

AFAM Informational

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African and African
American Studies Program
College of Arts and
Sciences

Welcome back Dr. Davidson

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Our program director, **Dr. Jeanette Davidson**, has returned from a semester sabbatical. We all say hooray and “welcome back”.

During her sabbatical, Dr. Davidson was working diligently on several projects. She and her husband are co-authoring a book to be published by Columbia University Press. The book is based on research concerning interracial marriages. She was also in the beginning stages of editing a text on African and African American Studies, to be published by Edinburgh University

Press. Dr. Davidson continued NSF research concerning the success in engineering studies of underrepresented groups on the campus of the University of Oklahoma.



One of her most exciting adventures was traveling to New York to interview Joselyn Barnes and actor and activist Danny Glover for *World Literature Today*.

She spoke with them about their film company, *Louverture* films. Feel free to visit the website at www.louverturefilms.com

Louverture Films is dedicated to the development and production of films of historical relevance, social purpose, commercial value and artistic integrity.

Needless to say, Dr. Davidson was busy during her sabbatical. However, she is ready to get back to the students and to the African and African American Studies Program.

Quote for the Month

Merely by describing yourself as black you have started on a road towards emancipation, you have committed yourself to fight against all forces that seek to use your blackness as a stamp that marks you out as a subservient being.
Steven Biko

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is a United States holiday marking the birth date of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., observed on the third Monday of January each year, around the time of King's birthday, January

15. It is one of four United States federal holidays to commemorate an individual person.

At the White House Rose Garden on November 2, 1983, President Reagan

signed a bill creating a federal holiday to honor King. It was observed for the first time on January 20, 1986. On January 17, 2000, for the first time, Martin Luther King Day was officially observed in all 50 states.

Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation to be held in Catlett

On Thursday, January 24, 2008 at 11:30 AM, the Fine Arts Department, in conjunction with AFAM, will be hosting the Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation in Catlett Music Hall.

Our own, Dr. Melanie Bratcher, will pay tribute to Civil Rights Leader, Clara Luper. Clara Luper, known to many as the *Mother of the Civil Rights Movement*, took her place at the head of the Oklahoma Sit-In Movement, August 19, 1958. With courage and persistence she taught

that non-violent activism is the way to freedom.

Clara Luper lives in Oklahoma City.

Dr. Melanie Bratcher, is an assistant professor in the AFAM program. She received her B.S. from Langston University and both her M.A. and Ph.D. from Temple University in African and African American Studies.



Please come and show your support for Dr. Bratcher and ultimately show your appreciation in honoring the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.

-Martin Luther King Jr.

Get Ready! February is Black History Month

Black History Month is an expansion of Negro History Week, started by Carter G. Woodson in 1926. In 1976, the Afro-Americans for the Study of Afro-American Life and History made it a month long celebration. Initially, Carter G. Woodson selected the week in February that embraced the birthdays of both Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lin-

coln. The Negro History Week Movement took hold immediately. At first it was celebrated almost exclusively by African Americans, taking place outside of the view of the

wider society. Increasingly, however, mayors and governors, especially in the North, began endorsing Negro History Week and promoting interracial harmony.

Today, Black History Month is celebrated across the country.

Stay tuned for events that will be sponsored by AFAM during the month of February.

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.—Dr. MLK, Jr.

Classes back in full swing

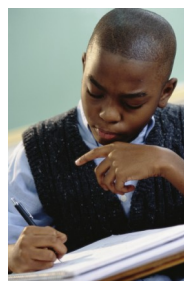


The **AFAM Studies Program** is a rich program in that it has so many students from various disciplines and majors.

The African and African American Studies Program is comprised of a senior faculty member as the director; an assistant to the director, a full-time administrative assistant, a student assistant, three assistant professors and more than 30 adjunct professors.

AFAM professors come from varying disciplines and are eager to enlighten the students here at the University of Oklahoma.

If you've never taken one our classes, don't let this opportunity pass you by. Check out our spring 2008 class schedule on the website: www.ou.edu/cas/afam.



