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**The African Studies Center at Boston University**

Boston University (BU) is a premier research institution with an international reputation for excellence in African studies. Since the founding of the African Studies Center (ASC) nearly 70 years ago, Africa has been a central teaching, research, and outreach focus at BU, one of the nation’s largest private universities. Its well-respected faculty and graduates are sought out for their expertise and leadership worldwide. The incorporation of the ASC into BU’s Pardee School of Global Studies (PSGS) in 2014 has expanded cross-regional and interdisciplinary engagement, enhanced advising and programming, and extended its campus and alumni networks.

The ASC’s mission is to promote knowledge of African languages and an in-depth understanding of the diversity of Africa across historical, sociocultural, ecological, and other dimensions. With 134 research and teaching faculty in 44 departments spread across 14 colleges and professional schools, as well as 14 interdisciplinary centers and programs conducting research and policy work directly relevant to Africa, the ASC provides ample opportunities for students across BU to include Africa in their studies. Furthermore, the ASC provides an important community for Africa scholars in Boston and beyond, as well as extensive outreach in K-16 education.

In the next four years, we will expand opportunities for students, scholars, and our communities through initiatives that include support for Africa-related internships, new advanced courses in African languages, and a new study abroad and research hub in South Africa. Working with HBCU, MSI, and CC partners, we will ensure educators and institutions traditionally underserved by Africa NRCs are equipped to share in our collective efforts to cultivate a well-informed understanding of Africa’s past, present, and future.

# COMMITMENT TO AFRICAN STUDIES

## Institutional Financial and Other Support for African Studies

BU has maintained a deep commitment to promoting research and teaching about Africa since the ASC was founded in 1953 as the university’s first area studies program. The expansion of resources for Africa has kept pace with the growth of the university, which in FY2021 enrolls over 33,000 students and has been awarded more than $502 million in grants and contracts. In 2009, the university spent nearly $800,000 to renovate a dedicated space for the ASC in the heart of campus that includes the William O. Brown conference room; 20 offices for faculty, staff, and visiting scholars; two classrooms with state-of-the-art multimedia equipment; a student office; lounge areas; the Teaching Africa Library and associated K-16 Education Outreach Program offices; and facilities for the Publications Program and the West African Research Association (WARA). An entire floor of the main BU library is dedicated to the African Studies Library (ASL). Remarkably, the ASC will receive further physical space upgrades in the form of a newly constructed twelve story building for the PSGS, which will contain a dedicated section for the ASC. The new building, funded by a recent $25 million gift to the university, will further increase the prominence of the ASC at PSGS and across campus.

BU has hired 25 Africa specialists since 2018, and in the past 15 years has authorized national searches for ASC director and assistant director, African Language Program (ALP) director, coordinator of Southern African languages, and head Africa librarian. In the past ten years, BU has hired additional Africa scholars in public health, global development policy, international relations, political science, religion, sociology, and theology; new African studies faculty in IR and history are expected to join BU in fall 2022. Major BU investments in the

School of Public Health (SPH) have increased the number of faculty focusing on Africa from 29 in 2009 to 35 as of 2022. In recent years, BU has had offices and research projects in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia dedicated to a variety of public health issues, including maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health, environmental health, health systems, and antibiotic resistance.

BU Study Abroad is committed to expanding options in Africa. While Covid-19 disrupted many of our study abroad programs, which in recent years have offered language immersion and service learning opportunities in collaboration with local partners in Accra, Rabat, and Zanzibar, BU is mobilized to revitalize and move forward with bold new initiatives (§4C). In fall 2022, the university is slated to establish new study abroad and research hub programs in Cape Town, South Africa, building on linkages established by the ASC.

BU’s commitment to expanding international and area studies is also reflected in the recent creation of PSGS, home to one of the largest IR programs in the US. The ASC maintains a distinct space and dedicated staff within PSGS’s Division of Regional Studies, while the school provides access to new resources and staffing, additional office and event space, professional career advising, and greater coordination with other area studies centers.

Salary support is the university’s most substantial commitment to the ASC. BU bears the full cost of salaries for the ASC director, African Language Program (ALP) director, Outreach manager, Publications manager and assistant editor, program administrator, three full-time African studies librarians, six full-time African language instructors, and student staff at the ASC and ASL. Together with paying 55% of the ASC assistant director’s salary, BU’s total annual investment amounts to approximately $1.1 million. Since 2010, the number of ASC faculty

affiliates has increased from 92 to 127, an annual salary commitment of approximately $20 million. PSGS provides the ASC an annual budget to support programming, facilities maintenance, and other operational expenses. Nonetheless, Title VI funding is essential for enabling the ASC to strengthen and scale African language and area studies at BU, in the Boston area, and nationally in ways that would not otherwise be possible.

## Institutional Support for Students

BU provides excellent financial aid to students at all levels. In 2012, BU began guaranteeing five years of full tuition and stipends to *all* students accepted into PhD programs. For all graduate FLAS fellows, including masters and doctoral students, the Provost’s office provides additional funds to cover the full cost of tuition (amounting to a total BU contribution of $127,204 in

AY21-22). Additionally, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GRS) supplements the FLAS stipend during the academic year to bring total support to the level of other PhD students, with an additional summer stipend of $5,000 per student (for a total stipend of $29,521 per student in AY21-22). Total GRS fellowship contributions for the ASC in 2021-22 were

$185,288. In addition, up to three years of academic year FLAS fellowships may be supplemented by GRS and not count towards the five years of full funding for PhD students, effectively providing PhD students up to eight years of funding. GRS offers similar generous supplements for other extramural funding for graduate students. Its Graduate Research Abroad Fellowship (GRAF) also funds travel to Africa for both preparatory and longer-term research. Undergraduates can conduct research in Africa through the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP).

# QUALITY OF LANGUAGE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Boston University’s African Language Program (ALP) rivals peer programs in the US in terms of quality and depth of offerings, faculty experience, materials development, and commitment to its nine supported languages, all of which are Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs). We seek funding to further strengthen our ALP through several initiatives, including expanded course offerings at advanced and superior levels; faculty professional development through pedagogy and assessment teaching training to improve the quality of instruction; development of audiovisual and dual-script (Ajami-Roman script) teaching materials; marketing campaigns to boost enrollments; and facilitation of overseas opportunities through institutional linkages and BU study abroad programs, including a planned research and teaching hub in South Africa.

## Extent of Courses in African Languages

BU currently prioritizes nine African languages: Amharic, Arabic, Igbo, Mandinka, Swahili, Twi, Wolof, Xhosa, and Zulu. Most languages are supported with regular courses through at least advanced proficiency (three years of instruction), with five available at

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 1: Language Enrollments, F18–S22** | | | |
|  | Enrollments, Total | Enrollments, 2nd yr + | Courses Available |
| Amharic | 74 | 45 | 6 |
| Arabic | 916 | 515 | 10 |
| Igbo | 64 | 32 | 8 |
| Mandinka | 5 | 2 | 4 |
| Swahili | 138 | 85 | 12 |
| Twi | 40 | 20 | 4 |
| Wolof | 43 | 28 | 8 |
| Xhosa | 20 | 13 | 4 |
| Zulu | 17 | 10 | 8 |
| **TOTAL** | **1317** | **750** | **64** |

superior levels (Table 1). Swahili is available for five years of study, plus two semesters of Swahili for health professionals. Arabic offerings include four years of Modern Arabic as well as courses in colloquial Arabic, translation, media, and literature. Students regularly enroll in directed studies with our faculty when they wish to build skills beyond regular course offerings.

Our plans for program growth prioritize expanding availability of advanced and superior-

level courses for languages that do not yet offer regular courses at these levels. Some of our earlier plans for expansion were delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic, during which our faculty reprioritized their efforts around adapting to remote and hybrid teaching methods through pedagogical training arranged by staff at the ASC as well as by BU language faculty coordinators. Nonetheless, we added Mandinka to our roster in fall 2020 with the hiring of a native speaker who is a linguistics PhD student at BU. He is actively involved in developing new teaching resources and advanced levels of Mandinka courses. We want our students to develop the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, and be able to write and read any document in the target language whether in Roman or African scripts, thus having access to information that would otherwise be unavailable to them. To this end, one of the hallmarks of our ALP has been instruction and development of teaching resources in Ajami, Arabic script modified for writing African languages including Hausa, Mandinka, and Wolof.

Our language courses attract students in several ways. Cross-registration facilitated by BU’s membership in the Boston Consortium for Higher Education, which comprises 20 institutions of higher education, has long attracted students to the ALP from area schools such as Boston College, Brandeis, and Tufts. Additionally, many BU students, particularly those of African heritage, report that the availability of African language courses were a critical factor in their decision to enroll at BU; they aspire to build necessary language skills in order to meet professional and family goals of engaging their communities abroad through careers in business, development, medicine, and technology. More recently, we have accredited language courses to offer units in the Hub, BU’s new general education curriculum launched in fall 2018. Students find Hub accreditation an attractive reason to not only pursue language study at any level, but to

continue through at least the intermediate level.

With NRC support, the ALP seeks to build on this momentum to increase the number of students achieving ACTFL Advanced proficiency level. Our current and planned initiatives focus on increasing enrollments in intermediate, advanced, and superior levels. This not only involves incentivizing students to pursue advanced and superior level study to master their language skills by prioritizing FLAS awards for students at these levels, but by expanding third year and higher course offerings in newer languages to our program. For our language program to have a greater impact, more students must reach a level of fluency that will allow them to use their languages effectively overseas beyond the classroom. Our program fosters innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural connection as advised in the World-Readiness Standards for Language Learning.

Complementing these efforts, we will draw on NRC support to sustain and expand initiatives to attract students to the ALP. Our language faculty, staff, and student workers collaborate on marketing initiatives for print and social media. We have partnered with the BU College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) On-Campus Internship program to hire graphic design interns who contribute to ongoing projects like our revamped website and a forthcoming series of short African language videos designed for social media. Our team works to enroll incoming students in African language classes earlier in their college career by working with BU Orientation’s Global Café, language advisors, the Global House Living-Learning Community, as well as the BU Hub. While the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted study abroad programs, BU is mobilized to revitalize overseas opportunities to attract more students to our languages and facilitate in-context study to build speaking, listening, reading, writing, and cultural competencies. These include new programs like BU’s planned South Africa hub as well as

revitalizing established linkages with institutions in Ethiopia, Ghana, and Senegal, among others.

We generate considerable interest among students on our Medical Campus, with SPH students regularly receiving FLAS fellowships. FLAS support and the opportunity to study African languages in preparation for careers in global health were decisive factors for some SPH students’ decisions to enroll at BU. We also offer intensive Swahili for Public Health courses. By offering accelerated graduate-level instruction focused on language specific to health work, we support students aspiring to function effectively in clinical settings. Furthermore, our program supports health professionals that rely on other languages with materials development initiatives such as two new workbooks to be published in spring 2022: *Hausa Ajami Workbook for Public Health* and *Materials for Medical and Health Purposes: An Amharic Workbook*.

## Quality of African Language Faculty

The strength of our language program derives above all from the quality of our faculty, and we invest extensively in their professional development. We have seven full-time African language faculty: four in Arabic, a Fulbright Arabic Language Teaching Fellow, one each in Swahili and Xhosa/Zulu. As our program has expanded, we have hired and trained part-time instructors to complement our full-time faculty. To ensure the quality of instruction, we have sent our instructors to NALRC’s Summer Institute to be certified as African Language Instructors and have supported their participation in professional meetings such as ACTFL, ASA, ALTA, and NERCPAL. The ASC has also hosted several NERCPAL meetings in Boston.

