



MPhil in African Culture and Development Studies

Academic Year 2026-2027

Course Guide



Broos Institute
Afrocentric Studies & Research



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Overview

The master's program African Culture and Development provide students with an African perspective on development. In the program, students will learn how culture forms and transforms developments in agriculture, health, education, natural resource management, conflict resolution, credit schemes, and more – all of which are core components of the socio-economic development of a people. It will allow students to engage in high quality development work that is relevant to a people within their respective cultural contexts; thus, combining theory with practice. Students will learn to initiate and conduct research on development issues, through hands-on training to design and conduct their own fieldwork. Through in-depth fieldwork students develop critical perspectives on social phenomena and engage about social and cultural phenomena and engage in contemporary cultural and developmental debates from a Pan-African perspective.

Theoretical Framework

Decolonization is the process of revealing and dismantling colonialist power in all its forms. This includes addressing the hidden aspects of those institutional and cultural forces that have maintained colonial dominance and that persist even after political independence is achieved. In many parts of the colonized world, early resistance movements operated through institutions appropriated from the colonizing culture itself. This was unsurprising, since early nationalists were educated to perceive themselves as potential heirs to European political systems and models of culture. This dynamic was evident not only in settler colonies, where the European colonial elite was a direct product of the system, but also in colonies of occupation. In Africa, during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the first nationalists were often modernizers, whose programs sought less to affect a rejection of colonial culture than to adopt its practices. This process of political and cultural 'brokerage', as some historians have described it, placed early decolonizers in a position of profound complicity with the imperial powers from which they sought to emerge as free agents. Consequently, political independence did not necessarily entail a complete liberation of the colonized from colonial values, for these, along with political, economic and cultural models, often persisted long after independence.

About the Department of Culture and Development

The MPhil program is offered through a partnership between Broos Institute in The Netherlands (NL) and Millar Institute of Transdisciplinary and Development Studies (MITDS) in Ghana (GH).

The Culture and Development department of MITDS is characterized by a broad research agenda and a wide range of thematic expertise. The department is committed to deep societal engagement, not only encouraging academics to extend their work beyond the university but also forging sustained connections with community experts and professionals. We foster the development of community-based knowledge systems at the academic level through guest lectures and diasporic exchanges.



Program Aims and Objectives

The MPhil graduate program in African Culture and Development aims to position culture as a scientific field of inquiry while promoting evidence-based research on best practices in culture and development.

The objectives of the program are inspired by Bloom's taxonomy of learning outcomes, which places the student at the center of development discourses. Accordingly, the program seeks to:

- Create a learning environment that enables students link their understanding of culture to contemporary discourses in African development.
- Equip students with advanced analytical tools relevant for engaging with on-going research that broadens the definition of science to include culture.
- Advance culture into the scientific domain, emphasizing the relevance of African sciences within globalization discourse.

Provide students with the knowledge and skills to manage peoples-centred poverty reduction and sustainable development strategies within cultural contexts.

Language of instruction: English

Mode: Modular full-time, covering six (6) trimesters

Location: In-person lectures in the Netherlands and Ghana

Course Delivery

The program employs a wide range of instructional methods, including lectures, presentations, field visits, and self-guided learning. Students are expected to attend lectures at the Broos Institute in The Netherlands for the first two trimesters and to participate in at least one semester of course work, including field visits, in Ghana during the third trimester of the two-year program.

Year One			Year Two		
T1 (Sep-Dec)	T2 (Jan-Apr)	T3 (Jul/Aug)	T4 (Sep-Dec)	T5 (Jan-Apr)	T6 (Jul-Aug)
Foundational courses and electives (4) in NL	Foundational courses and electives (4) in NL	Field visit, electives (2) term paper in Ghana	Term Paper presentation. Research	Research/Thesis	Thesis and Viva

The MPhil in Culture and Development is a research-based program. Coursework spans one (1) and a half year, including three (3) months of term paper preparation and submission, followed by a six (6) months research phase (a total duration of 24 months). Students are required to write a thesis and will be supervised at all stages by a member of the academic teaching staff. A large portion of the program focuses on self-study, including the preparation and execution of fieldwork projects and the writing of the thesis.

