



Request for New College Credit Certificate

Name of Certificate Program: African American Studies
 College: Social Sciences and Public Policy
 Department: Program in African American Studies
 Proposed CIP Code: 05.0201
 Certificate Program Director: Dr. Katrinell M. Davis
 Level: X Undergraduate
 _____ Graduate
 Delivery Method: X Face to Face (Tallahassee)
 _____ Fully Online
 Semester to be Implemented: Fall 2026
 Note: Must state a future semester in which students can first enroll

Substantive Change Required _____Approval _____Notification _____None
 To be completed by Institutional Accreditation Liaison

DocuSigned by: <i>Katrinell Davis</i>	3/19/2026 4:31 PM EDT
Department Curriculum Committee	Date
DocuSigned by: <i>Katrinell Davis</i>	3/22/2026 10:45 AM EDT
Department Chair	Date
Signed by: <i>Holger Kern</i>	3/22/2026 10:52 AM EDT
College Curriculum Committee	Date
DocuSigned by: <i>Timothy Chapin</i>	3/22/2026 12:27 PM EDT
Academic Dean	Date
Director of Institutional Performance & Assessment	Date
Institutional Accreditation Liaison	Date
Graduate School Dean or Undergraduate Policy Committee	Date
Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement	Date



Request for New College Credit Certificate Program

Proposal

1. Purpose of the Certificate Program

The Undergraduate Certificate in African American Studies is an interdisciplinary academic program designed to provide students with structured coursework focused on the historical, cultural, social, and political experiences of people of African descent in the United States. The certificate formalizes academic training in African American Studies through a defined sequence of approved courses offered by the African American Studies undergraduate degree program.

Students completing the certificate will develop foundational knowledge of African American history, social structures, cultural production, and analytical frameworks used in the field. The certificate is intended for degree-seeking undergraduate students who wish to supplement their primary field of study with formal coursework in African American Studies.

The certificate does not confer professional licensure or certification for an occupation. Requirements for completion consist of successful completion of the required core and elective courses as outlined in the curriculum section of this proposal. The certificate prepares undergraduate students for graduate study, public sector and nonprofit work, education, policy analysis, and other professions requiring cultural, historical, and structural competency related to African American experiences.

2. Substantive Change

a. The proposed Undergraduate Certificate in African American Studies aligns most closely with the existing African American Studies undergraduate major offered at Florida State University.

b. The CIP Code for African American Studies is 05.0201 – African-American/Black Studies.

c. CIP Code 05.0201 appears in the Florida State University Degree Program Inventory.

d. Certificate Program Location: Instruction for the certificate program will be offered on the Tallahassee campus and through approved online modalities. No instruction will be delivered at unapproved sites.

3. Certificate Admissions Procedures

Prospective students must be admitted as a degree-seeking undergraduate student enrolled at Florida State University. Students applying to the certificate program must complete a COSSPP Qualtrics survey. This survey is administered in both fall and spring by the college Academic Affairs Office. After completion of the survey application, the Program in African American Studies will relay accepted students to COSSPP Academic Affairs, who will then ensure that students are enrolled into the appropriate certificate program. Questions regarding admission should be routed to the Certificate Program Director or the COSSPP Academic Affairs Office. An admissions committee consisting of faculty affiliated with the program is responsible for application review and admission recommendation to the Certificate Program Director. The certificate credential is not intended as a diploma or a degree.

4. Certificate Curriculum (12 Credit Hours)

Certificate Required Courses			
Course Prefix and Number	Course Title	Credits	Delivery Mode (Online, Face to Face, or Both)
AFA 2000	Introduction to African American Experience	3	Both
AFA 3101	Theoretical Foundations of African American Studies	3	Both
AFA 4358	Culture, Land, and Ecology	3	Face to Face
Certificate Elective Courses (select one of the following courses)			
Course Prefix and Number	Course Title	Credits	Delivery Mode (Online, Face to Face, or Both)
AFA 3353	Race, Class, and Gender	3	Both
AFA 3373	Psychology of Hip Hop	3	Both
AFA 4851	Research Methods in Africana Studies	3	Face to Face
AFA 3330	Black Families	3	Face to Face
AFA 3604	Politics of Black Poverty	3	Both
AFA 4940	African American Studies Internship	3	Both

Total Credit Hours: _____ 12 _____

5. Certificate Retention and Completion Requirements

The Undergraduate Certificate in African American Studies consists of undergraduate courses already offered in the Program in African American Studies at Florida State University. The coursework is intended to be completed within two years. The Certificate Program Director approves the student's program of study. No transfer credits are accepted. Students must earn at least a 2.0 GPA across all certificate coursework to receive the certificate. No course with a grade below C- may be applied toward certificate requirements.