African Language Program Director Zoliswa O. Mali (PhD, Iowa) has taught Zulu and Xhosa at all levels since 2007 (Appendix III, 39). She is the immediate past president for ALTA and a board member and peer-reviewer for the National Federation of Modern Language

Teachers Associations. Dr. Mali oversees all courses to ensure the use of learner-centered communicative and performance-based teaching and full implementation of ACTFL guidelines and assessment standards. She supervises instructional materials development and works with our overseas partners to ensure intensive programs meet our high standards for FLAS fellows. Judith Mmari (MA, Ohio University) is Master Lecturer of Swahili and has taught at BU for nearly 20 years (Appendix III, 45). She has completed certificates in African Language Program Administration and Teaching African Languages. She has served on ALP faculty hiring committees, edited pedagogical and assessment materials, and mentored fellow language faculty.

Our Arabic program also upholds rigorous standards, with highly trained and experienced faculty. It is coordinated by Giselle Khoury (PhD, BU), Master Lecturer in Arabic with over 10 years of teaching experience who researches applied linguistics and second language acquisition, and who has headed BU’s participation in STARTALK (Appendix III, 32). Margaret Litvin (PhD, Chicago), Associate Professor of Arabic and Comparative Literature, founded the Middle East and North African Studies program and is a core faculty member of the new Masters in Literary Translation (Appendix III, 34). Luluah Mustafa (BS, University of Al-Najah) is a Senior Lecturer with over 20 years of Arabic teaching experience who has been recognized for her faculty excellence (Appendix III, 45). Salima Slimane is Lecturer of Arabic with over 20 years of teaching experience enriched by STARTALK training and graduate coursework at BU’s Wheelock School of Education and Human Development.

As our program has expanded over the years, we have hired several part-time native speakers with high qualifications and experience in teaching their languages. Amharic Lecturer Mulugeta Zegeye (MSc, University of Strathclyde) taught at Harvard for five years before

joining BU and since 2017 teaches all levels of Amharic in the ALP (Appendix III, 69). Igbo Lecturer Nikki Agba (LLB, Nnamdi Azikiwe University) taught at Harvard for seven years before joining our program in 2012, and has completed pedagogy training in the NALRC Summer Institute (Appendix III, 2). Wolof Lecturer Mouhamadou Lamine Diallo is an experienced language teacher who taught Wolof and Pulaar at Harvard for eight years before joining our program in 2013 (Appendix III, 17). In addition to pedagogy training at NALRC, his Wolof courses are noteworthy for offering dual literacy in Roman and Ajami scripts, integrating our Wolof Ajami workbook had been developed with prior NRC support. Akan Twi Lecturer Emmanuel Owusu (MA, Tufts) joined the ALP in fall 2019, having previously taught Twi at Harvard and as a teaching assistant at the University of Ghana (Appendix III, 50). In addition to his teaching, he also serves as Executive Director of the African Bridge Network (ABN), a Boston-based organization serving to connect African immigrant professionals with jobs, networking, and credentialing opportunities (§7C).

Our newest teacher is Ousmane Cisse, a PhD student in linguistics at BU who since fall 2020 serves as Senior Teaching Fellow for Mandinka (Appendix III, 13). His role emerges from a partnership of the ASC and Department of Linguistics facilitated by Fallou Ngom in order to support Ajami materials development and research across the Senegambia region. Like Wolof, our Mandinka courses teach dual script Ajami-Roman literacy. Before joining BU, Ousmane also served as a Fulbright Teaching Fellow at Eastern Michigan University and has already completed the NALRC Summer Institute. With Mandinka as our newest language, we plan to draw on NRC support to develop digital and Ajami teaching resources for Mandinka.

## Overall Quality of Language Program

The quality of our language instruction is unparalleled, with seven full-time language faculty and nine of our eleven faculty with over seven years of teaching experience. Rather than offer any African language on demand, we focus on a few prioritized languages so that we can adequately train and monitor instructors, develop high-quality teaching resources, and enhance the curriculum to ultimately offer courses in each language through at least four years. Our language faculty are at the forefront of curricular and pedagogical innovations for language and culture instruction. They are trained in learner-centered, communicative, performance-based, and Ajami teaching methods, and have developed multimedia teaching materials. All our languages are

four-skill courses leading to proficiency in oral expression, reading, writing (in both Roman and Ajami script for Wolof and Mandinka), and listening comprehension as well as cultural literacy to understand how to apply the languages in context and in professional fields.

We focus on continually strengthening the quality of language instruction as the most important means of reaching our goal of increasing the number of students who enroll in upper- level African languages and achieve Advanced ACTFL proficiency levels or higher. ALP faculty work closely with NALRC, ALTA, and NERCPAL on teacher-training activities, instructional materials, and developing national proficiency assessment tools and standards for African languages that draw on ACTFL and Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP) guidelines. NRC support enables us to fund faculty development through these organizations, as well as additional training in assessment standards like OPI. While our timeline for OPI certification in the current funding cycle has been delayed by the pandemic, we will organize this training later this year and every other year during the next NRC cycle. With NRC support we also fund faculty participation in NERCPAL and regularly host NERCPAL at the ASC.

Over the years, our language faculty have developed valuable teaching resources that serve students at BU and nationwide through our website (Table 2). We actively develop new resources for our signature series, like the 200-Word Project and African Proverbs Project, with plans for further development in the next four years for our newest languages, Mandinka and Twi. Furthermore, we published the workbook *Comprehensive Outcomes-Based Assessment: A Guide for African Language Instructors* with former ALP faculty and assessment specialist Dr. Jennifer Yanco, working in partnership with ALP Director Zoli Mali and former Zulu student Jennifer Erem. Accessible as an Open Access resource on our website for peer language instructors, the book provides concrete performance goals from Beginning through Superior ACTFL proficiency levels. Our team presented the work at the ALTA conference, and the workbook served as the focal point for a series of assessment training workshops for ALP faculty led by Dr. Yanco during the current NRC funding cycle. Our ALP director and Dr. Yanco worked with each instructor to develop objective and reliable assessment tools that take into account STAMP and ACTFL guidelines and the idiosyncratic features of each language.

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| **Table 2: African Language Teaching Resources** | | | |
| **Project** | **Description** | **Target Levels** | **Current Languages** |
| 200-Word Project | Recordings of first lang. speakers pronouncing key vocabulary | Elementary, Intermediate | Amharic, Hausa, Swahili, Wolof, Xhosa, Zulu |
| African Proverbs Project | 10 video skits per language to enact meaning of popular proverbs | Intermediate, Advanced | Amharic, Hausa, Igbo\*, Swahili, Wolof, Zulu, Xhosa |
| Profiles in Nigerien Artisanry | 13 video interviews with traditional artisans in Niger | Intermediate, Advanced | Hausa |
| Ajami Workbooks | Books teaching Ajami literacy | All | Hausa, Wolof |
| *Comprehensive Outcomes-Based*  *Assessment* | Concrete performance-based assessment guides for each level | All | All |
| Workbooks for Public Health | Vocabulary and cultural concepts tailored for health professionals | Intermediate, Advanced | Amharic\*, Hausa Ajami\* |
| *\* Publication scheduled in 2022* | | | |

Our hybrid dual script teaching program is the first in the US to offer training in both Roman script and Ajami, used by millions to write African languages. We have developed

pioneering Ajami workbooks for elementary/intermediate Hausa and Wolof, available through our Publications program. New workbooks for health professionals to learn relevant Hausa Ajami and Amharic will be available in spring 2022. In the next four years, we will produce new materials for Mandinka as well as online materials for Zulu developed under the auspices of NERCPAL by the ALP director and Sandra Sanneh (Yale). Funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the US Department of Education support our efforts to digitize Ajami manuscripts and to develop new multimedia Ajami reading resources for students in several languages, including Hausa, Mandinka, and Wolof. Our archival preservation and materials development initiatives not only benefit BU students and faculty, but also serve researchers, language learners, and the communities who own and produce original materials.

We are excited about the potential for this work to reshape expectations for African language students and to pave a path forward in Africa-related knowledge production that diversifies sources beyond European language materials.

**DRC:** U of Lubumbashi

**Ethiopia:** Addis Ababa U; Mekane Yesusu Lang. & Intercultural Ctr.

**Morocco:** Arab American Language Institute in Morocco; Qalam wa Lawh Center

**Nigeria:** Nnamdi Azikiwe U **Senegal:** Dakar Language Ctr. **South Africa:** U of Cape Town

**Table 3: Recent FLAS Fellow Overseas Destinations**

For each of our languages, we seek to develop linkages with African institutions to make possible intensive overseas advanced language study. Complementing linkages established for recent FLAS fellows who studied overseas (Table 3) are additional partnerships with institutions such as the University

for Development Studies (Ghana) and WARC (Senegal). While the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted many recent plans for partner visits, in the next funding cycle we aim to enhance language study abroad options through partner visits by the ASC and by integrating language study in BU’s planned South Africa hub.

ASC teaching facilities include a conference room and four classrooms equipped with state-of-the-art technology built for language instruction. These have recently been upgraded to sustain our work and adapt to the dynamic hybrid and remote teaching requirements of the pandemic, for which we also provided faculty with electronic tablets to facilitate remote teaching from home when needed. The BU Geddes Language Center has a rich repository of audiovisual African language materials and labs, recording studios, and listening posts and has worked with the ALP to develop audiovisual projects. The ASL holds a major collection of materials published in our languages. It also organizes the CinemAfriq film series, which features African language films selected in partnership with ALP faculty for screenings and discussions engaging language students and the greater Boston community. Every spring, the ALP celebrates student progress in their studies with African Language Theater Night, a fun event accompanied by food and competitions during which students engage their creativity, learn about cultural context, and improve oral performance. Our planned activities outlined in §9A will build on our tradition of excellence and continue to offer leadership in African language pedagogy.

# QUALITY OF NON-LANGUAGE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

## Quality of Non-Language Courses in Diverse Disciplines

Our strong African studies reputation attracts faculty in diverse fields to BU while encouraging existing faculty to develop new research and teaching concentrations on Africa. BU students take courses with African content in 26 disciplines in CAS, the College of Fine Arts, Writing Program, continuing education, and professional schools (Table 4; see also Appendix I). This

depth of course offerings allows an increasing number of professional school students in international relations, law, public health, business, and theology to focus their studies on Africa,

and students in a variety of professional programs now have opportunities to learn about and travel in Africa.

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| **Table 4: African Studies Courses by Department, 2020-23** | | | |
| **Department** | | **100%**  **Africa** | **25-90%**  **Africa** |
| Social Sciences | African Amer Studies | 6 | 14 |
| Anthro & Sociology | 4 | 19 |
| Archaeology | 2 | 6 |
| History | 10 | 13 |
| Poli Sci & Economics | 3 | 17 |
| Women, Gender, Sexuality | - | 2 |
| Arts and Humanities | African Langs | 55 | 21 |
| Art History & Fine Arts | 7 | 12 |
| English & Writing | 5 | 15 |
| Modern Langs & Ling | 2 | 8 |
| Religion | 1 | 5 |
| Sciences | Biology & Earth and Enviro | 1 | 9 |
| Professional Schools | International Relations | 2 | 13 |
| Law | - | 3 |
| Medicine & Public Health | - | 28 |
| Theology | 1 | 4 |
| Continuing Ed (Met College) | 2 | 10 |
| **TOTAL** | | **101** | **209** |

PSGS partners with other BU departments and professional programs, fostering greater inclusion of Africa across the curriculum. It offers joint international relations MA/JD and MA/MBA degrees in

addition to other international affairs masters degrees in global policy, diplomacy, security studies, communications, and religion. SPH offers joint MPH degrees for students in business (MBA), law (JD), medicine (MD), social work (MSW), medical sciences (MS) and genetic counseling (MS), with many students within the MPH opting for a specialization in global health that often leads them to work in Africa. The Program for Global Health Storytelling draws on expertise of scholars and practitioners from the College of Communication (COM) and SPH in order to offer fellowships and conferences that have engaged students in journalism in Africa; it has partnered with the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting. SPH has also worked with the Lab for Engineering Education and Development in the College of Engineering to develop and test new medical technologies in Africa. BU’s chapter of Engineers Without Borders runs several projects

in Zambia and Kenya in which engineering students apply technologies developed in classes. The School of Law launched its nationally-recognized Immigrants’ Rights and Human Trafficking Program in 2017. Law students learn practical legal skills while providing *pro bono* representation to vulnerable non-citizens, including many asylum seekers from Africa.

