



COLLEGE *of* CHARLESTON

AFRICAN AMERICAN
STUDIES PROGRAM

Fall 2022 Newsletter



"Iron "sankofa" symbol on a memorial to the enslaved workers who "helped" build the Unitarian Church in Charleston, SC" by Spencer Means is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

From the Director



Anthony Greene,
Director of the
African American Studies
program

Greetings colleagues, students, staff, and friends of the African American Studies program. As we kick off the beginning of a new academic year, the excitement of the new year brings renewed energy and enthusiasm. While we continue to deal with the remnants of Covid-19, we must continue to remain diligent in our efforts to keep a safe and healthy campus environment. Over the last eight months, we have witnessed a great number of things that reminds us we have not lived up to America's promise of freedom and equality.

Thus far in 2022, the US Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark 1973 Supreme Court decision that affirmed the constitutional right to choose on June 24th. Since January 2021, 42 states have introduced bills or taken steps that would restrict teaching critical race theory or limit how teachers discuss racism and sexism, with 17 states having already imposed such bans (including South Carolina). There have been 27 school shootings since the start of 2022, with the most recent being at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. The Uvalde mass shooting resulted in 21 lives lost, mostly children. The national profile of the local police failure to take immediate action caused significant commentary on the state of policing, along with the role of race and social class.

More recently, there has been occasion to rejoice in some semblance of social justice. The killers of Ahmaud Arbery, Travis McMichael and Greg McMichael, were given life sentences in federal prison. While Ahmaud Arbery's family can experience a small inkling of resolution, far too many of these cases have very different outcomes. Over the 4th of July weekend, Akron police shot and killed Jayland Walker, an unarmed Black man. The autopsy report highlighted police shot at Walker more than 90 times, hitting him a total of 60 times. While this is an extreme use of force, it's not unique. In 2016, Cleveland police shot at two unarmed African Americans in their car over 137 times. These incidents are well-documented, and too often, African Americans and other people of color must endure countless examples of outcomes that support the system of policing rather than real justice.

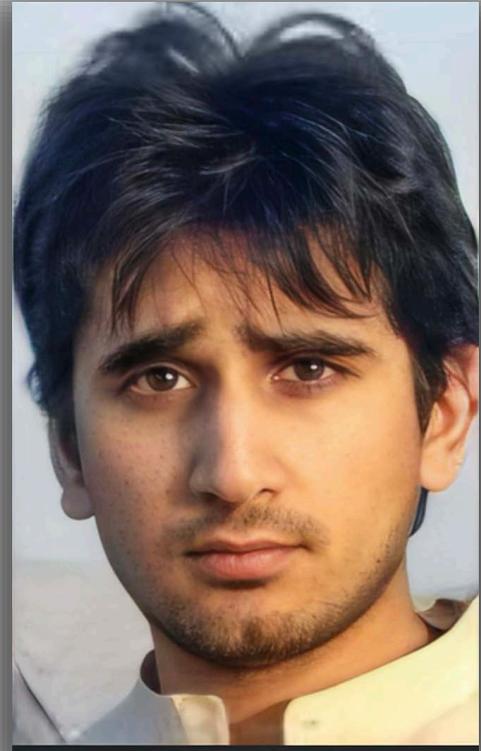
The legacy and future of African American Studies designed to provide critical analyses of American society with a focus on the Black lived experience. African American Studies emerged in response to the social injustices African Americans experienced during the 1960s. Its legacy is a continuation of the Black Freedom Struggle. The College of Charleston's African American Studies program continues to provide spaces for students to engage in racial consciousness, cultural nationalism, and social responsibility. Our work remains as important today as it did during the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements. Each new cohort of CofC students are seeking more accurate portrayals of American history; more contextual knowledge regarding race and racism, and desire a more inclusive curriculum across the disciplines. As a result, institutions of higher education must begin to address these specific needs and interests of their students. As such, I will forever echo Dr. Consuela Francis' words: "How do we achieve social justice in this multiracial/multi-ethnic democracy?" I contend, how do we reach and connect with a growing generation of students who are seeking a better understanding of the social, cultural, and political world within which they live in? African American Studies will continue its expansive course offerings and programming/events. This upcoming academic year, we will partner with the Avery Research Center, MUSC's Diversity and Inclusion Office, and the Charleston chapter of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) to provide a series of events focused on Black Health and Wellness. Events are TBA.

