

Africology

Doctor of Philosophy

College of Letters and Science, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee



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The Ph.D. in Africology at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee is grounded in the axiomatic assumption that, as the imperatives of global integration significantly transform human relations, the twenty-first century will witness an exponential expansion of the institutional delivery of Africological knowledge. Across the planet today, Africa remains the only continent with a vast store of natural resources (e.g., uranium, oil, copper, nickel) that are underutilized. With the demand for energy increasing exponentially worldwide, knowledge and understanding of the cultures and political economies of African countries and societies clearly are in the self-interest of the global community. Because of this twenty-first century imperative, the Department of Africology has designed the Ph.D. degree around concentrations in 1) Political Economy and Public Policy, 2) Culture and Society: Africa and the African Diaspora, and 3) a concentration outside the department in the student's area of interest.

The fields of concentration are the substantive core of the Ph.D. program. Political economy entails the normative and empirical relations of political and economic phenomena in given sociocultural contexts. Public policy entails the making of binding authoritative decisions that produce, allocate, reproduce, and reallocate societal resources. Political, economic, cultural, and social elements interact continually in every political economy, and public policy substantially frames their patterns of interaction. Through a range of research methods and techniques, the concentration in political economy and public policy grounds students in local, national, and transnational political economies and public policies. Relevant courses and seminars in such fields as economics, political science, sociology, urban planning, geography, and history will be utilized.

All cultures share in common at least eight attributes. These are species life, species being, language, religion, food, literature-art-science-technology, institutions, and transgenerational memory. Systematic comparisons of these elements of cultures in Africa and in the African Diaspora worldwide afford sound explanations of, and novel insights into, the behaviors of Africans and their descent. This concentration in comparative cultures will enable students to scrutinize rigorously exchanges, admixtures, fusions, retentions, and disappearances of cultural elements in Africa and the African Diaspora in regard to their contemporary significance. Relevant courses and seminars in English, foreign languages and literatures, history, and sociology will complement those offered in the department.

Admission

To be considered for admission, an applicant must meet UWM Graduate Faculty requirements for admission plus the departmental requirements listed below. A master's degree is not a prerequisite for this PhD program.

1. Possession of an overall undergraduate grade point average of 3.33 (B+)
2. Submission of scores within the last five years from the Graduate Record Examination
3. Submission of three letters of recommendation from individuals who are familiar with the applicant's academic work
4. Submission of a writing sample (10-15 pages) of the applicant's written work, signaling one's aptitude for graduate study

Normally, students are admitted only for the fall semester. However, in extraordinary circumstances, a student may be permitted to begin Ph.D. studies in the spring semester. The department does not offer a terminal M.A. degree. Students applying without a master's degree are admitted to the Ph.D. program in the equivalent of master's status.

Admission to the graduate program is based on a careful review of the applicant's academic qualifications, and is highly competitive. Successful candidates usually have a high grade point average (GPA) in their undergraduate majors, as well as overall. There are, of course, a variety of factors that come into play over the years of an applicant's studies, and so the admissions committee will consider closely a student's academic profile, as well as accomplishments that are germane to his/her application.

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Looking Back/Moving Forward: The Future of Africana/Black Studies

April 15-17, 2010

Africana Studies and Research Center, Multi-Purpose Room

Cornell University, 310 Triphammer Rd. Ithaca, NY 14850.

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In celebration of its 40th anniversary, the Africana Studies and Research Center at Cornell University will host '*Looking Back/Moving Forward: The Future of Africana/Black Studies*'. The conference will be held April 15–17, 2010, to revisit and critically assess the origin and development of the field of Africana/Black Studies, as well as a look at new theoretical imperatives in the field and its future prospects in the context of global African Diaspora and transnational studies. The conference will invite several major scholars in the field from outside Cornell University to engage with Cornell-based scholars in a dialogue about the field and its future.

Critical Synopsis:

The field of Africana/Black Studies has undergone major changes and transformations within the last three decades, which were largely due to feminist, postmodernist, postcolonial studies and other critical interventions. A new generation of African and African American feminist scholars has produced a body of work critical of patriarchy and its hegemonic impact on the field. They also have been critical of western and white feminist scholarship that has either been patronizing or shown disregard for Africana/Black women issues and concerns. As a result of such interventions, a diverse array of gendered perspectives have evolved within the field of Africana studies and greatly enriched its discourses in social sciences and the humanities. The same could be said about new imperatives, such as postcolonial, postmodernist, gay and lesbian or queer perspectives, which have confronted homophobia within the Black communities and led to the development of a new body of literature and fields of inquiry in Africana Studies. These developments were influenced by transformations in related areas such as cultural studies and critical race theory in which Africana/Black Studies have played a vital role in shaping their evolution in the first place. Other developments are related to explorations of new frontiers in African Diaspora Studies. These include lesser explored aspects of the African Diaspora in the Spanish speaking Caribbean (such as Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Mexico), Latin America including Brazil, in addition to the Black British experience and recent African migrations and diasporas in Europe and the Middle East.