The unique concentration of top schools in the Boston area greatly expands the course options available to BU students. Through the Boston Consortium (§2A), BU students may cross-register in African studies courses at nearby schools while making BU’s African studies courses available to thousands of non-BU students. As a part of the Boston Theological Interreligious Consortium, BU students can also cross-register at nine area theology schools.

## Depth of Specialized Course Coverage

In addition to ensuring Africa content is broadly included throughout BU’s curriculum, the ASC actively supports programs that offer courses for specialized Africa tracks of study. These courses can range from introductory to graduate level courses and are long-standing program options in history, anthropology, IR, political science, and public health. Each department has several regularly taught Africa courses (Appendix I) with ASC-affiliated faculty and staff (Appendix III) to manage and support these specializations. Undergraduate and graduate students often work closely with a faculty member in directed student research programs, through which many students conduct an interdisciplinary project on Africa. Research funding is available through departmental support, research centers like the Center for Humanities, Graduate Research Abroad Fellowships, and the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

African studies courses are integrated in several professional programs (Table 5). The creation of PSGS strengthened existing cooperation between the ASC and the IR program, which

features MA degrees in global policy and international affairs with several specializations engaging Africa. Students in these programs received a major portion of recent certificates and fellowships awarded by the ASC. Since 2017, PSGS has hired four faculty who focus on Africa, signaling that the Africa-related curriculum is rapidly expanding in the school.

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| **Table 5: Selected Africa Programs in Professional Schools** | |
| **Professional School** | **Africa-Focused Program** |
| School of Public Health | MPH – Global Health |
| MPH – Infectious Disease |
| MPH – Maternal and Child Health |
| MPH – Human Rights & Social Justice |
| School of Medicine | MS Medical Anthropology & Cross-Cultural Pract |
| Lesotho Family Medicine Residency |
| School of Law | Immigrants’ Rights & Human Trafficking Prgm |
| School of Theology | MDiv – Global & Community Engagement |
| Program on Religion & Conflict Transformation |
| Pardee School of Global Studies | MA Global Policy – Developmental Policy |
| MA Global Policy – Environmental Policy |
| MA International Affairs – Security Studies |
| MA International Affairs – Religion & Int’l Affairs |

The MPH program is another professional degree program that closely works with the ASC. MPH students are our other largest cohort of graduate certificate and FLAS fellowship recipients. African studies and

language training naturally complement degree concentrations in areas like Global Health; Human Rights and Social Justice; and Program Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation. SPH is consistently ranked among the top ten public health schools in the US. The Department of Global Health leads in its field with dozens of programs examining poverty and development, maternal and child health, HIV and other infectious diseases, healthcare systems, and policy analysis in The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia, to name only some of its Africa programs. These projects create opportunities for students to travel to Africa for research and professional development. The School of Medicine has two programs with focus on Africa. The MS in Medical Anthropology is popular among African studies students interested in non-Western health beliefs and practices, and the Family Medicine program offers a residency in Lesotho in partnership with the Lesotho Ministry of Health.

The School of Theology (STH) has a history of engagement with Africa. The Center for Global Christianity and Mission allows theology students the opportunity to reflect critically on Christianity in Africa. The center is home to the *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*, a program designed to collect and publish biographies of African Christian leaders. The Religion and Conflict Transformation program attracts many students with an interest in Africa.

## Sufficiency of Non-Language Faculty and Pedagogical Training

The non-language faculty consists of 123 members representing 44 departments in the arts, sciences, and professional schools. We have particular strengths in public health, political science/IR, anthropology, theology/religion, and history, but we have affiliates in nearly every arts and sciences discipline and professional school. In addition to our regular faculty, the ASC maintains a vibrant network of Visiting Scholars and Research Affiliates. Active members in the ASC’s intellectual community, they participate in our seminars, advise students, and advance our research and media outreach. Our scholarly community has in recent years included current and emeritus faculty from Brandeis, Simmons, UMass Boston, and Johns Hopkins; independent scholars who often consult for or serve as fellows with major organizations like the US Department of State, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the US Institute of Peace; and international professors including recent Fulbright Scholars from Ethiopia, Mali, and Morocco.

All university teaching fellows (TFs) participate in an orientation program before teaching and receive continued support from the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). CTL offers programs and workshops for faculty and graduate TFs to develop and refine their classroom teaching, including training in inclusive and active learning principles, antiracist curriculum design fellowships, and syllabus writing workshops. BU’s Digital Learning and

Innovation office provides technology tools, teaching guides, workshops, and assessment tools that were critical to the university’s successful pivot to remote and hybrid teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic. All students formally evaluate TF and faculty performance in each class.

## Availability of Interdisciplinary Courses

BU’s unparalleled commitment to interdisciplinary work is embedded throughout the Strategic Plan guiding the university’s work through 2030. “Research That Matters” serves as one of five pillars in the Strategic Plan that reinvigorates BU’s record of commitment to interdisciplinary research and education, informing multi-school joint hiring initiatives, the formation of collaborative research initiatives, and the establishment and support of impactful and transformative centers complementing the work of the ASC, like the Center for Antiracist Research and the new Faculty of Computing and Data Sciences. Hundreds of BU courses are cross-listed not only between departments but also across colleges, many of which intersect with African studies and facilitate the many joint degree programs outlined in §3B (see also Appendix I). Many ASC classes are inherently interdisciplinary, such as the introductory course ID116 Africa Today. PSGS further increases interdisciplinary opportunities in African studies, as it includes faculty trained in political science, history, global development policy, sociology, economics, anthropology, environmental sciences, and public health.

Africa content is further embedded in undergraduate study through BU’s Writing Program and its general education program, the Hub, a university-wide initiative that emphasizes working across disciplines to prepare students for a complex and diverse world. Connecting our courses to the Hub has been an important way to engage students outside traditional African studies fields like humanities and social sciences, and an opportunity to not only grow African

studies course enrollments and students in our undergraduate minors, but to encourage greater consideration of African perspectives in sciences and professional fields. Our core course, Africa Today, has seen enrollments leap ahead since its accreditation in the Hub in 2020, and we have begun to offer it every semester rather than annually to accommodate increased student interest.

The Kilachand Honors College, founded in 2011, encourages team-teaching across disciplines and provides an integrated, four-year curriculum in which students address important global, societal, corporate, and geopolitical challenges. Several African studies faculty members have cross-listed interdisciplinary courses and teach them regularly at the college. Anthropology and ASC core faculty member Joanna Davidson serves as the college’s associate director.

# QUALITY OF CURRICULUM DESIGN

## Africa in the Undergraduate and Graduate Curriculum

The ASC strives to expand opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students in all disciplines to include African language and area studies in their academic program

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| **Table 6: Graduates with Africa Specializations, 2015–21** | |
| Majors – African Studies Independent Major/History | 8 |
| Majors – IR, Africa/Middle East Regional Track | 256 |
| Majors – Middle Eastern and North African Studies | 42 |
| Minors – African Studies and African Languages | 28 |
| Minors – Arabic | 55 |
| Minors – Muslim Societies and Muslim Cultures | 24 |
| Graduate Certificates – African Studies | 97 |
| **Total** | **510** |

and to increase the number and disciplinary diversity of students who develop expertise in Africa. We offer two undergraduate minors (African Studies, African Languages and Literatures), a joint BA (Linguistics and African Languages), and a graduate certificate (African Studies). We propose to use NRC support to expand the levels of our newest African languages, extend our study abroad programs, and facilitate internship opportunities.

All 6,949 undergraduates in the College of Arts and Sciences are required to demonstrate intermediate proficiency in a foreign language. Most BU colleges require at least a year of foreign language study. CAS has expanded its language advising by naming an Assistant Dean of Languages and two faculty liaisons for language advising. We will work with these individuals, BU Hub advisors, and the incoming students’ orientation program to increase enrollments in Africa-related courses and African languages. NRC funds will support our marketing initiatives to incoming students as well as current students through new digital bulletin screens across campus, in addition to marketing outreach through the Boston Consortium.

Additionally, we will build language enrollments by developing advanced and superior-level courses in languages for which regular courses at these levels are not yet available, including Mandinka, Twi, and Xhosa.

Enhancing African studies opportunities in undergraduate education will remain a major focus. FLAS fellowships have allowed us to attract more undergraduates to advanced levels of language study and to send students abroad for intensive language study. By the end of 2022, we plan to increase our study and research options in Africa with a major study abroad and research hub in Cape Town engaging multiple programs at BU. We predict that this will bolster interest in our South African languages. The ASC supports student-led initiatives and we have expanded extracurricular opportunities specifically oriented toward undergraduates, including career panels, fellowship application workshops, and receptions for undergraduates to meet faculty. We work closely with student organizations including the African Students Organization, Umoja (BU Black Student Union), BU Niger Alumni Network, Minority Connection Initiative, Eritrean and Ethiopian Students Association, the Questrom Business School’s Graduate Students of the

African Diaspora, and the Pardee School’s Anti-Racist Coalition.

We continue to expand options for specialized study of Africa and African languages.

Responding to evolving campus requirements introduced with the Hub general education program, we amended our two minors to make their completion more compatible with the new Hub curriculum and more attractive to students across disciplines. The minor in languages and literatures emphasizes superior-level language skills; the African studies minor places greater emphasis on research and area studies coursework while still encouraging serious language study. Our new joint BA in Linguistics and African Languages, launched with the Department of Linguistics in 2020, not only trains students to understand the structures of language but also builds their awareness of the sociocultural, historical, and religious diversity of Africa. The ASC also attracts many undergraduate majors in IR who pursue the Africa and Middle East regional concentration as well as students majoring in Middle East and North African studies.

Graduate students in any discipline or professional field can include an Africa focus in their curriculum and earn a certificate in African studies. The value of our graduate certificate is evident in the quality of students it attracts and their subsequent job placement (§7B). BU has particular strengths in African studies for students in anthropology, art history, history, ethnomusicology, IR, political science, public health, and theology. We encourage Africa specialization among students in the professional schools by not only marketing FLAS to them, but ensuring BU offers supplements to the FLAS that make it a full-tuition award (§1B).

## Academic and Career Advising for African Studies Students

The ASC is an active part of the university’s multi-tiered, formal advising structure. Our assistant director and publications manager share advising duties for African studies minors and

graduate certificate candidates. Meanwhile, students receive primary advising from their college, school, or professional program. Full-time professional advisors in these schools offer specialized guidance for careers and coordinate with the ASC regarding financial aid and the integration of African studies in their coursework. ASC faculty members supervise all theses and dissertations. The ALP Director works with the Assistant Dean of Languages and faculty language liaisons in CAS to provide specialized advising related to African languages.

The ASC’s extensive network of local and international scholars complement university and departmental efforts in advising, connecting students with opportunities in Africa, Europe, Asia, and the US. ASC faculty take collective responsibility for the professional development of our students irrespective of departmental affiliation, sharing information, critiquing proposals, and providing career counseling. The ASC organizes periodic workshops on proposal and dissertation writing that allow students to vet their proposals and works-in-progress. The ASC provides funding for graduate students to attend the annual ASA meeting and supports the annual BU African Studies Graduate Conference where students present papers and have opportunities for professional development. Our Visiting Researcher program integrates faculty from Boston- area schools as well as scholars from abroad into its activities, enhancing the number of Africa specialists available to work with students by bringing additional areas of expertise.