African American Studies welcomes our new Visiting Assistant Professor! Dr. Avinash Hingorani comes to us from the University of Edinburgh where he earned his Ph.D. in History. You can review more about Avinash in the Faculty News section, but please join me in welcoming him to the Lowcountry. As we continue to be resilient in the face of the pandemic, African American Studies is looking forward to another exciting year of programs and events which will engage our students in learning about the areas of African American history and culture, domestically and abroad.

Faculty Spotlight

We are happy to welcome
Dr. Avinash Hingorani
this academic year as our
Visiting Associate Professor.

Avinash began his academic studies in 2010 at Tulane University in New Orleans, where he graduated with a BA in Philosophy. After graduating from Tulane, he attended the University of Amsterdam where he earned his MA in American Studies (2016). He completed his Ph.D. in History from the University of Edinburgh in 2021.



His dissertation, "A Clash of Color: A Dialogue on Race, Caste, and Class in the United States and India (1893-1954)" analyzed the relationship between a small number of Black Americans and Indian activists, assessing how they interacted with one another. By choosing a few key individuals, his approach allowed him to keep his project precise whilst exploring broad themes such as race, caste, class, and nationalism. Avinash is currently working on a book based on his doctoral research, which is currently under peer review at Cambridge University Press.

Avinash enjoys building transnational historical projects and envisions himself as a historian who seeks to situate local history with broader international context which is how he frames his courses here at the College of Charleston.

Alumni Spotlight



Ayana Walker
Graduate Student
University of South
Carolina

I am Ayana Walker a 2019 Graduate of the African American Studies Program majoring in Sociology and minoring in African American Studies. I've had an assortment of jobs since graduating from CofC and my experience gained from the African American Studies Program has prepared me to work in many fields before finding the right fit for myself.

Some of these included working in corrections as an officer, working in childcare, and then working with youth on the Autism spectrum and with other developmental disabilities. The knowledge that I learned in the AAST department continues to be relevant and a great support in my professional endeavors and aspirations.

The African American Studies Program was very instrumental in my career and personal endeavors, especially when combined with what I learned in my Sociology courses. I can look at issues in the Systemic sense while understanding how the intersections of various identities affect peoples' view of themselves and the world at large. The program has supported me and influenced my career choices, my poetry, and the causes I care about deeply.

All this knowledge from the program prepared me to pursue a master's degree in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling at the University of South Carolina. This degree path allows me to assist people with disabilities in fulfilling their work and personal desires. I have a particular interest in addiction/substance abuse and want to help these individuals turn their lives around. While earning my degree, I aim to continue working in the clinical or social service/community-based fields and am forever grateful for my experiences being in the African American Studies Program of CofC.

Faculty News

What's new with AAST faculty, affiliates, and friends?

- Mari Crabtree is back from a restful yet busy sabbatical, during which she worked on a new book project about the pleasures and political utility of deception in the Black cultural tradition. She also wrote some essays, including a review of the horror film, *Master*, for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Her first book, *My Soul Is a Witness: The Traumatic Afterlife of Lynching*, will be published by Yale University Press on January 10, 2023.
- Founded in 2020 in honor of the first African American students and early African American trailblazers who enrolled in the College of Charleston, the 1967 Legacy Scholars is a program that recognizes, honors and builds upon the legacy of African American excellence in South Carolina and at the College of Charleston. The 1967 Legacy Program provides African American students with scholarships, academic enrichment funding, professional development, and research experiences centered on the work of Africans and African Americans who contributed to the development of the College of Charleston and the Lowcountry community. The inaugural cohort included 11 students and the 2022-2023 cohort includes 8 students. Seven (7) of the 19 Legacy Program participants are in the Honors College. The average Legacy Program GPA for the 2021-22 academic year was 3.30, and six (6) of our 1967 Legacy Scholars made the President's List or Dean's List for the 2021-22 academic year. All eleven students from the first cohort persisted to year 2. The Director, Dr. Valerie Frazier, is an Associate Professor of English and an African American Studies affiliate. Additionally, Dr. Frazier is a CofC alumni and was instrumental in the College establishing African American Studies as a part of collective student activism and demand to create inclusive curriculum.
- Race, Equity, and Inclusion (REI): In line with the College of Charleston's core values and the current Strategic Plan's commitment to diversity, the Race, Equity, and Inclusion (REI) initiative came about as a result of an ad-hoc committee's two-year effort at creating a two-course REI requirement for all CofC undergraduates. Beginning Fall 2023, all entering undergraduates at the College of Charleston will be required to take at least two courses whose content addresses issues of race, equity and inclusion, one in the context of the United States and one addressing the issues in a global context. Dr. Simon Lewis, Professor of English and African American Studies affiliate, was appointed REI Director and will lead the implementation of REI.

