

African & African American Studies Undergraduate Fellows Program:

Global Black Popular Culture and Visual Studies



African & African American Studies (AAAS) at Duke provides a multi-disciplinary liberal arts education and prepares students for the increasingly rigorous expectations of prospective employers and graduate or professional schools. A top ten program nationally, the department offers a program of study through which undergraduates become original thinkers, independent researchers, and collaborative problem solvers. The knowledge and methodological tools they acquire, benefit graduates as life-long learners well equipped to understand and explain complex global systems and the constantly changing conditions for people of African descent.

Led by Dr. Mark Anthony Neal, a James B. Duke distinguished professor, the department's faculty seek to introduce a new program that blends classroom instruction, independent research, and experiential learning.

The aim of the **AAAS Undergraduate Fellows Program** is to provide research support and networking opportunities to students doing multimodal research in Black popular culture and visual studies, whose scholarly output can be represented and disseminated in ways other than the traditional print format.

The program will provide cohorts of up to five AAAS students annually...

with opportunities to receive mentoring from faculty and non-Duke practitioners and gain the theoretical and technical skills necessary to create their own podcast, narrative film, radio, TV, or social media research projects. Collaboration opportunities will be created with Duke's Center for Documentary Studies, the Franklin Humanities Institute, the Hayti Film Festival, and other partners. Fellows will receive funding for equipment, travel, research supplies, and enrichment activities. Among the participating faculty are:

- Professor Jasmine Cobb, an AAAS professor of art, art history, and visual studies. Her book "New Growth: The Art and Texture of Black Hair" closely analyzes the idea of "natural hair" through scrapbooks, film, photography, and other visual media.
- Professor Patrick Douthit (aka 9th Wonder), a Lecturing Fellow with over 25 years of experience working in the Black popular music industry as a producer, CEO, and DJ. He has collaborated with a multitude of artists, including Jay-Z, Kendrick Lamar, Destiny's Child, Mary J. Blige, Drake, Chris Brown, Erykah Badu, and Ludacris. A multiple Grammy Award nominee, 9th Wonder won a Grammy in 2005 for his production of "Good Woman Down" on Mary J. Blige's album, Breakthrough.
- Professor Mark Anthony Neal, a founder/editor of the blog NewBlackMan, and host of the weekly podcast Left of Black. He was featured in the TV series "Gospel," which discusses historical moments and Black spirituality movements through music.

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Giving Opportunities

This program is your chance to enhance research and experiential learning opportunities for Duke students. Your investment will create leaders in Black studies who will have unique skillsets, fully equipping graduates across the workforce and academia to be changemakers.

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