## Options for Research and Study Abroad in Africa

BU runs one of the largest study abroad programs in the US. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, over 2,000 students from over 150 colleges or universities annually participated in BU study abroad programs, of which there are more than 70 worldwide. We anticipate returning to these numbers in the near future as our Study Abroad office restores and launches new programs. BU

has sponsored programs through Study Abroad as well as department-led trips in Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zanzibar (Table 6). Additionally, BU approves many Africa programs organized by the Institute of International Education (IIE), the School for International Training (SIT), and peer universities. The ASC worked closely with BU Study Abroad, whose executive director earned a graduate certificate in African studies and PhD in history from BU, to facilitate the launching of programs in Ghana, South Africa, and Zanzibar. ASC Director Michael Woldemariam serves on BU’s Global Faculty Advisory Committee, charged with guiding BU’s global engagement as part of its 2030 Strategic Plan and overseeing BU’s planned South Africa hub.

NRC support will be critical to our pursuit of other possible locations for study programs that can build on existing linkages and areas of BU faculty expertise to provide opportunities for students’ intensive language study. Our linkages with African universities are an important element in training students, as we seek to combine language study, related on-campus area studies courses, and overseas experience. We propose to use NRC funds to develop and enhance linkages with institutions of higher education in Africa, expecting that some of these linkages will culminate in the creation of full study abroad programs. We will revisit recent linkages with Addis Ababa University, the University for Development Studies (Ghana), and WARC, whose activities were interrupted by pandemic travel bans. Our pursuit of linkages is informed by the need to facilitate advanced African language study for students. Complementing this work are BU’s Graduate Research Abroad Fellowship and Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program, both of which have funded recent student research in Africa.

BU allows students to enroll in numerous study abroad programs sponsored by other

universities. The ASC was a founding member of the National Consortium for Study in Africa, a body anchored by Africa NRCs working collectively to augment the quantity of overseas experiences for US students. The ASC website contains information on programs in Africa approved by BU. ALP faculty have played a key role in Group Projects Abroad in Africa. We use FLAS fellowships to encourage students to travel abroad to achieve Advanced ACTFL language proficiency through our own linkages and in programs sponsored by other NRCs. In recent years, our FLAS fellows have completed intensive programs in DRC, Ethiopia, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa recommended by our language and area studies faculty.

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| **Table 7: Selected List of Recent Overseas Travel and Research Options at Boston University** |
| * Rabat Language and Liberal Arts Program, semester-long and summer study abroad program in Morocco with focus on Arabic language and cultures of Islam and North Africa. |
| * Summer Study Abroad Program in Zanzibar, Tanzania, with focus on Swahili language, history and identity. Linkage with the State University of Zanzibar. |
| * Accra Global Health Program jointly run by BU and Lancaster University at LU’s Ghana campus, incorporating service learning for students in health sciences. |
| * Partnership with WARC in Senegal involving exchange of scholars from West Africa and BU. |
| * Linkage agreement with Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia) for intensive study of advanced Amharic. |
| * Linkage agreement with Fort Hare University and the University of KwaZulu Natal (South Africa) for intensive study of advanced Xhosa and Zulu. |
| * Linkage agreement with University for Development Studies (Ghana) for intensive study of advanced Hausa. |
| * Graduate Research Abroad Fellowships and Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program fund both research in Africa, including recent projects in Senegal and South Africa. |
| * School of Public Health long-term research initiatives provide overseas training and study options in Africa, with projects and offices in dozens of countries, including Ghana, South Africa, and Zambia. |
| * Engineers Without Borders student chapter works on water catchment and borehole well projects in Kenya. |
| * Lesotho-Boston Health Alliance 2-year medical internship program in Lesotho for physicians and Family Medicine Residency, in partnership with Lesotho Ministry of Health and Primary Care International. |
| * School of Theology’s Center for Global Christianity and Mission brings African theologians to BU for advanced training and provides opportunities for American students to research Christianity in Africa. |
| * Initiative on Forced Displacement offers academic year and summer programs engaging undergraduate and graduate students in work around the world, including in Uganda. |

# QUALITY OF STAFF RESOURCES

## Qualifications of Faculty and Professional Staff

Evidence of the quality of the ASC’s faculty abounds in their publications, research,

teaching, international linkages, community involvement, and fellowships and awards. ASC faculty have in recent years been named to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and won fellowships and grants from Guggenheim, Mellon, Fulbright, MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, British Library, Radcliffe Institute, US Institute for Peace, Centers for Disease Control, National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Council on Foreign Relations, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, CAORC, and USAID. Five of our faculty have won the ASA Best Book Prize (formerly Herskovits Prize) for African studies. The latest winner is former ASC Director Fallou Ngom’s *Muslims beyond the Arab World: The Odyssey of Ajami and the Muridiyya* (Oxford, 2016). While a high percentage of our full-time teachers are tenured (59%), we continue to refresh and expand our faculty, including new Africa hires since 2018 in PSGS, political science, religion, and social work, as well as a new Director of the School of Music. Recent African studies hires come from top schools such as Princeton, Harvard, Brown, UCLA, the University of Texas, Washington University in St. Louis, and Oxford.

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| **Table 8: Current Staff with Years of Service** | | | |
| **Name** | **Title** | **Years** | **Education** |
| Michael Woldemariam | Director, Associate Professor of International Relations | 10 | MA/PhD, Princeton |
| Eric J. Schmidt | Assistant Director | 4 | MA/PhD, UCLA |
| James McCann | Associate Director for Development, Professor of History | 37 | MA/PhD, Michigan State U |
| Natasha Patel | Program Administrator | 3.5 | BA, Boston University |
| Zoliswa Mali | Director, African Language Program; Senior Lecturer, Xhosa and Zulu | 16 | PhD, U Iowa  MA, U Stellenbosch |
| Elsa Wiehe | Outreach Manager | 2.5 | MA/EdD, U Mass Amherst |
| Michael DiBlasi | Publications Manager | 32 | MA/PhD, Boston University |
| Sandra McCann | Publications Assistant | 29 | BA, Western Illinois University |
| Beth Restrick | Head Africana Librarian | 18 | MSLIS, Simmons College |
| Rachel Dwyer | Assistant Head Africana Librarian | 8 | MSLIS, Simmons College |
| Gabeyehu Adugna | Africana Subject Liaison Librarian | 6 | MSLIS, U Maryland |

Our faculty and program staff are highly qualified to carry out the projects we propose

(Table 8). Most have extensive research experience in Africa, and many have visited our linkage partners. The combination of new hires with staff who have served the ASC for ten years or more ensures a dynamic environment characterized by both seasoned expertise and rejuvenation. In addition to a strong scholarly credentials, ASC Director Dr. Michael Woldemariam’s record of government service and high-level policy engagement, including a recent stint as an Africa policy advisor at the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, positions him well to spearhead our efforts around encouraging graduates to pursue government service (NRC Absolute Priority 1). ALP Director Dr. Zoliswa Mali is a specialist on the use of technology for second language acquisition and oversees development of our virtual classroom capacities. Assistant Director Dr. Eric Schmidt is an ethnomusicologist with experience in Niger, Mali, and Morocco and contributes to strengthening our arts and humanities programming. Outreach Manager Dr. Elsa Wiehe is a licensed teacher and has a rich background in curriculum development and teacher training in the US and Mauritius (NRC Absolute Priority 2). Program Administrator Natasha Patel is a PSGS graduate with extensive experience living abroad and as an international student in the US, as well as with programming student outreach. Publications Manager Dr. Michael DiBlasi is a graduate of BU’s archaeology program with research and teaching experience in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Nigeria and deep familiarity with the ASC and our peer-reviewed journal.

The Director, ALP Director, Assistant Director, and other faculty teach core courses, serve on thesis and dissertation committees, play an active role in their departments, and serve on university committees. The Assistant Director and Publications Manager advise students in our undergraduate and graduate programs. Our Assistant Director and Program Administrator work closely with students on financial aid and other issues.

BU resources for faculty and staff development are exceptionally strong. All faculty in PSGS and CAS have annual budgets that support participation in conferences and travel for research. Junior faculty are eligible for pre-tenure sabbaticals. CTL offers grant funding and an extensive calendar of talks, workshops, and training focused on improving teaching. BU’s Hariri Center for Computational Sciences, Center for the Humanities, and Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs all provide faculty course release fellowships. The Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer Range Future offers significant research funding to eligible faculty. BU staff are equally well supported. They can secure funding to attend professional conferences and can enroll in accredited university courses for free; many earn masters degrees part-time. Staff also regularly complete free professional training institutes in management, accounting, grant management, information technology, and diversity and inclusion offered by BU offices.

## Oversight Arrangements

ASC oversight is a multi-tiered structure. Levels of accountability include: 1) ASC faculty, visiting researchers, and research affiliates meet as a body twice a year to review the state of the ASC and suggest programming directions; 2) an Executive Council, composed of the director, assistant and associate directors, ALP director, ASL head librarian, program administrator, and outreach manager, meets monthly to coordinate ASC initiatives; 3) a Fellowships Committee, chaired by the assistant director with rotating membership from the arts and humanities, social sciences, and professional schools, which makes financial aid decisions; and 4) an Appointments Committee, which evaluates visiting scholar and research affiliate applications and makes recommendations to the dean. BU organizes periodic department and program reviews that include a self-study and outside review committee. The ASC remains

acutely aware that it represents all disciplines, carefully balancing committee membership across the arts, social sciences, humanities, health, education, and communication. We are as committed to training the next generation of well-informed professionals as to training professors.

In PSGS, the ASC director reports directly to the dean. The director participates in the Executive and the Area Studies Program Councils within the school, both of which provide oversight of the Center’s work and assistance with planning and programming that complement the ASC committee structure. Within the ASC, the ALP director and assistant director report directly to the ASC director. The ALP director supervises language faculty for all languages except Arabic, which is managed in the Department of World Languages and Literatures. The assistant director supervises daily operations and other ASC staff, while the program administrator supervises our student staff. The director annually submits evaluations of each staff member as part of a merit exercise. Meanwhile, our outreach manager is among the nation’s few full-time professionals in this position. She provides oversight of the student workers in the Outreach Program and seeks written feedback on each of its program activities.

## Nondiscriminatory Employment Practices

The ASC is committed to principles of affirmative action in hiring and awarding financial aid. Of all 17 faculty and professional staff appointed directly to the ASC or ASL, 47% are women and 59% are members of underrepresented racial minorities. Among ALP faculty, 43% are women and 100% are members of underrepresented minorities. Of the 14 students working in our main office and Outreach Program, 71% are women and 71% are members of underrepresented minorities. On the financial aid side, 72% of the 70 FLAS fellowships awarded since fall 2018 went to women and 37% to members of underrepresented minorities. Finally,

among the 25 African studies faculty hired at BU in the past 4 years, 11 (42%) are women and 12 (46%) are members of underrepresented minorities. BU shares our commitment to equal opportunity and affirmative action. Over the past five years BU has increased its community of African American and Black faculty (50%), staff (23%), graduate students (3%) and undergraduates (8%), among other important demographic changes. Although these numbers are far better than the national average, the ASC remains committed to continued growth in the diversity of its faculty, students, and staff. We thus take actions such as advertising job openings in publications, websites, and networks that specifically target underrepresented groups, as well as engage in other efforts to address equity and inclusion (§7E).