Is the MPhil in African Culture and Development Right for You?

- Are you get excited by the idea of pursuing higher education from a Pan-African and decolonial perspective?
- Are you interested in engaging with culture and culturally relevant development issues at advanced levels of discourses?
- Do you take intellectual pleasure in engaging critically with Culture and Development theories?
- Do you wish to spend a year researching a Pan-African and/or decolonial topic of your own choosing?
- Do you enjoy exploring complex topics through reading and writing analytical texts?
- Do you have the ambition to become an independent researcher?

If so, the MPhil in African Culture and Development may be the right program for you!

Admission Requirements

Eligible applicants must hold a bachelor's degree with a minimum of Second-Class Lower, or the Dutch equivalent of a 6 or higher. Applicants must also demonstrate an excellent command of written and spoken English.

Conversion Table

NL (out of 10)	UK Equivalent	USA Equivalent
6	C (2:2 Lower Second)	GPA 2.3–2.7 = C+/B-

Application Process

Applicants must apply to the program through the Broos Institute website. The application requires a completed form to be submitted along with one academic reference.

Additionally, applicants who hold a bachelor's degree that was taught in a language other than English are required to submit proof of English language proficiency, such as TOEFL, IELTS, or an equivalent standardized test score.

Study Program

The program consists of core and elective courses, along with term papers and Research Seminars. In addition, students are required to write a thesis. The full MPhil program is structured in modules, allowing for flexible scheduling and offerings.

Year 1								
	Year 1			Year 2			CH	ECTS
Core Courses	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6		
Introduction to Endogenous Development This course introduces students to the various paradigms of development, enabling them to explain and distinguish among concepts such as: exogenous development (transfer-of-technology), participatory development (PRA), and endogenous development . The course also introduces students to the core tenets, key processes, and applications of endogenous development.							3	6
Introduction to Indigenous Knowledge and Ethnography The objective of this course is to strengthen students' understanding of the role of indigenous and community knowledge in the research and development process as a new paradigm. The course defines the concepts of indigenous knowledge and ethnography before discussing the various nomenclatures of peoples' knowledges including Rural Peoples' Knowledge, Indigenous Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and Indigenous Technical Knowledge . The course highlights data collection principles, methods and techniques in ethnographic research, as well as the role of cultures and worldviews in development. It discusses indigenous technologies and innovations, along with challenges and solutions related to traditional systems of indigenous knowledge and development. Finally, indigenous development is presented as a continuous process integrating the natural, social and spiritual worlds of a people, shaping their acceptance or rejection of development interventions.							3	6

<p>Research Methodology</p> <p>The course aims to enable students to appreciate the research cycle and strengthen their ability to design studies and conduct field research.</p> <p>The course begins with problem statement, objectives and hypothesis formulation, followed by the selection of appropriate research designs, operationalization and measurement of variables, quantitative data collection techniques and the judicious application of logical reasoning, mathematical methods and statistical techniques to data analysis and interpretation. Students are introduced to research proposal writing, ethical issues in research, questionnaire design, administration and processing, data analysis and data presentation. The course also addresses thesis writing and introduces students to the scientific approach to producing publishable articles, research proposals, and term papers. Special attention is given to quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods of research designs.</p>						3	6
<p>Philosophy of Science</p> <p>This course introduces students to fundamental philosophical questions concerning scientific knowledge and methodology.</p> <p>The course surveys a range of positions within the philosophy of science, structured around four central themes. First, it considers the extent to which science resembles or differs from other ways of knowing. Second, it examines philosophical accounts of scientific theory-change, including falsification and paradigm shifts. Third, they explore the scientific realism debate, asking whether fundamental philosophical questions about the structure of reality can be answered by the sciences. Fourth, it addresses theoretical and empirical investigations of scientific practice, with attention to topics such as creativity, the role of values in science, and feminist perspectives on scientific inquiry.</p>						3	6
<p>African Philosophy</p> <p>This course introduces students to the historical origins of Philosophy and the foundations of African Philosophy.</p> <p>The course traces the origins of philosophical thought and the evolution of modern philosophical traditions, with attention to African contributions and influences. It engages students in theoretical debates across key areas, including metaphysics, ontology, gnoseology, epistemology, axiology and considers their implications for African Philosophy. The course further examines concepts such as Ubuntu: Myths and Realities, African Personality, Indigenous Traditions, and Emerging Knowledge Systems. Modern African philosophical thought is explored through discussions Ancestorcentrism (African), Asaase Yaa (Akan for Mother Earth), divinities and deities and comparisons between Westerncentrism and Afrocentrism. Finally, the course links African Philosophy in development praxis.</p>						3	6