There are a few weekend classes that are still available, if your schedule permits.

Feel free to stop by the office at any time. The AFAM program is located in Ellison Hall on the second floor, room 233.

We look forward to meeting you!

AFAM Book Club-(officially begins in February)

There is an old, horrible saying about our community. It goes like this, "if you want to hide something from black folks, put it in a book". The point is that African Americans don't read.

Here is an opportunity to put this saying to rest. Beginning in February we will start the AFAM Book Club. It purposes to get each of us reading different genres of literature and feel comfortable discussing and sharing our ideas with others.

The Book club will meet once, at the

end of the month, in the Henderson-Tolson building.

Each session will be facilitated by one of our AFAM faculty.

Food will be served.

All you need is the designated book, an open mind and a willingness to share.



- **February**—Na'im Akbar, *Visions for Black Men*
- **March**—Octavia E. Butler *Kindred*
- **April**—Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

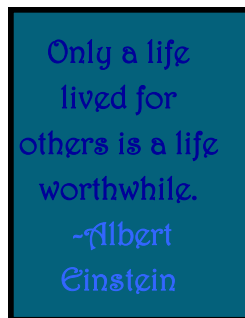
Books will be available at the University Book Store for purchase, at least 3 weeks before the next meeting. Or feel free to visit the local library for the book.

Community Service

The African and African American Studies (AFAM) Program at the University of Oklahoma has created a database of community service projects for our students. Our goal is to develop and implement dynamic community service programs that boldly address the educational, social, cultural, and recreational needs of the under-

represented and the educationally "at-risk" residents in the Oklahoma City and Norman, Oklahoma area.

Northwest Classen High School, The Northeast Resource Center (NERCI) and the New Day Recovery Youth and Family ser-



vices are all located in Oklahoma City and in need of your help.

We are still in the process of locating agencies which are in the Norman area.

If you are interested in receiving more information, please contact

Dr. Sharri Coleman at 325-1186.

What is your dream?

Dr. King dreamed that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."...I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood....



dren will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

Dr. King was a nonviolent, social activist who had many hopes and dreams for his people and all of the people of the world. His life was dedicated to this work.

going about trying to accomplish this goal? Take a look at yourself and see what gifts, talents and dreams lie inside of you. Dr. King cannot resurrect himself, but maybe there is something that is waiting to be birthed in you that can help the next generation.

So don't be afraid, dream BIG dreams! Then put your hands and feet to action.

I have a dream that my four little chil-

What do you hope for and how are you

Greatness lies within you!

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"Return and Get it"
Learn from the Past

www.ou.edu/cas/afam



The Mission of the University of Oklahoma African and African American Studies Program (AFAM) is first to exemplify excellence in research, teaching and service, in accordance with the mission of the University of Oklahoma (OU) of Arts and Sciences (CAS). Specifically, AFAM has the mission to provide a broad, interdisciplinary education with a focus on traditional areas of study of the African American Studies / Black Studies discipline.



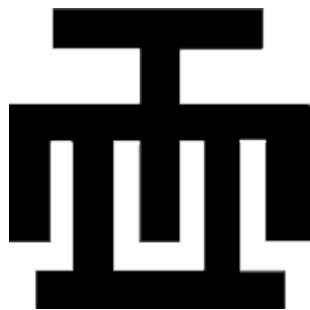
African symbols

HWE MU DUA

"measuring stick"

symbol of examination and quality control

This symbol stresses the need to strive for the best quality, whether in production of goods or in human endeavors.



Adinkra symbols were first used as decorative elements in one of the most highly valued, hand-printed and hand-embroidered cloths of West Africa. Traditionally, the cloth was used exclusively by royalty and spiritual leaders for very important sacred ceremonies and rituals. In addition to its traditional sacred usage, today Adinkra cloth is also used to make clothing for such special occasions as festivals, church-going, weddings, naming ceremonies and initiation rites.



BIN NKA BI

"No one should bite the other"
symbol of peace and harmony
This symbol cautions against provocation and strife.