# STRENGTH OF LIBRARY

## Quality of Library Holdings and Institutional Support for the Library

BU’s African Studies Library (ASL) is the preeminent resource for research on Africa in the Northeast due to the size and scope of its collection, its accessibility, the expertise of its staff, and the research assistance and services provided. The ASL Reading Room and circulating African collections occupy an entire floor of BU’s main campus library. Its collections, covering all of Africa and spanning all academic disciplines and topics, comprise over 200,000 print volumes, 25,000 microform units, 1,500 maps, 31,000 pamphlets, and a steadily increasing digital collection due to the increase in e-book purchasing, electronic journal publishing, and the continued addition of digital content to the institutional repository (OpenBU). The library provides visitor access and Africana librarians regularly assist members of the local community and visiting researchers from North America, Africa, and Europe.

The ASL has a staff of three professional librarians (Head, Assistant Head, and Subject Liaison) who perform the essential duties of collection development and library instruction. They are aided by graduate assistants and work study students who typically possess some African studies expertise. ASL professional staff members have either an academic background or experience in Africa and are multilingual, able to offer visiting scholars research assistance in Amharic, Portuguese, French, and Zulu. All are active members of the Africana Librarians Council and serve in a variety of roles, including the executive council of the Cooperative Africana Materials Project (CAMP) and the Gretchen Walsh Book Donations Committee.

BU has a long history of financial commitment to the ASL, and last year provided the ASL with $234,662 in direct salary support (including fringe benefits) for professional staff and

$3,900 available for student assistants. All three professional library staff receive funding to attend professional development opportunities, including day-long workshops and the African Studies Association and Africana Librarians Council meetings. Last year, the overall BU Libraries’ acquisitions of Africana content totaled over $163,000. This included book purchases as well as ongoing subscriptions to expensive electronic resources such as the World Newspaper Archive, African Newspapers, and the Aluka collection, “Struggles for Freedom.” The overall university library budget of $19,581,978 ensures rich resources are available in all disciplines.

In the past four years a concerted effort has been made to acquire materials authored and published in Africa. Special emphasis is given to collecting African language materials in both Roman and Ajami scripts, particularly for our languages of instruction; some 300 African languages are represented across the university’s collections. BU is home to the African Ajami Library, the largest digital collection of Ajami texts in the country. As of January 2022, the

collection has received a combined total of over 538,000 page views and downloads worldwide.

## Cooperative Arrangements and Accessibility of Library Holdings

The ASL is committed to accessibility and engagement with individuals and institutions from local to international levels. BU is affiliated with several organizations that cooperate in making research materials available to students, faculty, and the general public. These include the New England Research Libraries; the Boston Library Consortium (18 research libraries in New England with shared borrowing, expedited interlibrary loan, cooperative acquisition, and electronic access initiatives); and the Cooperative Africana Materials Project (CAMP), giving funds to assist with cooperative purchases of research materials available on loan to member libraries. The ASL regularly provides financial contributions to and collaborates in projects with institutions nationwide. BU’s Alumni Medical Library also recently partnered with the National University of Lesotho’s Thomas Mofolo Library as part of a long-standing relationship between the institutions’ medical schools. The partnership includes offering reference support, lesson plan sharing, and training and includes opportunity for support from the greater BU Libraries.

The BU Library provides access to non-BU members by appointment. Additional support and access to print and online library resources are provided as a benefit to scholars with formal appointments at the ASC as Visiting Researchers or Research Affiliates. ASL staff provide reference and research assistance 50 hours a week on a walk-in basis as well as by phone and email. Approximately 40 online research tutorials and customized course-specific research guides have been created to further assist users. To promote knowledge of Africa, the ASL works with BU and other area schools to develop informational displays and exhibits, and events such as its CinemAfriq Film Series (§2C), all intended to capture the interest of undergraduate

students and others with no prior involvement in African studies.

# IMPACT AND EVALUATION

## Impact of Activities

Our impact at BU and beyond is obvious. We have infused African studies into the curriculum at BU through our accreditation of African studies and language courses in the Hub general education program, extending the reach of African studies beyond traditional fields like history and anthropology and engaging students in professional degree programs like international relations and public health (Table 9). The number of ASC faculty affiliates continues to grow across all



**Figure 1: Distribution of Outreach materials, AY20-21**

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| **Table 9: Impact of ASC in AY20-21** | |
| Enrollments – African Studies, All | 4,587 |
| Enrollments – African Studies, Prof. Schools | 872 |
| Enrollments – African Languages | 329 |
| Degrees Awarded with Africa Focus | 60 |
| ASC Faculty Affiliates | 127 |
| Publications – By ASC Affiliates | 211 |
| Publications – Instructional Materials by ASC | 16 |
| Attendance – Core ASC Events | 1,540 |
| Attendance – Outreach Program Events | 4,808 |
| Outreach Program – Website Visits | 198,802 |
| Outreach Program – Teacher Podcast Plays | 3,807 |

disciplines, from 119 in 2018 to 127 today. A silver lining of the Covid-19 pandemic has been that in pivoting to program a greater number of online and hybrid events, we have been able to include participants beyond the Boston area and note a marked increase in attendance to our events. As an example, our Walter Rodney Seminars have now included regular real-time input from scholars in Africa, Europe, and across the US, and Zoom has facilitated the recording and dissemination of our lectures on our YouTube channel.

Our faculty and affiliated researchers publish widely in scholarly and public outlets and regularly appear in news media for analysis of current affairs in Africa. ASC-developed instructional materials for language and K-16 faculty reach audiences nationwide through our ALP and Outreach Program. Since 1998, our Outreach Program has distributed nearly 10,000 teaching materials throughout the US (Figure 1). Our TED-Ed video “Who Built Great Zimbabwe? And Why?” has nearly 900,000 views on YouTube. Reflecting our commitment to the NRC Competitive Preference Priority, our course enhancement grants have contributed to the development of new and revised courses that integrate African perspectives in diverse disciplines across partner teacher education programs, CCs, and MSIs (§9A).

## Record of Graduate Placement

The ASC clearly addresses national needs in training Africa specialists. The number of students graduating with a specialization in Africa between 2015-2021 is 510. Of the 78 students who qualified for an African studies graduate certificate since 2014, 29 earned PhD degrees and 49 earned MA or MPH degrees. Disciplines represented include public health, IR, anthropology, history, political science, sociology, environmental policy, art history, religion, ethnomusicology, economics, journalism, French and Francophone studies, and earth and environmental sciences.

A measure of the impact of our program is our successful record of placements. In recent years, our PhD graduates have secured faculty and postdoctoral positions at prestigious liberal arts colleges, such as Williams, Skidmore, Middlebury, Simmons, St. Lawrence, and Connecticut College, and at leading research universities, such as MIT, Emory, Brandeis, and BU. Many of our placements are in areas of national need. BU has a large military science program, with an active ROTC; the ASC trains many students who are or will become military officers. BU ranks

as one of the top 25 large colleges that produce the most Peace Corps volunteers and is a top producer of Fulbright grantees. Our graduates work with businesses, the White House, the US Armed Forces, the State Department, USAID, CDC, US and African development and educational organizations, US and African churches, and major universities worldwide (Table 10). Our commitment to Absolute Priority 1 is enduring. We will continue to encourage government service in areas of national need and in education, business, and non-profit sectors.

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| **Table 10: Selected List of Non-Academic Service by BU Graduates** | |
| Cyril Sartor, MA ‘86 | former White House Director, African Affairs; former CIA Deputy Asst. Director |
| Yolande Miller- Grandvaux, MA ‘89 | Senior Global Education Strategy Advisor, FHI 360; former Senior Education Advisor, USAID |
| David M. Miller, PhD ‘90 | former Technical Managing Director, Resilience to Climate Change, ACDI/VOCA |
| Ama Egyaba Baidu- Forson, MA ’07 | Senior Economist II – Sub-Saharan Africa, IHS Global Insight |
| Rebecca Doffing, BA ’08 | Foreign Service Officer, US Department of State (prior posts include Niger) |
| Alex Zito, PhD ‘12 | Director of Analysis, Navanti Group |
| Rachel Nalepa, PhD ‘16 | former Policy Advisor, Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (Canada) |
| Jasmine Miller, MA ‘16 | M&E Associate – Global Essential Medicines, Clinton Health Access Initiative |
| Adrienne Lemon, PhD ‘17 | Director of Institutional Learning, Search for Common Ground (Burundi) |
| Claire Corkish, MPH ‘20 | Public Health Advisor & Response Capacity Coordinator, CDC |

We carefully allot FLAS fellowships to support training for students in both professional and academic tracks, in diverse languages, and who focus on a variety of African countries.

Recent FLAS fellows included students in anthropology, art history, biology, computer science, education, ethnomusicology, history, IR, political science, public health, and theology. Many undergraduate fellows have continued to graduate school or are already working overseas. Our fellows have focused on Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa, and Tanzania, and most have traveled to Africa to apply their language skills. As demonstrated above, our placement record for FLAS students has been excellent.

To encourage BU student engagement with the mission of the ASC and expand the diversity of services we provide, we employ undergraduate and graduate students at the ASC, including in the Outreach Program. The ASC also organizes events such as a recent panel on African studies careers by BU alumni and a workshop on writing strong applications for fellowships including FLAS, Boren Awards, and Critical Language Scholarships, which often lead to careers in fields of national need. The ASC director’s recent service with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee positions him well to spearhead further efforts in this direction.

## Impact in Addressing National Needs and Dissemination of Information

The ASC serves national needs through a vibrant record of publications and media appearances by our faculty and Outreach Program, excellent placement of our graduates, and dynamic events that ensure cutting-edge knowledge about Africa is made widely available (§7A-B). Many of our events serve audiences of students, researchers, K-16 educators, and the public with an array of compelling stories, performances, and data. Programs such as the weekly Walter Rodney Seminar, the annual Bradford Morse Distinguished Lecture, and our Visiting Scholar programs engage academics from institutions throughout New England and internationally. Responding to NRC Absolute Priority 1, our Rodney Seminar generates weekly debates that reflect diverse perspectives on various issues pertaining to Africa. Additionally, our course enhancement grants have supported faculty at partner CCs, MSIs, and teacher education programs to deepen African studies across disciplines and institutions nationwide (§9A and Table 12).

Boston is a major national media hub, and the ASC works closely with Boston-based TV, radio, and print media to encourage coverage of Africa issues. ASC staff work with BU Media Relations to connect our faculty experts with journalists worldwide. Our faculty are regularly

quoted in media outlets such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, NPR, and BBC. Our language faculty receive regular requests to serve as interpreters and translators, including Mandinka translation for the recent HBO documentary *Hard Knocks: The Dallas Cowboys*. Our Outreach Program consults frequently with media, businesses, museums, and area organizations, such as the children’s show *Arthur,* TED talks and TED-Ed. The ASC works with local NGOs and community groups such as Africans in Boston, the African Bridge Network, the Nigerian American Multi-Service Association, and the West African Research Association to support events and increase interaction between African immigrant and academic communities. As a testament to our commitment, we make our space freely available for African immigrant organizations and provide funding for events such as the annual Africa Festival of Boston. Most recently, the ASC hosted meetings establishing the African Diaspora Engaging Africa (ADEA) community of practice for individuals working with non-profits in Africa, an initiative led by our Twi instructor Emmanuel Owusu and his organization African Bridge Network (§2B).

The ASC’s Publication Program reaches a global academic audience with scholarly publications that reflect the diversity of interests and perspectives in the African studies community. The *International Journal of African Historical Studies* (IJAHS) is a peer-reviewed journal that has been published by the ASC since the journal’s inception in 1968. The journal is available to over four thousand institutions worldwide through hard copy subscriptions and online platforms provided by EBSCOhost and JSTOR, which average over 170,000 views of the journal each year. The ASC also publishes four working paper series: *Working Papers in African Studies* (274 titles); *Papers in the African Humanities* (38 titles); *Conflict, Politics, and Human Rights in Africa* (6 titles); and the *Program for the Study of the African Environment Research*

*Series* (16 titles). Papers in each series appeal to academic as well as general audiences and are distributed internationally online by EBSCO, ProQuest, and the ASC website.