Development Theory and Change This course enables students to grasp the theories and concepts of development and how to apply their concepts to local contexts. In this course, students are introduced to the historical trends and theoretical debates in development, as well as various theories and their application to development paradigms and strategies. Key concepts such as capacity, capability, change, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are discussed. Topics also include the economics of development, the Theory of Change, capitalism, economics, monetization, and the role of science paving the way for transdisciplinarity in development practice. The course further examines policy environment and its implications for change along with theories, models and concepts of development change. Case studies are presented for students' self-reflection and discussion, providing opportunities to critically engage with diverse discourses that characterize the field.							3	6
Research and Presentations								
Field Immersion Program Students are required to undertake at least a three (3) week field immersion that exposes them to the practical realities of their studies. This immersion will be organized as an academic exercise, graded, and the marks contribute to the results of the term paper.							3	6
Term Paper This course provides students with hands-on experience in writing professional and publishable papers.							9	18
Total credit hours/ECTS year one							30	60

	Year 1			Year 2			CH	ECTS
Elective Courses	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6		
Sociology and Society The course introduces students to the key theories and paradigms of sociology and society, the cultural underpinnings of the discipline and the historical development of the field. Concepts such as polyandry, polygamy, polygyny, and monogamy are explored. Attention is given to differentiating forms of traditional authority, traditional institutions, traditional organizations, traditional systems, as well as matrilineal and patrilineal structures, lineage, and social policy planning in the Global South. The course also examines spirituality, shrines and groves, power, nature, and traditionally protected areas. Lastly, it engages with sociological research methods, theoretical paradigms, socialization, and the dynamics of social change.							3	6

<p>Culture and Diasporanism This course introduces students to the concept of diasporanism and its relationship to culture, examining both overt and covert discourses that shape diasporic identities and experiences in the contemporary world.</p> <p>The course revisits the foundations of diasporanism before examining its contemporary cultural consequences. It covers the historical development of diaspora formations, their contemporary ramifications, and examples and case studies of diaspora manifestations. Through case studies and critical analysis, students engage with key debates in diaspora studies and consider how this rich dimension of African experience can positively shape developmental paradigms. Key topics include an introduction to diasporanism; Africa and Africans in the diaspora; cultural consequences and implications of diasporanism; and contributions of African diaspora to global civilization.</p>						3	6
<p>Cultural Studies This course enables students to engage with the broad conceptual issues around culture, including cultural variations, values, taboos, totems, language, dress, codes of conduct, and entertainment.</p> <p>The course approaches culture as a generic and cross-cutting theme, seeking to liberate it from being narrowly defined by music, festivals, and dance. It highlights the importance of uniqueness, "oneness", and continuity while also addressing intrusions, corruptions, negative influences of value systems, and the dynamics of dominance and subjugation. Students are introduced to broader issues of inculturation, enculturation, acculturation, interculturalism, and cross-culturalism. Key topics include understanding culture and its defining characteristics; categorizations of culture; concepts of cultural relativity and cultural universality; and Ancestorcentrism as an emerging concept reflecting African collective values.</p>						3	6
<p>Social Anthropology This course is designed to deepen students' understanding of the core debates in the anthropological literature and to increase their knowledge of traditional African social anthropology. It enables students acquire a thorough grounding in a range of approaches to social anthropological analysis.</p> <p>The course examines the historical development of social anthropology and addresses key problems in anthropological theory, interpretation, and comparison. These issues are analyzed in relation to ethnographies and substantive debates within the discipline. Through critical reflection on a range of anthropological theories, and the application of those theories to bodies of ethnographic data, the course aims to provide anthropological perspectives on a variety of practical development issues. Key topics include research in social anthropology; symbolic social anthropology; cognitive social anthropology; ecological social anthropology; and ethnography and social anthropology.</p>						3	6

