



Minor: African American Studies

Expected 7 Dec 2013

Valdosta State University (VSU), Valdosta, GA



The U-Can! Man Enlighten About My History.

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Akwaaba! Karibu! Welcome to VSU's African American Studies home page and congratulations on having accessed our exciting program. African American Studies is committed foremost to academic excellence, to the acquisition of knowledge concerning people of African descent, and to fostering interdisciplinarity, multiculturalism and diversity at Valdosta State and particularly in the southeast Georgia region. Established in 1996, AFAM has already experienced astronomical growth. The program has recruited over 300 minors with several having completed the minor requirements. Please don't leave until you have accessed all of our program services, including course descriptions and offerings, the AFAM Resource Center and special announcements. For many students, faculty and visiting friends, an involvement with African American Studies at VSU has been an academic, cultural adventure of a lifetime. Again, "Akwaaba".¹

1.) Akwaaba, from the Ghanaian language Twi, and Karibu, from the Swahili language, meaning "welcome".

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I am an associate professor at Valdosta State University. I am starting my 27 year at Valdosta State. I have been teaching for 31 years. I have several degrees. I have a BS degree in Liberal Arts with a major in History and teaching certification. I have a Masters in Secondary Education with an emphasis in Reading. Both are from the University of Tennessee at Martin. I have a Masters of Public Administration (MPA) from Valdosta State University. I also have a Ph. D in Higher Education Leadership from Georgia State University.

I teach a variety of classes. I teach VSU 1101, a class designed to help freshman make the transition from high school to college. It is a class that most freshmen should take. I teach PERS 2730, an internet technology class that students design a basic webpage. I teach AFAM 3000, the introduction courser for the AFAM minor. I teach AFAM 4700, the capstone seminar for the AFAM minor. Last, I also teach AFAM 3600 Race, Class & Gender also a course that can be used in the AFAM minor. My philosophy of the teaching is to teach the class the way that I want to be taught. I believe in respecting each student as an individual. I try to help students to empower themselves. I believe that it my purpose to help a student to gain a sense of who he or she is and that will help them to move forward in their life.

I am married to Sharon Dianne Woods. We have been married for 30 years. We have no children of our own but we do have a God daughter who we love and in turn her daughter is our Granddaughter. I constantly tell my students skip the children stage and go straight to grandchildren. They are a whole lot more fun and you can send them back to their parents or if you are visiting you can go home.

I believe in making the community that I live in a better place. I do community service whenever I can. I am a past board member for Habitat for Humanity for Valdosta/Lowndes. I help to pick up trash along Patterson Street with my fraternity brothers. As a matter of fact the section that we have is right in front of VSU. I have volunteered at the Food Bank. I have also participated in Relay for Life for several years. I have helped to mentor several young men in the community. Also helped to provide meals for people during Thanksgiving and the Christmas season. I am member of New Hope Baptist Church on West Gordon Street. There I serve several functions. I am a group leader. I serve on the finance pay committee. I have taught Sunday school and Bible Study.

I am a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. I am an Omega Man, not a Que Dog. I have been an Omega for 36 years and a result I have an extended family throughout the United States. It is through my Omega affiliation that I have made lifelong friends in several states. I believe in our motto that "Friendship is essential to the soul!"

Ms. Caterina Orr
Part-time Instructor,
African American Studies & English



Mr. Antwan Herron
Part-time Instructor,
African American Studies



Mr. Kendrick G. Dyer
Part-time Instructor,
African American Studies

Mr. Derrick L. Carter
Senior Secretary, African American Studies



Advice/Wisdom from The U-Can! Man AFAM Team

- 1) Dr. Shirley Hardin, Director of African American Studies and Professor of English Dr. Hardin has been mentoring and inspiring students for 35 years. She challenged me to consider African American Studies as a minor. Her appeal was so moving that I quickly decided to.
- 2) Ms. Melva Morfau, AFAM 3600 – U.S. Civil Rights Movement “John, remember that no one knows it all, so come to class with your mind set to learn. You may be shocked at what you hear in this class. However, it is important that you learn as much as you can about your past. Then you can go forward making differences and helping out in the areas you choose.”
- 3) Dr. Calvin Walker, AFAM 4700 – African American Studies Seminar “My philosophy of teaching is to teach the class in the way that I want to be taught. I believe in respecting each student as an individual. I try to help students to empower themselves. I believe that it is my purpose to help a student gain a sense of who he or she is in order to help the student move forward in life.”
- 4) Mr. Antwan Herron, AFAM 3220 – Studies in African American Literature “During this semester, I would like for you to be a critical thinker, creative thinker, and innovative thinker as you read your assigned readings. Dig into what you are reading by asking questions of the text. Write down any and all questions before class and add them to our class discussions. This class will be interactive.”
- 5) Mrs. Caterina M. Orr, AFAM 3000 – Intro to African American Studies “Make sure your assignments are done on time. Your assignments reflect you, and you should want them to reflect you in a correct manner. This is not an easy A class, but it is a class in which you can earn an A if you do the work and make sure the work is done correctly. The key is doing what the syllabus says and giving your best effort. Then, whether your grade is an A, a B, or a C, you will know you did your best.
- 6) Mr. Kendrick Dyer, AFAM 3600 – Black Families “It is very important that you know where you come from and where you are going. Your family history can help you with this process. This class will be dealing with the black family and its many diverse parts. Come to class every day ready to learn.”