## Evaluation Plan

The ASC is regularly evaluated at the program level and as a unit within the PSGS. In 2019, Prof. Eyamba Bokamba (U Illinois) conducted a thorough external evaluation of the center involving detailed interviews with our staff, faculty, and senior administration, as well as close review of our finances, enrollments, and other data. His post-evaluation recommendations inform program priorities articulated for the next NRC cycle and curriculum updates currently being implemented by the ASC. For example, our revised undergraduate minors (§4A) respond to student input that clarified how recent changes to BU’s general education curriculum made our minors impractical under the old requirements. We also focus ALP proposals in this cycle on adding advanced language courses rather than increasing the number of supported languages.

The ASC was also part of a comprehensive Academic Program Review (APR) of PSGS in 2021. In response to the APR, PSGS has implemented major innovations at the School that will boost the quality of teaching and instruction, including at the ASC. ASC faculty, staff, and students will participate in, and benefit from, new school-wide committees on curriculum; diversity, equity, and inclusion; and faculty affairs that will oversee these changes. The APR has also led to comprehensive reforms of the PSGS’s by-laws, which will further integrate the ASC into the governance structure of PSGS and expand the ASC’s prominence on school-wide matters. While the APR was a comprehensive evaluation, the ASC team, under the leadership of new Director Michael Woldemariam, plans to facilitate robust external evaluations of the ASC in 2022 and biannually during the upcoming grant cycle to supplement the PSGS’s recent review.

These evaluations will help us to better identify what is working and what needs improvement in our activities in a timely manner, so that we may continue to take swift corrective action.

Most immediately, we will invite an independent program evaluation specialist to conduct an external program evaluation of the ASC in 2022 in order to take full stock of our performance in advance of the next grant cycle. The external evaluation will employ quantitative and qualitative methodologies and include both *outcome* and *formative* evaluation activities. Our primary goals are to increase (1) the number of students graduating with African area expertise,

(2) the number graduating with advanced fluency in African languages, and (3) the number of teachers in our state and beyond with African area studies expertise. Each goal has a specific measurable target, with data gathered on an ongoing basis by ASC staff and by BU’s Office of Institutional Research. Training all our language instructors in ACTFL assessment methods will allow us to monitor progress on language proficiency.

In addition, we propose to undertake a variety of formative evaluation activities. The program evaluator will assist us in interpreting formative and outcome data and continuing to refine our data collection. Our Outreach Program will continue conducting written evaluations of each of its programs, and we will institute a periodic survey in our seminars. During the next NRC cycle, we will complete biannual external evaluations to closely track progress on our program objectives involving an outside team of faculty evaluators who will visit campus and conduct full program reviews. Based upon their recommendations, we will develop and implement an improvement plan each year. The ASC has a strong track record of innovating in response to internal and external evaluation processes. The current enhanced profile of the ASC at PSGS, the increase of Africa-related events at the ASC, the revision and expansion of the ASC

communications strategy, and the hiring of three tenure track Africa scholars at PSGS since 2017 resulted from recommendations from evaluations of PSGS and the ASC. In addition to the findings and recommendations of the independent external program evaluation, as part of PSGS, the ASC will continue to participate in its on-going reviews and make revisions accordingly.

## Equal Access

Equal access and treatment of members of the ASC community are central to our mission. Our commitment to principles of affirmative action in hiring and financial aid decisions include ensuring our communications and job postings are circulated among networks specifically serving historically marginalized communities as well as reviewing our initial selections of candidates for fellowships and interviews to consider whether these pools are diverse (§5C and

§10). Furthermore, ASC faculty and staff are deeply engaged in important advocacy, programming, and training efforts for an equitable and inclusive environment at the center, on campus, and across the academy. Mindful of the hidden curriculum that may disproportionately hinder first generation students in their pursuit of academic opportunities, the ASC offers fellowship application workshops with guidance on best practices to bolster the strength of FLAS and other applications. Our Outreach Program hosts meaningful panels for K-16 educators that bring diverse perspectives to bear on decoloniality and the history of resistance movements in Africa, as well as training for culturally-sensitive and inclusive teaching. Furthermore, our faculty and staff play prominent roles in conversations at the PSGS regarding equity and diversity, and our assistant director serves as an inaugural member of the new Standing Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. It is charged with evaluating areas of need in the school (including regarding hiring, retention, and admissions), making recommendations to the

dean, and drafting a new mission statement for PSGS. Our program administrator collaborates closely with the PSGS Anti-Racist Coalition, a student group for which she helped secure grant funding to produce a podcast exploring equity needs on campus. Finally, several ASC faculty and staff are associates of the new Center for Antiracist Research founded by Ibram X. Kendi.

# OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The ASC’s nationally acclaimed K-16 Education Outreach Program, established in 1979, responds to Absolute Priorities 1 and 2 and Competitive Priorities 1 and 2. It promotes teaching on Africa with a focus on engaging MSIs, schools of education, diaspora communities, and K-12 educators. As a leading Africa-focused NRC with one of the only full-time staff members devoted to African studies outreach, and whose salary is fully supported by the university, the BU ASC is unique in its widespread and ongoing impact on educators throughout the country.

The Outreach Manager works to enrich public understanding of Africa by curating and developing collections of teaching resources for educators, organizing workshops and online courses to grant professional development points as a state-approved professional development provider, consulting for educational publishers and media outlets, and more.

The Outreach Program has developed and manages the Teaching Africa Teacher (TAT) Certification Program, the only one of its kind in the country. The TAT supports and trains educators in K-12 classrooms, CCs, and MSIs to build competency in African studies and to formally acknowledge their commitment and expertise. The program incorporates coursework related to the continent and teacher workshops sponsored by the ASC. In the last cycle, the TAT was relaunched for a national audience with an online learning pathway that includes core

courses developed by the ASC as well as a capstone curriculum design project, through which teachers translate their coursework into integrative classroom lessons. The number of teachers active in the program grew from two to twenty-six in the last three years alone. Teachers from eleven different states have produced curricula that significantly contribute to their fields.

Three highly regarded online courses developed with Primary Source, a Boston-based organization that promotes global studies in K-12 classrooms, form the core content knowledge for TAT participants and are also publicly accessible for teachers nation-wide. During this current grant cycle, we co-developed *Dynamic Societies of Medieval Africa,* a course which has enrolled seventy educators this year alone. This complements the two existing and highly successful courses the ASC co-developed with Primary Source: *Modern African History: Colonialism, Independence, and Legacies*, which has been offered seven times since 2016; and *Africans in the Age of Atlantic Slavery*, which has been offered twelve times since 2012. These courses have reached hundreds of educators who have created new materials customized for their own students. With the National Humanities Center, the ASC also supported the development of *Medieval Africa and Africans*, a course for teachers that was offered three times in the last year.

Our well-established and growing online curricular offerings continue to serve K-12 schools and tertiary education institutions nationwide, with some of our most popular curriculum pages reaching 45,000 unique views in the past year. Additionally, our curriculum is featured on the websites of the National Humanities Center and the ASA Outreach Council, reaching even more teachers and higher education instructors through these platforms. In addition to growing our database of new curriculum units, the ASC has also participated in creating high profile original resources, such as our podcast series developed with Primary Source, *What Teachers*

*Need to Know—Africa Edition*, which has received 4,479 views to date; and *The Gold Road Project*, collaboratively developed with Howard University’s Center for African Studies, which provides a unique interactive online map for educators to teach about the kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai and has received 13,226 views to date. Building on our commitment to offer free resources that respond to educational need, we have also supported Primary Source’s development of an Open Access curriculum for 6th grade on the geography and ancient history of Africa for the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Our professional development offerings extend educators’ knowledge on topics that address the wide range of diverse perspectives from and about the continent, ranging from trade on the Swahili coast to bringing African studies into mathematics and science. We have launched a French language initiative, which includes a website of materials and lessons to expand French foreign language instruction to francophone Africa as well as an online French literature book club for teachers. We offer an average of ten workshops a year, and in the last year, served close to 800 pre-service and in-service teachers as well as higher education instructors, the large majority of whom have expressed that the learning sessions have tremendously benefited their practice. Our professional development events have served pre-service teachers (e.g., workshops on African literature for student teachers), in-service teachers (e.g., cultural heritage in the classroom), secondary teachers (e.g., teaching about the Swahili coast), and higher education instructors (e.g., decolonial perspectives in teaching African history). In addition, we have a strong working relationship with the ALANA (African, Latinx, Asian, and Native American) Educator Network in Boston Public Schools, one of the largest districts in the country. Every year, we directly serve schools by bringing guest speakers on diverse topics, such as a discussion

of South African history for Waltham High School that was attended by 1,700 students. Reflecting our commitments to NRC Absolute Priority 2 and the NRC Competitive Preference Priority, we recently collaborated with the International Studies Consortium of Georgia to offer an Africa-focused conference for 57 participants from CCs and MSIs. The ASC took a lead role in collaborating with other NRCs to offer the yearly ASA Teachers’ Workshop, which served a total of 332 teachers over the last cycle. These efforts complement the collective work of the ASC research community in publishing scholarship, making media appearances, and disseminating current knowledge about Africa (§7C).

# PROGRAM PLANNING AND BUDGET

## Quality and Relevance of Proposed Activities

While African studies offerings at BU are available in most departments, we recognize the importance of developing Africa-related curriculum development across disciplines at BU and partner institutions. To respond to this need, in the prior NRC grant cycle we introduced a successful course enhancement grant program and funded travel grants for community college and MSI faculty to participate in faculty development seminars in Senegal. In the next cycle, we seek funding to continue to offer three course enhancement grants ($6,000/yr) and one travel grant ($4,000/yr) per year to support Africa-focused curriculum development. These activities respond to Absolute Priority 1 by supporting a diverse range of perspectives and disciplines within the scope of African studies, Absolute Priority 2 by supporting teacher training, and the NRC Competitive Priority through partnership with CCs, MSIs, and HBCUs. The awards made in the current cycle supported an array of disciplines and institutions (Table 12); we plan to

continue funding a similarly dynamic range of courses and faculty in the next cycle.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 12: Selected Course Enhancement Grants Awarded by BU ASC, 2018-22** | | |
| **Faculty Awardee** | **Institution and Department** | **Course** |
| Victoria S. Downey | **Anoka-Ramsey Community College**  *Geography* | “Introduction to Human Geography” |
| Aida Bueno | **Boston University**  *Anthropology / Study Abroad, Madrid* | “The Forgotten Colony: From ‘Spanish Guinea’ to Equatorial Guinea” *(in Spanish)* |
| Christopher Martell | **Boston University**  *Wheelock College of Education* | “Developing Historical Literacy” |
| Edward Dawley | **Delaware State University**  *French (and Portuguese)* | “African Influence in Contemporary Brazilian Culture” |
| Damaris M’Mworia | **Edward Waters College**  *Religion and Philosophy* | “Introduction to Philosophy” |
| La Tanya L. Rogers | **Fisk University**  *English / W.E.B. Du Bois Honors Pgm* | “World Literature” |
| Sonji Nicholas | **Florida SouthWestern State College**  *Student Life Skills and Sociology* | “Sociology of the Family” |
| Anna Mester | **University of Massachusetts, Boston**  *Latin American and Iberian Studies* | “Prisons and Concentration Camps in the Lusophone World” |
| Dawit Senbet | **University of Northern Colorado**  *Economics / Study Abroad, Ethiopia* | *Community-Engaged Learning Course*, “The Developing World and Globalization” |
| Karen Barton | **University of Northern Colorado**  *Geography, GIS, & Enviro Studies* | “International Sustainable Development” |

Course enhancement grants support the development of new Africa content courses or the revision of existing courses—in any discipline—to incorporate substantive engagement with Africa. They will be available for faculty at US higher education institutions including community colleges, MSIs, schools of education, and teacher education programs. Travel grants support the participation of one faculty member annually from a CC or MSI in a Howard University-led Faculty Development Seminar in Senegal coordinated by the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) and West African Research Center (WARC).

