African Studies, an interdepartmental program, prepares students to go beyond superficial media interpretations of the vast African continent by developing a multidisciplinary perspective on the region. Students may supplement their major in another field with a concentration in African Studies that consists of six Africa-related courses. The broad theme of the African Studies concentration is continuity and change in recognition of an understanding of the internal and external forces ensuring continuity and change on the African continent.

Core Faculty

William Moseley, director of the African Studies program, as well as professor of geography, is a development and human-environment geographer. He teaches Human Geography; People, Agriculture and the Environment; Geography of Africa; Geography of Development; and Comparative Environment and Development Studies. Most of his fieldwork has been in West and Southern Africa. He is the author of more than 70 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters and is the editor of five books: An Introduction to Human-Environment Geography; Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial African Issues; Hanging by a Thread: Cotton, Globalization and Poverty in Africa; The Introductory Reader in Human Geography: Contemporary Debates and Classic Writings; and African Environment and Development: Rhetoric, Programs, Realities.

David Blaney, professor of political science, teaches courses on international politics, global political economy, and development. His research centers on the political theory and political economy of international relations. He is currently working on two edited books that explore the state of international relations as a global discipline. He serves on the editorial board of the Routledge Press series “Worlding Beyond the West,” and the Iranian Review of Foreign Affairs. Professor Blaney teaches courses on international relations, global political economy, development, political economic thought, and global citizenship.

Erik Larson, professor of sociology, pursues research in political sociology, economic sociology, and the sociology of law by examining patterns of uniformity and diversity in globalized institutions. To this end, he has studied the formation and operation of new stock exchanges in Ghana, Fiji, and Iceland. A second collaborative project examines political contention and policy formation about indigenous rights, with a focus on economic affirmative action.

Sowah Mensah, instructor of music, is an ethnomusicologist, composer, and master drummer from Ghana. As director of the popular Macalester African Music Ensemble, he gives private lessons in African drumming, xylophone, singing, and flute.

David Chioni Moore, associate professor of international studies and English, focuses on the literatures and cultures of the Black Atlantic world, with interests in both Africa and African America. He maintains allied interests in post-colonialism, the post-Soviet world, and globalization. He edited Martin Bernal's 2001 Black Athena Writes Back, is currently completing an edition of Langston Hughes’s lost 1934 A Negro Looks at Soviet Central Asia, and has been published in journals such as Transition, Diaspora, PMLA, Frontiers, Genre, Research in African Literatures, and Callaloo.

Ahmed Samatar, James Wallace Professor of International Studies and founding dean of the Institute for Global Citizenship, is the author and editor of five books including The African State: Reconsiderations; Somalia: State Collapse, Multilateral Intervention, and Strategies for Political Reconstruction; The Somali Challenge: From Catastrophe to Renewal, African Studies and Undergraduate Education: Ideas Toward the 21st Century; and Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric and Reality, as well as several dozen scholarly articles. He was a member of the editorial board of the International Studies Review and editor of Macalester International and founding editor-in-chief of Bildhaan: An International Journal of Somali Studies. Professor Samatar was also a presidential candidate during the 2012 elections in Somalia.

Dianna Shandy, professor of anthropology, is a sociocultural anthropologist whose work spans U.S. and international settings, with broad research and teaching interests in gender, migration, political conflict and violence, human rights and humanitarianism, and research methods. Her research projects have explored African asylum seekers in Ireland; the Nuer (southern Sudanese) diaspora in Ethiopia, Egypt, and the United States; Darfur; the International Criminal Court; and the representation of violence in Africa. Her 2007 book, Nuer-American Passages: Globalizing Sudanese Migration, was recently re-released in paperback.

Joëlle Vitiello, professor of French and francophone studies, teaches courses on 20th-century French literature; Haitian literature and culture; French, African, and Caribbean cinema; contemporary French culture; women writing in French; as well as French language. She specializes in representations of relationships in contemporary literature. In addition to completing a manuscript on friendship in anthropology, philosophy, and literature, she is working on cinemas of diverse communities in French cities, and on representations of systemic violence (especially in Haiti and Rwanda).
African Studies

Contributing Departments and Courses

African Studies draws faculty from, and cross-lists classes with, many other departments. Representative courses include:

- **Anthropology**: Gender and Development in Africa; Refugees and Humanitarian Response; Darfur: Conflict and Human Rights in Africa
- **English**: African Literature; Anglophone Literature
- **French and Francophone Studies**: Haiti, Guadeloupe, Martinique; Child Soldiers through Text and Films
- **Geography**: Geography of Africa: Local Resources and Livelihoods in a Global Context; Geography of Development and Underdevelopment
- **History**: Africa to 1800; African Life Histories; Farm and Forest: African Environmental History
- **International Studies**: Postcolonial Theory
- **Music**: African Music
- **Political Science**: Development Politics; African Politics
- **Sociology**: Indigenous Peoples’ Resistance Movements
- **Theatre and Dance**: African Dance

Honors Projects

Zhe Yu Lee ’15 (Singapore), “Farmer Discontent in Peri-urban Bangalore: The Utopia of Agricultural Modernization, Neoliberal Developmentalism, and the 21st Century Global City”

Sarah Lansky ’14 (Amherst, Mass.), “My Brother Before Me: The Role and Experience of Local Humanitarian Aid Workers in Eastern Cameroon”

Special Opportunities

Study abroad programs in Africa are available through the International Center. Macalester directly supports the spring semester program Globalization and the Natural Environment: South Africa. Programs are offered in Tanzania and Botswana via the Associated Colleges of the Midwest, of which Macalester is a member. Many others are offered in all regions of the continent, focusing on a broad array of subjects including politics, culture, the environment, development, Arabic language (in North Africa), archaeology–paleontology, and more.

In recent years, Macalester students have studied abroad in Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, and Tanzania. Furthermore, in one recent year, the Macalester student body included students from Botswana, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

The student group Afrika! strives to increase awareness of African issues on campus through social programs and education. Its primary focus is the support of African students, and it welcomes the entire Macalester community for membership.

The African Music Ensemble is widely known as “the hardest working band on campus.” This Macalester institution is composed of players, including beginning players, from throughout the college.

After Macalester

Jonathan Goh ’15 (Houston) is an international program management intern for the American Refugee Committee.

Lucy Kane ’15 (Jackson Heights, N.Y.) is an affordability advisor at uAspire in Boston.

Emily Lawson ’15 (Alexandria, Ind.) was a 2015 Humanities in Action fellow.

Clementine Sanchez ’14 (Madrid, Spain) is volunteering for a UK nonprofit in Tanzania.

Anna Faber ’13 (Washington, D.C.) is an account coordinator with Blue State Digital in New York City.

Rachel Mueller ’13 (Glenwood Springs, Colo.) works in digital storytelling for the Minneapolis nonprofit Green Card Voices.

Olivia Margaret Nichols ’13 (St. Paul) is an elementary school teacher with Teach for America in Phoenix.

Ghariza Sujak Bakir ’13 (Melbourne, Australia) is an online industry organizer for the National Union of Workers in Melbourne, Australia.

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