The above-mentioned developments will certainly play a part in reconfiguring and revisiting the field and expanding its discourse –and by extensions the curricula on both graduate and undergraduate levels– to include such new perspectives and frontiers in Africana Studies. The Africana Studies and Research Center at Cornell University is increasingly taking up as well as shaping the new paradigms of thought in the field and is innovating in ways that will ensure its place at the forefront for years to come.

Negotiating the African Presence: Rastafari Livivity and Scholarship Rastafari Conference 2010

August 17 - 20, 2010
University of the West Indies Mona

Overview

2010 will mark 50 years since the "Report on The Rastafari Movement in Kingston, Jamaica" was first published by the then University College of the West Indies. The Report, authored by M.G. Smith, Roy Augier and Rex Nettleford, validated the University's sense of its social responsibility and remains one its most successful monographs, having gone through eight reproductions without change in form or content, becoming a most highly referenced document on the Movement.

2010 also marks the 80th anniversary of the Rastafari Movement itself, which has grown from a few visionaries struck by the coronation of the Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I in November 1930, into a vital force in reconstructing and elevating the African Presence in the Western landscape. In recognition of these two anniversaries, and on the birthday of Pan-African champion, the Honourable Marcus Mosiah Garvey, the Institute of Caribbean Studies announces the inaugural Rastafari Studies Conference to be held August 17 - 20, 2010 at the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies, under the Joint Chairmanship of Vice-Chancellor Emeritus, Prof. Rex Nettleford and Prof. Emeritus, Sir Roy Augier.

Call for papers:

Interested scholars are invited to submit abstracts of no more than 150-200 words by April 21, 2010, for presentation of papers on any of the following themes:

Conference Themes:

'Reasoning' and Articulating African 'Freedom'
Rastafari Thought and Philosophy
Rastafari and the City
Historicising Rastafari and the State
Rastafari Reflections: The Visit of HIM Emperor Haile Selassie I to Jamaica
Theocracy, Resistance and the Elaboration of Black Religion
Routinization and New Religious Movements
Interrogating Rastafari Icons & Iconographies
Rastafari Studies and Institutions of Higher Learning
Rastafari Communities and Sustainable Development
Rastafari and the Black Intellectual Tradition
Rastafari Tributes & Testimonies
Repatriation to Africa as Practice: Case Studies
Rastafari Geographies and Demographics
Regional and Global Reach of Rastafari
Rastafari and other Caribbean Worldviews
Universities and Corporate Social Responsibility
Social Movements, Change and Identity
Diasporan Citizenry
Youth, Pedagogy and Rebuilding African Diaspora Communities
Family, Gender & Power in Rastafari
Staging/Representing Rastafari: Literature, Film, Media & Reggae Festivals
Rastafari Drumming Rituals
Health and Healing: Rastafari Ministries
Negotiating the Twenty First Century: Rastafari in the Global Moment
Rastafari and the Caribbean Arts

The conference welcomes creative and non-academic contributions through workshops, video presentations, artistic displays and other forms of expression.

Abstracts may be submitted to rastafaristudies2010@yahoo.com

Final date for the submission of abstracts is April 21, 2010.

For more information visit our website:

<http://ocs.mona.uwi.edu/ocs/index.php/irc/>

<http://ocs.mona.uwi.edu/ocs/index.php/rsc/inaugural>

Secretary-General Designates Stevie Wonder: United Nations Messenger of Peace



UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appoints Stevie Wonder as a messenger of Peace at UN headquarters in New York on December 4, 2009.

New York (Press Release, Note No. 6234, Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York).

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has designated Grammy Award-winning songwriter and musician Stevie Wonder (United States) as a United Nations Messenger of Peace with a special focus on people with disabilities. His designation will be officially announced at a press conference at United Nations Headquarters on Thursday, 3 December 2009.

Recognized for his ability to focus attention on and mobilize support for civil and human rights issues, Stevie Wonder joins ten other United Nations Messengers of Peace who advocate on behalf of the Organization.

Messengers of Peace are individuals who possess widely recognized talents in the fields of art, academia, literature, sports and entertainment, helping to raise worldwide awareness of the Organization's ideals and activities. Through their public appearances, contacts with the international media and humanitarian work, they expand public understanding of how the United Nations helps to improve the lives of people everywhere.