Participants in the Faculty Development Seminar develop a plan for circulating their new understanding of Senegal and West Africa in their courses and campus communities, generate new teaching materials, and publish blog posts for public reading.

For the course enhancement grants, proposals are invited from faculty at any eligible

institution; however, we plan to continue working closely with some of our partner institutions to ensure robust and sustained development of curricula. These include the University of Massachusetts–Boston, an MSI with which we regularly partner in research and outreach activities. Another partner is the University of Northern Colorado (UNC), which features a major teacher training school in a region traditionally underserved by Africa-focused NRCs and is in the process of pursuing designation as an MSI. We have the strong support of the UNC administration, as well as a participant in our 2016 Fulbright-Hays Senegal program and her colleagues who teach across disciplines and the UNC School of Teacher Education. Finally, through our Outreach Program we work closely with BU’s Wheelock College of Education and Human Development, which includes licensure programs for elementary, secondary, high school, and foreign language teachers. Our partnerships will contribute to greater Africa-related

content in teacher education and licensure programs. Our goal is to normalize Africa-related content in the K-12 curriculum, complementing the work of our Outreach Program. Three units of the ASC will be available to support recipients of course enhancement grants: our Outreach Program, the ASL, and the ALP.

We also recognize the importance of the arts in educating communities about diverse perspectives across African cultures and languages. To this end, we seek funding ($2,000/yr) to support the BU Arts Initiative in hosting the annual BU Global Music Festival, a free public event held each fall to bring together high-caliber international artists and vibrant local music communities. NRC support will facilitate workshops and performances by African and African diaspora artists at the festival each year, which may also include classroom visits or residencies.

Finally, to support professional development for BU undergraduate students interested in

African studies, we propose an ASC Non-Profit Internship Program. Building on the model of BU’s Yawkey Non-Profit Internship Program, which pays students stipends for taking unpaid internships at non-profit organizations, the ASC program would fund support for students pursuing unpaid internships at non-profit organizations that work in or engage African communities. The program would help students build professional networks by facilitating participation in internships in areas of need, serving Absolute Priority 1. We believe this program will enhance our partnerships with organizations run by Africans and the African diaspora in Boston and strengthen support for lower income students. Three awards of $1,500 each will be offered per year ($4,500/yr). **Total Curriculum Expansion Request: $16,500/yr.**

We seek NRC support to expand priority African language offerings; improve the quality of instruction through materials development, faculty training, and improved assessment; attract more students and increase the number achieving at least advanced proficiency; and continue developing our dual script (Ajami-Roman script) literacy teaching resources. Complementing BU’s commitment to our full-time language faculty and teaching fellows (§2B), we plan to continue engaging NRC support to hire part-time faculty for core courses in Amharic, Igbo, Twi, and Wolof; to expand our current core offerings to add advanced levels in Mandinka, Twi, and Xhosa as well as superior Amharic; and to continue to support directed studies at superior levels in other supported languages. We request NRC funding for part-time instructors at $5,220 per fully enrolled course, plus fringe ($130,709 yr 1, $140,332 yr 2, $177,014 yr 3, $150,323 yr 4). To expand our course availability, we not only budget for adding additional advanced levels of languages taught by part-time faculty in subsequent years of the grant (20 yr 1, 21 yr 2, and 22 yrs 3 and 4)—to complement additional offerings taught by our faculty with BU support—but

also will offer $500 stipends to compensate full- and part-time faculty for developing new courses and ensuring their approval by BU faculty ($1,000 yr 1 and 2).

We also seek assistance to maintain the quality of language teaching through instructor training ($9,000/yr), which will support participation in trainings and workshops by the National African Language Resource Center (NALRC) Summer Institute, the African Language Teachers’ Association (ALTA), and the Northeast Regional Consortium for Programs in African Languages (NERCPAL), among others. We also plan ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) tester certification for our faculty ($8,000 yr 2).We seek to enhance language instruction through curriculum and instructional material development (§2C). We request NRC funds to develop new Open Access digital and listening materials for our priority languages, particularly for our newest language, Mandinka ($5,000/yr). To increase student enrollments, we seek support to market our language offerings at BU and the Boston Consortium ($1,500/yr). **Total Language Program Expansion Request: $147,209 yr 1; $164,832 yr 2; $162,515 yr 3; $165,823 yr 4.**

Our K-16 Education Outreach Program is among the most extensive in the country, leading educators both nationally and locally. To address current grade and subject standards in K-12 settings, teacher needs across instructional levels through college, and an explicit commitment to teach about current events from diverse perspectives, we will expand our current offerings of workshops to 6 workshops a year on topics that address grade-level standards while promoting knowledge about Africa from a range of fields ($4,000/yr); develop a summer institute for educators on 6th grade ancient civilizations and world geography in partnership with Primary Source ($5,000 yr 3 and 4); initiate an annual public film showing for educators on topics ranging from economics to identity ($1,000/yr); and continue to support our highly

successful and unique African literature book group ($1,700/yr) while also adding to our French Language Initiative, which includes leading African francophone literature reading discussions, building our archive of French teaching resources, and reviewing French books in collaboration with Howard University and the organization Africa Access ($1,000/yr). To increase our already strong presence in K-12 schools, we will develop a speakers’ bureau to train graduate students, emerging scholars, and members of diasporic organizations on ways to communicate their expertise to elementary and high school students ($800/yr), and in collaboration with our ALP and the ASL, offer a virtual reading exchange for young readers and writers through a sister school program in the US and Ghana that builds global literacy connections, in partnership with the Zongo Story Project, an award-winning literacy organization ($800/yr).

We will expand our already reputable online curricular offerings for middle and high school through the continued development of the *Gold Road* interactive map on the medieval Sudanic empires of the trans-Saharan trade, created in partnership with Howard University and Balance Studios during the prior funding cycle. Funds will support new technological functions, development of videos and voice-overs, and expand content coverage and teacher training ($5,000 yr 1). We plan to launch a Teaching East Africa Week in collaboration with Howard University, modeled after the acclaimed Teach Central America Week run by the organization Teaching for Change. The primary goal for Teaching East Africa Week will be to bring diverse perspectives on this region and to anchor its significance in schools across the nation. During this week, teachers will be invited to commit to teaching about East Africa and will be offered resources, lessons, and books ($1,500 yr 1 and 2). To respond to the great need for freely accessible materials that link the teaching of African history with African American history, we

intend to fund the expansion of Africa content in the first volume of the Open Access textbook *Making Freedom: African Americans in U.S. History*, Primary Source’s pioneering 5-volume sourcebook series ($5,000 yr 1 and 2).

NRC support will also enable updating and relaunching our Teaching Africa lending library, a public library of free resources for educators in the Boston area, in order to reinvest in cataloguing, organization, and an annual open house ($1,000/yr). With master teachers in our network, we plan to continue growing and updating our database of online unit plans and instructional modules for K-16 educators, as well as edit and subtitle video materials to boost their accessibility ($2,000/yr). We will continue to recruit teachers and support active cohorts of our Teaching Africa Teacher (TAT) Certificate participants with stipends upon program completion ($4,000/yr) and strengthen our team of mentor teachers who review curriculum design and organize program-specific professional development opportunities, including our highly successful community meetings which offer a space for teachers to build knowledge together ($1,500/yr). To support course completion for TAT participants and other teachers, we will build on a broad base of collaborative partnerships to develop a new *Teaching across the Disciplines* online course with the National Humanities Center ($5,000 yr 2). Finally, to ensure our programs reach broad national audiences, we will support Outreach staff travel to local and national conferences to offer teacher workshops and host resource booths ($3,000/yr) and hire student assistants to help in the promotion and distribution of our teaching resources ($7,602/yr). **Total Outreach Program Request: $44,902 yr 1, $34,902 yr 2, $33,402 yrs 3-4.**

The ASC regards international linkages as key means for students and faculty to engage Africa in productive and enduring ways. While the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted many of our

research and study abroad plans involving partner institutions, BU is in advanced stages of establishing a new network of research and teaching hubs in several world cities. Among these is a hub in Cape Town, South Africa, building in particular on research partnerships among BU’s medical and public health faculty as well as offering potential study abroad experience for students in African studies programs, especially our Xhosa and Zulu courses. We seek NRC support to strengthen our existing and new linkages by funding ASC faculty and staff visits to partner institutions overseas, including in South Africa. These visits will include designing study and research abroad activities, intensive language programs, and professional development opportunities for staff and faculty at these institutions ($4,000/yr). Additionally, we seek NRC support to strengthen our WARA partnership by hiring students to provide staff support in WARA’s BU office ($1,500/yr). **Total African Partnerships Request: $5,500/yr.**

The ASC recognizes the value of collaborative action with other NRCs. Responding to both Absolute Priorities and the NRC Competitive Priority, we support the Association of African Studies Programs (AASP) travel grant, enabling colleagues from CCs, MSIs, and HBCUs to attend the two AASP meetings per year ($1,000/yr). Furthermore, we will contribute to ASA Outreach Council (ASOC) activities supporting K-16 educators: the annual Teachers’ Workshop held during the ASA annual conference ($600/yr); fees for maintaining the ASOC website, which provides teaching resources for educators ($20/yr); the nationally recognized Children’s Africana Book Award and resource development ($400/yr); and ASOC booths at the annual conferences of the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), both events that reach over 5,000 educators ($500/yr).

We will also support the implementation of several joint online resources for educators.

One of these is the Teaching the World Consortium, a collaboration with 11 NRCs to promote educator resources and to share exhibits at national conferences, including those of the NCSS, NCTE, and American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) ($300/yr). Addressing the NRC Competitive Preference Priority, we will support a Community College Outreach website, a collaboration with over 16 NRCs to develop, share and promote online resources, lessons, and

events for CC instructors in a wide range of social science, arts, humanities, and STEM fields for all world areas ($200/yr). We will contribute to the Global Read Webinar Series, an annual online webinar series open to the public to learn about diverse children’s books ($100/yr); a new Foods of the World project that showcases lesson plans and scholar lectures on foodways and cultures developed by NRCs across all world areas ($500/yr); and the Today in International Politics Speaker Series (TIPPS) to support AP Comparative Government teachers and students with a yearly speaker series on topics related to Nigerian politics ($450/yr).

We will continue supporting the African Language Materials Archive (ALMA), an important resource for African language teachers that archives African language documents to make them available for students, researchers, and language teachers. Documents represent over 20 African languages and include written texts in multiple writing systems; A/V recordings; and translations of human rights documents by the United Nations and the African Commission of Human and Peoples’ Rights into African languages to make them more accessible to vulnerable communities; among other collections. Through these efforts, ALMA serves both Absolute Priorities and supports language instructional programs and African studies libraries ($1,000/yr). We will also contribute to the Cooperative Africana Material Archive Project (CAMP) that Title VI librarians jointly propose to enhance research and teaching in African studies ($2,000/yr).

