



Broadening Perspectives, Deepening Understanding

Supporting The Center for Africana Studies

The Center for Africana Studies at Penn Arts & Sciences takes a multidisciplinary approach to studying race and the history, arts, cultures, and contemporary lives of people in Africa and of African descent around the world. Faculty and staff come together with students, activists, scholars, political leaders, writers, and artists to engage the University and surrounding communities in debate, discussion, learning, and understanding of the complex perspectives and experiences that affect people of African ancestry, wherever they are found.

The Center builds on the University's long history of research and teaching excellence in Africana studies—which dates back to famed sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois' work in the 19th century—and today is a leader in scholarship and programming on Africa and its diaspora. A hub for research that crosses disciplines, interests, and geographic regions, the Center is directed by Wale Adebani, Presidential Penn Compact Professor of Africana Studies, and is an intellectual home for some of the most dynamic scholars from across Penn's 12 schools.

Promoting Interdisciplinary Research

The strength of the Center lies largely in its outstanding faculty, whose scholarship demonstrates the crucial role of the humanities, social sciences, arts, and sciences in studying race and its public policy implications. Significant faculty-led initiatives supported by the Center include the Program on Race, Science, and Society (PRSS) and the Marginalized Populations Project. PRSS, led by Dorothy E. Roberts, analyzes the role of race in scientific research and biotechnological innovations, aiming both to promote social justice and to dispel the myth that race is a natural division of human beings. The Marginalized Populations Project, led by Michael Hanchard, Chair and Gustave C. Kuemmerle Professor of Africana Studies, is a collaborative research initiative that explores political dynamics between populations with unequal, minimal, or non-existent state protections and national governments.



Dorothy E. Roberts, George A. Weiss University Professor of Law and Sociology, Raymond Pace and Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander Professor of Civil Rights, Professor of Africana Studies



Michael Hanchard, Chair and Gustave C. Kuemmerle Professor of Africana Studies

Public Programming

Through its public programming, the Center serves as a space for open discussion on topics central to public policy issues related to race and Black people. Events range from film screenings and poetry readings to academic conferences and lectures and draw diverse audiences from Penn and beyond. These activities reflect the Center's dedication to meaningful scholarship both for the academy and the public—scholarship that has an impact on national, cultural, legislative, and academic discourses.

The annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Lecture in Social Justice particularly demonstrates the Center's commitment to facilitating critical conversations on campus. This flagship event engages the entire University community in discussion about the continuing struggle for social justice in the U.S. Past panelists have included John Legend, C'99, HON'14; Reverend William Barber; Joy Reid; and Charles Blow.

Other annual events include the Honorable A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. Memorial Lecture, which focuses on a topic, event, or personality tied to African or African diasporic history, sociology, social justice, or law. Brave Testimony, an annual poetry celebration, has featured U.S. Poets Laureates, Pulitzer Prize winners, and National Book Award honorees, as well as prominent local poets.



Ta-Nehisi Coates in conversation with Camille Z. Charles, Walter H. and Leonore C. Annenberg Professor in the Social Sciences and Professor of Sociology, Africana Studies, and Education, at the annual Honorable A. Leon Higginbotham Jr. Memorial Lecture.

Engaging Students

The Center fosters a strong sense of community among undergraduate and graduate students. These connections are primarily made through the Undergraduate Advisory Board, support for student-initiated co-curricular programming, and the Center for Africana Studies Summer Institute for Pre-Freshmen.

The Summer Institute has the dual purpose of introducing students to Africana studies and preparing them for the transition to college academics and University life. Before the start of their first year, a cohort of 70 to 80 students, representing all of Penn's undergraduate schools, have the opportunity to attend the Institute, free of charge, for an intensive week of courses taught by Arts & Sciences faculty. Graduate students provide guidance and attendees leave the program with a network of peers and mentors who can help them navigate their undergraduate careers.



In a class taught by Herman Beavers, Julie Beren Platt and Marc E. Platt President's Distinguished Professor of English and Africana Studies, students take direction from the plays of August Wilson, readings on 20th-century drama, and West Philly residents. Through a partnership with the West Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, students and community residents collaborate on an original theater piece that dramatizes life in West Philly in an end-of-semester performance.

Giving Opportunities

The giving opportunities described here support the Center's commitment to innovative research and education. All gifts are payable over five years.

Endow the Center for Africana Studies with a gift of \$8 million

A naming gift to endow the Center would provide a perpetual funding stream and secure its permanent home within Penn Arts & Sciences.

Endow the Center for Africana Studies Summer Institute for Pre-Freshmen with a gift of \$3 million

The Summer Institute is a vital opportunity for incoming students to become acquainted with academic life at Penn generally, as well as with the intellectual resources of Africana studies. The mentoring relationships forged during the Institute endure throughout the students' Penn careers, creating a collegial, supportive community. Seventy to 80 students enroll each summer and earn half of an academic credit for their participation.

Endow the Center for Africana Studies Directorship with a gift of \$2 million

A gift to endow the Center directorship will associate the donor's name with the program's academic leadership in perpetuity. A named directorship is a position that brings prestige and resources to the scholar who holds it, allowing for academic and pedagogical innovation. He or she leads the Center to maximize research, create learning opportunities for students, and plan programming that is meaningful to the campus and Philadelphia communities and to broader publics.

Endow a postdoctoral fellowship with a gift of \$1.5 million

Postdoctoral fellows are chosen for their emerging academic talent. The Center seeks two Fellows annually to pursue independent, interdisciplinary research while mentoring undergraduate and graduate students and growing into committed Africana studies scholars.

Support graduate students

Graduate research grants enable graduate students to travel to perform field work or attend conferences, which in turn allows them to complete the independent research necessary for their development as scholars. A **term gift of \$50,000** supports graduate research for five years; an **endowed gift of \$200,000** supports graduate research in perpetuity.

Support undergraduate students

Undergraduate research grants allow students to travel to pursue or present original research and allow the Center to recognize exceptional undergraduate work. A **term gift of \$20,000** provides student research support for five years; an **endowed gift of \$100,000** supports students in perpetuity.

To learn more about supporting the Center for Africana Studies at all levels, please contact Deb Rhebergen, Vice Dean for Advancement, at 215-898-9942 or drheberg@sas.upenn.edu.



Penn Arts & Sciences
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

SCHOOL OF ARTS & SCIENCES OFFICE OF ADVANCEMENT
3600 Market Street, Suite 300 • Philadelphia, PA 19104-3284
215-898-5262 • www.sas.upenn.edu