AAST Student Award Winners and Graduates

Our annual celebration of the African American Student Awards were acknowledged during the LCWA Awards Ceremony.

Conseula Francis Outstanding Student Award:

Kayla Doctor

Ajani Ofunniyin

Community Activism Award:

Zinnia Harris

African American Studies

Rising Scholar Award:

Barinwa Wiwgua

African American Studies

Outstanding Senior

Scholar Award:

Iyanla Fuller

African American Studies

Capstone Project Award:

Jaiden Canteen

Congratulations to all of our AAST graduates who completed the degree program this past Spring. We wish our sixth graduating class all the best as they determine their post-graduate paths!

Minors:

Kennedy Caldwell
KeAundra Humphrey
Anthony Jackson
Alexis Williams
De'von Witherspoon

Majors:

Jaiden Canteen
Kayla Doctor
Iyanla Fuller



Fall 2022 Events

"KENDRICK LAMAR ON LIFE AND THE NATURE OF DEATH"

WITH
DR. ANTHONY B. PINN



Using the album DAMN, this talk explores Kendrick Lamar's understanding of the interconnected nature of life and death. In so doing, it provides a sense of how hip hop wrestles with some of the central theological challenges that plague our historical moment.

ANTHONY B. PINN (PHD, HARVARD UNIVERSITY) IS CURRENTLY THE AGNES CULLEN ARNOLD DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF HUMANITIES AND PROFESSOR OF RELIGION AT RICE UNIVERSITY. PINN IS THE FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR ENGAGED RESEARCH AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING ALSO AT RICE UNIVERSITY. HE IS A FELLOW OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, AND PROFESSOR EXTRAORDINARIUS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA. IN ADDITION, PINN IS A VISITING SCHOLAR AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY DIVINITY SCHOOL.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2022 AT 11AM
AVERY RESEARCH CENTER - 125 BULL ST



COLLEGE of
CHARLESTON
DEPARTMENT OF
RELIGIOUS STUDIES



INTERNATIONAL
AFRICAN AMERICAN
MUSEUM



Charleston
Interreligious Council



COLLEGE of
CHARLESTON
AFRICAN AMERICAN
STUDIES PROGRAM

Kendrick Lamar on Life and The Nature of Death" with

Dr. Anthony B. Pinn

November 1, 2022

11:00am

Department of Religious Studies

**Co-Sponsors: International African American
Museum; Charleston Interreligious Council; African
American Studies**

Fall 2022 Course Offerings

AAST 200: Introduction to African American Studies

AAST 340: Race, Violence, and Memory in American History

AAST 345: Race and Sports in America: Chronicling the Black Sporting Experience

AAST 300 (ST): The African Diaspora in German Speaking Countries

AAST 300 (ST): Environmental Justice

AAST 395: African American Research Methods

AFST 101: Introduction to African Studies

HIST 211: American Urban History

HIST 216: African American History to 1865

ATTENTION: SENIOR CITIZENS

South Carolina residents who are over 60 years old are eligible to enroll in regular College of Charleston courses on a space-available basis for a fee of \$25 for the semester. Permission of the instructor is required for African American Studies courses. Call 843.953.5620 for details.

LCWA World Affairs Signature Series “Black Lives”

Black Lives is the 2021-2022 World Affairs Signature Series Sponsored by the School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs. In the spirit of the Akan aphorism “Sankofa,” which emphasizes the importance of looking to the past to understand the future, this series features a number of events and a range of courses taught in 15 different disciplines in an effort to enhance our understanding of Africa and peoples of African descent across time and space. For the participatory activities, students will engage with four guest speakers from the target cultures to discuss specific folk practices. Speakers will be native to the target culture (and speak relevant dialects/ languages) and have direct, applied expertise in the culture.