## Total Collaborative Initiatives Request: $7,070/yr.

We seek NRC support for 45% of the ASC Assistant Director’s salary and benefits ($40,791 yr 1; $41,811 yr 2; $42,856 yr 3; $43,927 yr 4). Our full-time assistant director oversees our Title VI activities, communications strategy, overseas linkages, and academic programs, and manages essential ASC activities in coordination with staff and faculty. We will continue our African Language Cataloging Internship Program—developed in the previous cycle through collaboration by the ASL, ALP, and BU Digital Initiatives and Open Access Unit—that will offer students opportunities to apply their African language knowledge in a real-world setting while learning from professional librarians and digital humanities specialists ($3,258/yr). We also request support for the following operational costs: library acquisitions ($1,500/yr), office supplies ($2,000/yr), printing ($500/yr), postage ($500/yr), conference travel for ASC faculty and staff ($5,000/yr), travel accommodations and honoraria for our Walter Rodney Seminar series ($8,000/yr), and program evaluation ($5,000 yrs 1 and 3). **Total Administrative Support Request: $66,549 yr 1; $62,569 yr 2; $68,614 yr 3; $64,685 yr 4.**

## Development Plan and Timeline

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 13: Summary of Program Plan** | | | | |
| **Initiatives** | **First Year** | **Second Year** | **Third Year** | **Fourth Year** |
| Curriculum Expansion | Develop 3 courses w/ Africa content at BU, CC/MSI partners, and teacher training programs | Develop 3 courses w/ Africa content at BU, CC/MSI partners, and teacher training programs | Develop 3 courses w/ Africa content at BU, CC/MSI partners, and teacher training programs | Develop 3 courses w/ Africa content at BU, CC/MSI partners, and teacher training programs |
| Fund CC/MSI faculty travel to Senegal | Fund CC/MSI faculty travel to Senegal | Fund CC/MSI faculty travel to Senegal | Fund CC/MSI faculty travel to Senegal |
| African artist workshops at BU Global Music Fest | African artist workshops at BU Global Music Fest | African artist workshops at BU Global Music Fest | African artist workshops at BU Global Music Fest |
| Support 3 students in  Africa-related unpaid non-profit internships | Support 3 students in  Africa-related unpaid non-profit internships | Support 3 students in  Africa-related unpaid non-profit internships | Support 3 students in  Africa-related unpaid non-profit internships |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Language Program Expansion | Develop advanced Mandinka & Twi | Begin offering advanced Mandinka & Twi, develop adv Zulu & superior Amharic | Begin offering advanced Zulu and superior Amharic | Continue advanced Mandinka, Twi, Zulu and superior Amharic |
| Develop Mandinka Ajami teaching materials | Develop Mandinka 200 Words Project materials | Develop Mandinka Proverbs Project digital materials | Develop Mandinka digital materials for professional fields |
| Language faculty professional  development | Language faculty professional dev, plus  OPI certification | Language faculty professional  development | Language faculty professional  development |
| Outreach Program Expansion | Offer public workshops, public film screening, and English and French- language African literature book groups for educators | Offer public workshops, public film screening, and English and French- language African literature book groups for educators | Offer public workshops, public film screening, and English and French-language African literature book groups for educators | Offer public workshops, public film screening, and English and French-language African literature book groups for educators |
| Virtual reading exchange at sister schools in US, Ghana | Virtual reading exchange at sister schools in US, Ghana | Virtual reading exchange at sister schools in US, Ghana | Virtual reading exchange at sister schools in US, Ghana |
| Expand Africa content in *Making Freedom* Open Access textbook with  Primary Source | Expand Africa content in *Making Freedom* Open Access textbook with Primary Source | Develop *Ancient Civilizations and World Geography* online course with  Primary Source | Launch *Ancient Civilizations and World Geography* online course with  Primary Source |
| Recruit, award stipends to educators completing Teaching Africa Teacher (TAT) Certificate | Recruit, award stipends to educators completing Teaching Africa Teacher (TAT) Certificate | Recruit, award stipends to educators completing Teaching Africa Teacher (TAT) Certificate | Recruit, award stipends to educators completing Teaching Africa Teacher (TAT) Certificate |
| African Partnerships Expansion | Support visit by faculty/staff to 1 international partner or visit by partners to BU | Support visit by faculty/staff to 1 international partner or visit by partners to BU | Support visit by faculty/staff to 1 international partner or visit by partners to BU | Support visit by faculty/staff to 1 international partner or visit by partners to BU |
| Support WARA student staff | Support WARA student staff | Support WARA student staff | Support WARA student staff |

* 1. **Budget Reasonableness**

Combined with BU resources, the investments requested from Title VI will enhance our program by 1) strengthening our partnership with MSIs, CCs, teacher education programs, and partners located in areas underserved by Africa-focused NRCs; 2) adding new Africa-focused courses in disciplines of particular need; 3) increasing the number of faculty with Africa experience; and 4) increasing opportunities for study and research in Africa. Title VI funds will also strengthen our

language program by 1) providing training to enhance the quality of instruction; 2) supporting training of our language faculty in conducting standardized assessments like the OPI; 3) expanding availability of more advanced language courses so that all of our priority languages may be studied to the advanced or superior level at BU; 4) developing audiovisual teaching materials for priority languages at all levels; 5) increasing the number of undergraduate and graduate students taking priority African languages and those reaching advanced or above levels of fluency; and 6) increasing the number of students and scholars with knowledge of *Ajami*.

NRC funds will allow our K-16 Education Outreach Program to ensure greater inclusion of African studies in K-16 curricula nationwide, taking advantage of webinar and other online activities as well as Open Access resources to keep costs low, increase accessibility, and reach expansive audiences of educators pursuing professional development.

## Long-term Impact of Activities

The long-term impact of the ASC’s initiatives includes: 1) a language program that will increase the number of graduates proficient in 9 African languages; 2) the first national instructional program that produces leaders in humanities, social sciences, and professional fields who are literate in Ajami writing systems; 3) a larger pool of instructors trained in performance-based language instruction and dual Ajami-Roman script pedagogy; 4) an expanded curriculum that increases the number of international experts with in-depth knowledge of the languages and cultures of Africa; 5) strengthened African studies curricula at CC, MSI, and school of education partners; 6) a K-16 Education Outreach Program that provides teachers throughout the US with increased expertise in Africa and relevant teaching resources; 7) a research library that expands access to significant records and the best of contemporary research on the African continent; 8) a

more integrated community of people with an interest in Africa in the Boston area; and 9) better engagement with Africa. In addition to their superior language training, BU undergraduate, graduate, and professional students will gain professional development through internships at non-profit organizations and in the ASl, employment in ASC units and at partner organizations, and participation as consultants and presenters for outreach activities. Our marketing initiatives will also encourage students at Boston Consortium institutions to enroll in our language classes, boosting the number of students receiving training in priority languages.

# FLAS AWARDEE SELECTION PROCEDURES

The ASC advertises FLAS fellowships through several channels, including: 1) the ASC website, which receives over 200,000 annual visitors; 2) social media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter);

3) FLAS info sessions held each winter; 4) classroom visits to non-language classes and African language classes; 5) departmental websites and literature in disciplines such as IR, public health, history, and anthropology; 6) university publications and websites (bulletins, catalogues, student guidebooks, and recruiting materials); and 7) participation in advising activities such as admissions fairs, freshman orientation, major fairs, and career expos. Our work coordinating with the advising office in public health has resulted in a sharp increase in applications from potential and current SPH students. Application materials are available on the ASC website.

The deadlines for both summer and academic year FLAS fellowships are in February. All applicants complete an online form that asks for information about the applicant’s target language and current level of fluency; a statement explaining how language study fits into their academic program; a transcript; and two letters of reference. Summer FLAS applicants identify

preferred intensive language programs and are encouraged to consult with ASC staff in advance of submitting their application to find programs that match their learning goals. Students proposing programs off campus or with our overseas partners must submit information about how the proposed program meets FLAS requirements regarding contact hours and instructional quality. Academic year applicants are requested to authorize BU’s financial aid offices to access their FAFSA Student Aid Report. Graduate students applying for dissertation research support are asked to specify their research goals, a timeline and plan for research, and an explanation of how they will engage the target language in their research abroad or in their writing.

Fellows are expected to reapply for FLAS every year. However, we remain committed to funding the full studies of students, and those making good progress on their degrees and in their language studies are given preference for renewal. Graduate students receive generous supplemental support from BU that enhance the value of FLAS awards (§1B). The ASC Financial Aid Committee includes the ASC director, assistant director, ALP director, publications manager, and three ASC faculty chosen to represent our disciplinary diversity.

Submitted applications are uploaded to a restricted website accessible only to the committee members, who read all files and rank the strength of each application from 1 (applicants who do not meet BU’s academic standards) to 5 (very strong candidates). All candidates must demonstrate excellent academic records—indicated by GPA and reference letters—and strong motivation for language study, with clear goals for how language study will contribute to academic and professional goals. Since we place high priority on bringing students to the highest possible level of fluency, we favor undergrad applicants with strong academic records entering third year language study or above. Responding to FLAS Competitive Preference Priority 2,

100% of our academic year FLAS fellowships support priority languages taught at BU: Amharic, Arabic, Igbo, Mandinka, Swahili, Twi, Wolof, Xhosa, and Zulu.

By March 15, the committee meets to discuss applicants and consider a number of criteria in determining fellowship nominations. Once we have narrowed the applicant pool to those with the strongest qualifications, clearest motivations for language study, and best potential to reach high proficiency, we consider disciplinary and language distribution. We are committed to offering fellowships to students in a range of disciplines, including professional schools, and to distribute fellowships across the languages we offer. The committee develops a ranked list of potential candidates for the fellowships.

Financial need is the final consideration for allocation of fellowships, serving FLAS Competitive Preference Priority 1. Since the ASC committee does not have access to confidential information contained in the FAFSA student aid report, the next step in our process is to forward the list of nominees to the BU Office of Financial Assistance and the GRS Office of Financial Aid. These offices determine which applicants on the list have financial need as demonstrated by their expected family contribution. Once fellowships have been allocated to those demonstrating need, the remaining fellowships are distributed to nominees based on their ranking. Final recipients are announced by April. This funding cycle, in response to increasing demand for fellowships in recent years, we seek 8 graduate, 3 undergraduate, and 5 summer FLAS awards.

# PRIORITIES

**NRC Absolute Priority 1.** 1) Our Walter Rodney Seminars, workshops at the BU Global Music Festival, scholarship drawing on our faculty strengths in the study of Christianity and

Islam in Africa, and teacher training activities will foster stimulating debates that reflect diverse perspectives. 2) Our graduates work in academia and in the White House, Armed Forces, State Department, USAID, and global NGOs. Through student advising as well as our Non-Profit Internship Program, we will continue to encourage service in areas of national need.

**NRC Absolute Priority 2.** Our course enhancement grants and faculty travel grants support K-16 educators across disciplines to incorporate African content in their courses, including in teacher licensure programs. The Outreach Program will develop numerous teacher training resources, including high-impact Open Access online courses and webinars to facilitate broad accessibility. Our TAT Program will continue to engage cohorts of pre- and in-service teachers who will develop new curricula for African studies across fields and educational levels.

**NRC Competitive Priority 1.** We propose course enhancement grants and travel grants designed to serve faculty at CCs, MSIs, and HBCUs and to facilitate development of Africa content courses at these institutions. A new Community College Outreach website developed through collaboration among NRC programs will compile African studies online resources for CC educators. The Teaching the World Consortium will also promote online resources and share exhibits at national conferences including the American Association of Community Colleges.

**FLAS Competitive Priority 1.** Coordinating with BU’s Office of Financial Assistance and the GRS Office of Financial Aid, we will consider financial need as demonstrated in FAFSA expected family contribution in the selection of FLAS recipients.

**FLAS Competitive Priority 2.** One hundred percent of academic year FLAS awards will support students of the nine modern African languages taught at BU.