
AAAS 834	The Rhetoric of Black Americans	3
AAAS 843	Language and Culture in Arabic-Speaking Communities	3
AAAS 855	African Film and Video	3
AAAS 874	Slavery in the New World	3
AAAS 884	Black American Literature	3
AAAS 885	Race and the American Theatre	3
AAAS 898	Sexuality and Gender in African History	3

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate mastery of relevant knowledge in the fields of Africana Studies and Black Studies. This mastery can encompass related fields of Arab Studies and Islamic Studies.
- Articulate an understanding of the nexus of the African continent and African Diasporas and their interconnections with US and global histories, cultures, and socioeconomic systems.
- Understand the development of Africana Studies and academic activism and critique dominant Eurocentric paradigms.
- Apply inter-disciplinary and multidisciplinary methods and approaches related to Africana Studies.
- Produce a significant thesis or critical creative project.
- apply a critical understanding of museum functions as institutions, bodies of knowledge, and communicators with a public audience.
- apply an understanding of professional standards including ethics and cultural awareness.
- show knowledge, application, and analysis of museological scholarship (historical and contemporary).
- display practical experience in museum leadership, collections, exhibitions/interpretation, and education.
- synthesize scholarship, professional standards, and practical experience to create new museological research or tools of use to the profession.