6. Certificate Program Faculty & Credentialing

Faculty Name	Highest Degree (Type & Discipline)	Courses to be Taught in New Certificate	Other Relevant Degrees or Qualifications (If Highest Degree is not in discipline)
Dr. Katrinell M. Davis (Certificate Director)	PhD, Sociology	AFA 3101, AFA 4851, AFA 3604	
Dr. Shantel Buggs	PhD, Sociology	AFA 2000; AFA 3330	
Dr. Carolina Velasquez-Calderon	PhD, Geography	AFA 4358	

Katrinell Davis, PhD, Professor of Sociology and Director of the Program in African American Studies at Florida State University, is a scholar of urban inequality, environmental justice, and the social determinants of health. Her research examines how racial, gender, and class inequalities shape labor markets, environmental health risks, and access to public resources in urban communities. Her work has explored issues including environmental health disparities, water governance, workplace inequality, and institutional responses to crisis. Davis is the author of *Tainted Tap: Flint's Journey from Crisis to Recovery* and *Hard Work Is Not Enough: Gender and Racial Inequality in an Urban Workspace*, and her scholarship has appeared in various top-ranking journals. Her teaching focuses on race, poverty, environmental inequality, and the social determinants of health. She received her PhD and MA in Sociology from the University of California, Berkeley and her BA from Michigan State University. Her career has included a postdoctoral fellowship at the National Poverty Center (University of Michigan) in addition to faculty appointments at the University of Vermont and Florida State University, where she has also served in leadership roles advancing interdisciplinary scholarship on race, inequality, and public policy.

Shantel G. Buggs, PhD, Associate Professor of Sociology at Florida State University, is a scholar of race, gender, sexuality, and violence whose research examines how structural inequalities shape intimate relationships, sexual health, and experiences of victimization. Her work focuses on issues including sexual violence, dating and hookup culture, reproductive justice, and the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality in contemporary social life. Buggs' research has appeared in leading sociology journals and edited volumes, and she teaches courses on race, inequality, and the Black family. Her career has included faculty appointments and collaborations with scholars and organizations focused on gender justice and social inequality. She received her PhD in Sociology from the University of Texas at Austin.



Carolina Velasquez-Caldero, PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of Geography; Program in African American Studies. She is an Environmental and Disaster Risk Management Scholar & Consultant with experience in small Caribbean Islands, like San Andrés. Her research interests are studying post-disaster recovery, social vulnerability, water-related crises, water justice, risk-informed development, and climate change adaptation. Carolina has published and is the editor of various risk and environmental management books. Her courses focus on social vulnerability, disaster public policy, risk communication, and climate change adaptation. Her career has combined positions in international organizations, centers, and renowned universities, including the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Society for International Cooperation) (GIZ), the Disaster Research Center at the University of Delaware, Military Engineering School in Colombia, and the National University of Colombia. She holds a Ph.D. in Disaster Science Management from the University of Delaware.

Faculty Affiliates

The certificate draws upon interdisciplinary expertise from faculty affiliates across Florida State University, including:

- Dr. Cameron Beatty (Associate Professor)
- Dr. Christopher Coutts (Professor of Urban and Regional Planning)
- Dr. Katherine Mooney (James P. Jones Associate Professor of History)
- Dr. Maria Ryan (Assistant Professor of Musicology)
- Dr. Rhea E. Lathan (Associate Professor of English)
- Dr. Tyler McCreary (Associate Professor of Geography)

Faculty Qualifications and Credentialing:

All faculty hold terminal degrees in their respective fields and demonstrate relevant expertise through peer-reviewed scholarship, teaching, and/or professional practice. All faculty teaching in the certificate will be credentialed in compliance with FSU Policy 3A-2.

7. Certificate Projected Enrollments

- Year 1: 5 Students
- Year 2: 8 Students
- Year 3: 12 Students
- Year 4: 17 Students
- Year 5: 20 Students

8. Additional Resources

The African American Studies certificate consists of undergraduate courses already offered in the COSSPP. There is sufficient capacity in the certificate courses to accommodate the anticipated student enrollment. There is thus anticipated to be minimal impact on faculty teaching loads. Certificate advising and admission activities will increase the service assignment of the Certificate Program Director, and all core and joint faculty members will need to have their certificate-related service activities reflected in their assignments of responsibility.

9. Certificate Institutional Effectiveness (IE)

Please see Appendix B for the two Student Learning Outcomes and Program Outcome.

10. Certificate Online Offerings

If more than 50% of the certificate program will be available online, please answer the following questions:

a. Will students be required to gather in-person (as a cohort or in a smaller group) at any time during the proposed online program?

No. Students will not be required to gather in person as a condition of completing the certificate.

b. If so, at what specific location will they gather?

Not applicable.

c. For what purpose will they gather?

Not applicable.

11. Design of Certificate and Wording

See Appendix C

**Appendix A:
Certificate Management Memorandum of Understanding**

Through the approval of this Certificate Proposal, the Department (if applicable) and College take responsibility for the following activities associated with systematic and ongoing management of the certificate program.