Research and Presentations								
Term Paper This course gives students hands-on experience in writing professional and publishable papers.								
Thesis/Research Proposal The complete thesis/proposal project enables students to understand the concepts and core components of a research study.							6	12
Seminar Presentation (Concept) The objective of this seminar presentation is to help students develop their presentation skills and refine their research concepts.							3	6
Seminar Presentation (Thesis/Research Proposal) The objective of this seminar presentation is to enable students to demonstrate their presentation skills and shape their thesis/research proposal.							3	6
Data Collection								
Thesis Write-Up The thesis write-up project enables students to understand the concepts and core components of a research study, from concept development through proposal writing to the final draft. Students will be required to present their completed thesis (chapters 1-5), incorporating all review comments, especially those following the successful defense of their research work. Students present bound copies of their theses to their supervisors. Their supervisors assess the bound copies and sign them off, allowing students to prepare for graduation.							12	24
Seminar Presentation (1st Complete Draft Thesis) The objective of this Seminar Presentation is to enable students to develop their presentation skills and shape the preliminary findings of their research.							3	6
Seminar Presentation (2nd Complete Draft Thesis) The objective of this seminar presentation is to enable students to develop presentation skills, shape their research findings and prepare their work for external assessment.							3	6
Viva Presentation The viva presentation gives students the final opportunity to defend their research work. It serves as the concluding component of the oral thesis defense.								
Total credit hours/ECTS year two							31	62
Total credit hours/ECTS							61	122

Requirements for Graduation

Overall, students will be required to do 27 credit hours of course work, 12 credit hours of seminar presentations, 6 credit hours of thesis/research proposal work, 12 credit hours of thesis write up and 4 credit hours of term paperwork. In total, students must complete 61 credit hours to graduate.

Credit hours vs. ECTS

At MITDS, student workload is measured in credit hours according to the Ghanaian university system. One credit hour is equivalent to two ECTS¹. One ECTS corresponds to approximately 40 hours of work, including classes, homework, reading and preparation). Therefore, 61 credit hours equals 122 ECTS.

Assessment Regulations

Candidates for the master's degree program are required to pass all taught courses with a minimum mark of 60%. The thesis is assessed within three months of submission, and students are advised on its suitability or otherwise. Those who fail to attain a satisfactory level of performance shall be advised to re-submit, withdraw from the program or follow other recommendations prescribed by the Academic Board. Performance will be determined by the Graduate Board, and a certificate may be awarded.

Diplomas and Certifications

All Degrees and Diplomas are awarded by the University for Development Studies (UDS), Ghana. Certificates, however, are awarded by MITDS. On a case-by-case basis, other forms of certification may be awarded by the MITDS Academic Board to students who successfully complete taught courses but are unable to present a term paper or thesis write-up. Master's Thesis will be assessed by two (2) examiners (1 internal and 1 external to MITDS). The external assessor will have the final say.

Career Opportunities

The program equips students to teach at higher levels of education and to engage in high quality development work that is relevant to people within their respective cultural contexts; thereby combining theory with practice (praxis). It also prepares students for PhD and postdoctoral studies in the field of culture and development.

