

Move Beyond the Myths

Despite the vital place that Africa occupies in today's world, and its centrality to the history and culture of so many countries, including the United States, few people get beyond the prevailing stereotypes to appreciate the reality of Africa, past and present.



Contrary to popular misconceptions, Africa is NOT:

A single country.

It is a continent made up of 53 different countries and territories whose people speak approximately 2,000 different languages.

A rural culture.

It is home to 14 percent of the world's population, where over a third live in cities.

A disease-ridden place, where famine is rampant.

It is a continent of many cultures, the cultural source for some of the world's oldest art forms and for much of world music today.



Putting a Face on Africa

Five Colleges, Incorporated
97 Spring Street
Amherst, MA 01002

African Studies at the Five Colleges

Putting a Face on Africa



Amherst College
Hampshire College
Mount Holyoke College
Smith College
UMass Amherst

www.fivecolleges.edu/sites/african



The Study of Africa at the Five Colleges: Greater than the Sum of Its Parts

Nationally recognized as a center for the study of Africa, the Five Colleges are home to the premier professional publication for African Studies, the *African Studies Review*.

“We’re not just a group of scholars who happen to be located in one place, we’re a real community of people who share a vision for making Africa better known and better understood.”

—Rowland Abiodun

Each campus sustains its own programs and courses relating to Africa. Taken together, the faculty and these resources are on a par with the best university-based Africa programs in the U.S. The Five College African Studies Council promotes collaboration and encourages cross-disciplinary and cross-campus exchange in many forms. A lively and monthly faculty seminar, visits and residencies by African scholars, and the Five College Certificate Program in African Studies are examples of what the Council makes possible. The Council also supports the development of Africa-focused curricula in many different disciplines.

Photographs by Cyndy Jean, Fred LeBlanc, Caroline Queeny, Brian Russell, Paul Schnaittacher, and Leonardo Villalon.

The Five Colleges Together Have:

- Thirty six scholars of Africa, one of the largest concentrations of its kind in the United States.
- A certificate program similar to a minor.
- Approximately 40 undergraduate courses in more than 15 disciplines.
- Classes in 9 languages spoken in Africa—Zulu, Wolof, Yoruba, Twi, Swahili, Portuguese, French, English, and Arabic. Several of these are taught through the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages.
- Study abroad opportunities in 13 African countries.
- An annual Africa Day celebration, monthly speakers, films, and gatherings.
- A Five College West African Music Ensemble.



African Studies at the Five Colleges: In Their Own Words

“With five cooperating campuses, we put together a rich and varied program that’s comparable to the country’s top African Studies programs.”

“Having faculty work so closely together encourages real intellectual exchange among us and our students and makes the study of Africa an intensely exciting learning experience.”

“The Five College African Studies Certificate Program represents an important way for students to bring coherence to selecting courses outside their major. And because the certificate requires them to take courses in different disciplines and often at different campuses, students develop an appreciation of the rich connections among politics, economics, culture, and history.”

“I love having the ability to study African languages at the undergraduate level.”

“I’m taking anthropology classes at UMass and Swahili at Amherst while pursuing a math major at Smith.”

For more information, visit the Five College African Studies Web site at www.fivecolleges.edu/sites/african