In selecting Stevie Wonder for this designation, the Secretary-General said, "Our newest Messenger of Peace is someone who is admired by millions of people and has given back to millions of people. I recognize that he has consistently used his voice and special relationship with the public to create a better and more inclusive world, to defend civil and human rights and to improve the lives of those less fortunate. Stevie Wonder is a true inspiration to young people all over the world about what can be achieved despite any physical limitations."

Stevie Wonder's activism has been pivotal in United States and world events. In 1983, he spearheaded a campaign to make Martin Luther King Day a national holiday in the United States. He also advocated for ending apartheid in South Africa.

Stevie Wonder has been recognized for his philanthropic efforts which include the United States President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, the Children's Diabetes Foundation, Junior Blind of America and the creation of the Wonder Vision Awards Program. For over 10 years, he has provided toys for children and families in need with his annual House Full of Toys benefit concert.

His career as a recording artist has reflected his concern with humanitarian issues. He has written, produced and/or performed songs relative to charities in support of disabilities, aids, cancer, diabetes, hunger and homelessness, domestic abuse and many other causes on behalf of children and adults. Some of these charities include institutes for the blind, such as the Royal National Institute of Blind People, for which Stevie Wonder launched the British Telecom Celebrity Eyes phone card. He has also supported We Are the World, That's What Friends Are For, City of Hope, Special Olympics, Nobody's Child: Romanian Angel Appeal, Charge Against Hunger Campaign and Tour, Live 8, September 11, 2001 America: A Tribute to Heroes, Andre Agassi's Grand Slam for Kids, Paul Newman's Hole in the Wall, The United Negro College Fund, the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, and many more.

On behalf of people who are blind or have low vision, Stevie Wonder released the first-ever descriptive music video entitled, “So What the Fuss”. His second descriptive music video, “Shelter in the Rain”, was a healing message of love and inspiration to those who were touched by Hurricane Katrina. Net proceeds from this song were donated to Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.



UN Photo/Paulo Filgueiras

Newly-inducted United Nations Messenger of Peace, Stevie Wonder, addresses the opening event for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 03 December 2009. United Nations, New York. Photo # 421961.

On December 4, 2009 he was interviewed by Gerry Adams of UN Radio. The interview proceeded as follows:

SG 1: Ladies and gentlemen, it's no wonder why we are so excited today to have Mr. Wonder as UN Messenger of Peace today. Thank you very much.

Narrator: Currently as one of only 11 UN Messengers of Peace - they include actor George Clooney and environmentalist Jane Goodall -- Stevie Wonder will advocate for the world's estimated 650 million people with disabilities.

SW 1: I'm extremely honored to be here. This is an amazing day because I never imagined that I would in my lifetime be given this honor. But when receiving such an incredible honor, it inspires me to move and do more, commit myself to an even greater degree than just the few years, but for a lifetime.

Narrator: But when an unexpected fire alarm marred his acceptance speech, Stevie Wonder, the consummate composer, had music on his mind:

N-Steve fire: (alarm)...I'm trying to figure out a new melody (laughter)

Narrator: Mr. Wonder was interviewed several times during the day. When he spoke to UN Radio, I asked him what he planned to do first in his new position:

Wonder 1: The first thing that I'd like to move on is to continue as I have, talking about how it is ridiculous that we have 10 percent of the people of the world with disabilities, and 90 percent of these people of the world are not doing enough to eradicating a condition where some people with disabilities are treated with prejudice because of the disability; where places in the world are not accessible to them-the people with disabilities.

Narrator: He also mentioned that he would like to focus on technologies that make the playing field more equal for disabled people:

Wonder 2: There's technology that is out there to help. A lot of this technology is not necessarily affordable to a normal person, so I'd love to see this technology be subsidized by governments, by companies in ways that would bring this cost of this technology down, or just be available to people for free, so that they can to do what they need to do.

Narrator: When he was serenaded by a group of young children, he spontaneously joined in: Stevie and kids: *Children and Stevie Wonder Singing.*

Narrator: Finally, Stevie Wonder had this to say about his new role of Messenger of Peace:

Wonder 3: I want you to know that I am committed to doing this, not just because I've been given this honor. And even after the time that I will have served with this honor is over, I'm still committed.

Narrator: Reporting for UN Radio, this is Gerry Adams.



UN Photo/Paulo Filgueiras

Stevie Wonder at UN Radio



UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

Stevie Wonder gives Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon a special handshake following his United Nations Messenger of Peace induction ceremony. 03 December 2009. United Nations, New York (photo # 421860).