The modern world has been shaped by forced labor, cultural innovation, and natural resources from the African continent. Scientists have identified East Africa as the cradle of humanity, while Timbuktu and Egypt are viewed as exemplars of ancient civilizations. Today we observe how phenomena such as China’s economic reach and Boko Haram’s insurgency sway realities for states with historically weak institutions and unstable governments; while our own has sworn in the first Black and South Asian woman as Vice President. Conflict in Ethiopia. Food insecurity in Madagascar. SARS protests in Nigeria. The nomination of Black Lives Matter for the Nobel Peace Prize. Ghana’s successful “Year of Return” that invited descendants of enslaved Africans to return “home.” African footballers playing worldwide and black Olympians breaking world records. Each of these has social, economic, and political implications for Black Lives.

Here at CofC, faculty are deeply engaged in research, teaching, and service projects that coalesce around African Studies, African American Studies, and studies of the broader African Diaspora. The Black Lives series seeks to put these efforts in closer dialogue from the unique vantage point of Charleston and the Lowcountry, a space where they intersect in key ways. Being a major center of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, enslaved Africans and their descendants have shaped our physical, cultural, economic, and political environment in such a way that Charleston can very much be described as an African city. Our theme and Charleston’s importance to the global economy calls attention to how the African continent and wider transnational Black experiences (African American, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-LatinX, Black British, Afro-European) are hubs for international engagement.

We warmly invite the College of Charleston community to participate in the Black Lives Signature Series. Check out the website to learn more about courses and upcoming events that will take part in the series! blogs.cofc.edu/lcwa-signature-series-black-lives

Port of Entry

Did you know that African American Studies has a Podcast series?

Charleston, South Carolina was a major hub of the Trans-Atlantic trade in enslaved Africans. Scholars estimate that around 40% of all enslaved Africans that entered what would become the United States did so through Charleston Harbor. It is the port of entry for enumerable familial lines of enslaved African descent.

Port of Entry: An African American Studies Podcast is a series sponsored by the African American Studies Program in collaboration with Dr. Michael Overholt of the Teaching and Learning Team at the College of Charleston. Port of Entry promotes the culture, history, and lived experiences of people of African descent in the Carolina Lowcountry and beyond. Stay tuned for episodes that explore new scholarship, programs and events in African American Studies, notable figures and facts, and the achievements of our faculty, students, and alumni.

Episode 1: “Alumni Spotlight- Olivia Williams and that viral Washington Post article!”



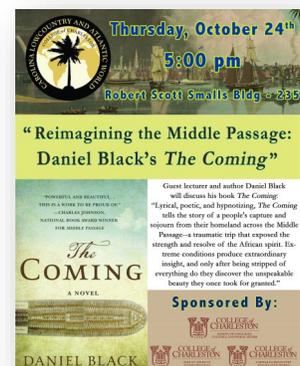
Episode 2: “DNA Doesn’t Lie”



Episode 3: “Music and the Black Experience”



Episode 4: “Reimagining the Middle Passage”



As we begin the start of this new academic year the African American Studies program at the College of Charleston has offered its services as a clearing house for news of events relevant to African American Studies. We have created a calendar and listings-service drawing attention to African American-related events happening across the state. The calendar is on our website and we will provide information on events that we are aware of. To keep our calendar up to date with the latest events, we invite you to submit events that you believe would be beneficial to this calendar. If you would also like to be added to our African American-related Events email list please contact Anthony D. Greene, Director of AAST at greenead@cofc.edu.

The **Event Calendar** can be found here:
african-american-studies.cofc.edu/events/

How Can You Support African American Studies ?

Area of Need:	Financial Goal:
Study Abroad Scholarships (\$3,000/student)	\$13,750.00
Student Research & Conference Travel	\$2,000.00
AAST Student Merit Awards	\$5,000.00
AAST General/Discretionary Fund	\$2,000.00
African American Studies Program Endowment	\$50,000.00*

Every Gift Counts! No amount is too large or small! Please consider an individual or group donation of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$1000 or more!

All donations are tax deductible [Donate Now!](#)

In the 'Designation' drop-down menu, select 'Other'. In the 'Other' box, note your intended contribution: **R717 - African American Studies**. Thank you for your continued support of the African American Studies program.

Or visit <https://giving.cofc.edu/ways-to-give>

Where Are You Now?

Let Us Know What You're Up To

For 20 years the African American Studies Program at the College of Charleston has educated students in African American history and culture. We would love to hear what those students are up to now. Let us know about the exciting professional and personal milestones you've reached since leaving the College. You can email Dr. Greene with the details at greenead@cofc.edu



not just in february