College: College of Social Sciences and Public Policy

Certificate Name & Level: African American Studies Undergraduate Certificate

Date: March 11, 2026

Action Item	Faculty or Staff Position Responsible Name and Title
Ensure the certificate program operates in compliance with FSU Policy 3A-1 . This includes ensuring the certificate program is only offered at locations and modalities listed in the proposal approved by the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement and our institutional accreditor.	Certificate Director – Katrinell M. Davis, PhD, Director, Program in African American Studies in coordination with <i>COSSPP Office of Academic Affairs</i>
Designate a certificate program coordinator and report any changes to the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement.	Certificate Director – Katrinell M. Davis, PhD
Every term, send list of admitted students to the Registrar’s Office prior to the completion of the second course in the certificate program. Lists must be submitted by the last day of classes in the given semester.	Certificate Director, in coordination with COSSPP Office of Academic Affairs
Every term, send list of completed students to the Registrar’s Office upon completion of coursework within 2 weeks of grades posting for the given semester.	Certificate Director, in coordination with COSSPP Office of Academic Affairs
Annually, assess and report results for Program and Student Learning Outcomes in the Institutional Effectiveness Portal.	Certificate Director, in coordination with COSSPP IE personnel
Marketing of certificate to prospective students and keeping website information current.	ISS Academic Program Specialist, in coordination with COSSPP Communications

<p>Enrollment Management, including monitoring the number of students applying to, taking course work in, and completing the certificate program.</p>	<p>Certificate Director, in coordination with COSSPP Office of Academic Affairs</p>
<p>Annually evaluation of the need to continue offering the certificate based on enrollments and resources.</p>	<p>Certificate Director, in consultation with the Dean's Office</p>
<p>Curriculum Management, including regular review by the program faculty and notification of any curricular changes to the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement.</p>	<p>Certificate Director and AFA Program Faculty</p>
<p>Ensure that faculty teaching certificate program courses have the required degree or appropriate justification in compliance with FSU Policy 3A-2.</p>	<p>Certificate Director, in coordination with Home Departments and the Dean's Office</p>

Appendix B: Proposed Certificate Outcomes, Assessment Plans, and Numeric Targets

Please complete this template by filling in the text fields. All certificate programs are required to select at least 1 Program Outcome and at least 2 Student Learning Outcomes.	
Program Outcome	
PO Name	PO Name: PO – Certificate Enrollment
PO Statement	The Undergraduate Certificate in African American Studies will achieve and maintain steady student enrollment.
Assessment Plan	Enrollment will be tracked annually using official university enrollment reports (Registrar and Oracle Business Intelligence). The Certificate Director will review fall census data each academic year.
Numeric Target	Our enrollment targets are listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 (Fall 2026 and Spring 2027): at least 5 students • Year 2 (Summer 2027, Fall 2027, Spring 2028): at least 8 students • Year 3 (Summer 2028, Fall 2028, Spring 2029): at least 12 students • Year 4 (Summer 2029, Fall 2029, Spring 2030): at least 17 students • Year 5 (Summer 2030, Fall 2030, Spring 2031): at least 20 students
Student Learning Outcome #1	
SLO Name	SLO – Critical Historical and Cultural Analysis
SLO Statement	Students will demonstrate the ability to critically analyze historical and contemporary African American experiences using interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks.
Assessment Plan	Student learning will be assessed using the Critical Analysis Paper in AFA 3101: Theoretical Foundations of African American Studies. In this assignment, students write a 10–12 page analytical essay applying African American Studies theoretical frameworks to a historical or contemporary case study. The assignment includes three components: a topic proposal, an annotated bibliography, and a final analytical paper. Student work will be evaluated using a standardized analytic rubric assessing: application of theoretical frameworks; historical/contextual analysis; use of interdisciplinary evidence; and argument clarity and organization. Each criterion is scored on a 4-point scale (Beginning to Exemplary).
Numeric Target	At least 75% of students will score 3 (Proficient) or higher on the rubric.
Student Learning Outcome #2	
SLO Name	SLO – Applied Knowledge and Community Engagement

SLO Statement	Students will apply African American Studies knowledge to real-world contexts through experiential learning, professional practice, and reflective analysis.
Assessment Plan	<p>Student learning will be assessed using the Thematic Reflection Paper in AFA 2000: Introduction to the African American Experience. In this assignment, students write a 2–3 page paper reflecting on a major theme or unit from the course, connecting course concepts to contemporary social, political, or cultural contexts. The assignment has two components: engagement with course readings and materials, and a written reflective analysis.</p> <p>Student work will be evaluated using a standardized rubric assessing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection of course concepts to real-world contexts • Demonstrated understanding of African American experiences • Use of course materials and relevant evidence • Depth and quality of critical reflection <p>Each criterion is scored on a 4-point scale (Beginning to Exemplary).</p>
Numeric Target	At least 75% of students will score 3 (Proficient) or higher on the rubric.

Appendix C: Sample Certificate



Florida State University
College of Social Sciences and Public Policy
Program in African American Studies

Attests that

I. Earnest Student

*Having successfully completed the requirements
Is hereby recognized for completing a Certificate in*

African American Studies

This _____ day of _____, 2027

Dean, College of Social Sciences and Public Policy

Certificate Director, Program in African American Studies