The target market includes:

- Teaching at secondary and tertiary level.
- Cultural institutions.
- Government service.
- Private sectors.
- Non-Governmental Organizations.
- International engagements.
- Self-employment

Tuition Fees & Living Costs

- **Introduction fee: €4,500 per academic year**
- **Total Program Fee (2 years): €9,000**

Additional Costs

- **Application Fee (non-refundable): €30**



¹European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

Estimated Living Expenses (not included in tuition)

- **Netherlands (per trimester):** €3,000–€3,500 (housing, food, transport, insurance)
- **Ghana (per trimester):** €1,200–€1,800 (housing, food, local transport)

Scholarships & Support

- Limited scholarships and tuition waivers may be available for outstanding candidates.
- Students are encouraged to seek sponsorship from governments, NGOs, or educational funds.

Payment Options

- Tuition is payable in **two installments per academic year** (September & January).
- Students may request a **payment plan** in exceptional circumstances.



Faculty Members

- Prof. David Millar – Professor of Endogenous Development

Prof. David Millar is the founder of the Millar Institute for Transdisciplinary and Development Studies. He holds a PhD in Agricultural and Environmental Sciences from Wageningen Agricultural University (NL). His vast body of work in Endogenous Development has impacted and transformed community-based development theory in Ghana and beyond.

- Prof. Mamudu A. Akudugu – Professor of Agricultural Economics

Mamudu Abunga Akudugu holds a PhD in Livelihoods (International and Rural Development) from the University of Reading, United Kingdom. Dr. Akudugu is currently a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research and Consultancy Services (IIRaCS) at the University for Development Studies (UDS). He is the Head of University Consultancy Services Unit. Mamudu has several years of experience in conducting interdisciplinary research, largely employing mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative approaches) in his research activities. He has served as a consultant to many national and international institutions including the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (UN). Dr. Akudugu is an active member of the African Association of Agricultural Economists (AAAE) and other professional bodies. He has over 20 peer-reviewed publications and has presented papers at many local and international conferences.

- Prof. Chaka A. Uzundu – Associate Professor of Politics and Development

Prof. Uzundu is an associate Professor at MITDS. He is an inspirational, results-oriented, critical and analytical thinker, and emotionally intelligent leader, with 10 years of international development experience in Africa and North America, specifically with Water Aid Ghana. Passionate and people-centered with a specialized focus on creating opportunities for marginalized people.

- Prof. Joseph Abazaami – Associate Professor of Development Planning

Prof. Abazaami is an Associate Professor of Development Planning and has been researching and teaching in the university for two decades. He holds a PhD in Development Planning from the University of Dortmund, Germany.

He provides technical assistance to governmental and non-governmental establishments on a consultancy basis, in subject matters such as evaluations, feasibilities and training. Abazaami is a Fellow of the Germany-based International Association of Development Planners (SIADP), and a Member of the Ghana Institute of Planners (MGIP- 892/21). He has consulted extensively for the Government of Ghana and numerous international organizations such as the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Foreign Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), MISEREOR, CARE International, ActionAid Ghana, Catholic Relief Service (CRS), World Vision Ghana (WVG), Children Believe (CB), Canadian Feed the Children (CFTC) etc. His areas of research interest center around issues of climate change adaptation and development policy; climate information services, agricultural development planning and management; inclusive development, agricultural policy and poverty; the nexus between food and nutrition programming, rural livelihoods and development planning; and analyses of institutions, actors' strategies and power games shaping livelihood debates and related policies for the informal economy. He lectures in Sociology and Society; Social Anthropology; Philosophy of Science; Strategic Planning and Management Models and Tools; Agricultural Policy and Rural Development; Strategic Corporate Management; Environmental Security and Human Development etc.

- Prof. Frederick Dayour – Associate professor

Professor Dayour holds a doctorate in Hospitality and Tourism management from the University of Surrey, and an MPhil and BSc in Tourism Management from the University of Cape Coast

- Prof. Samuel Bonye - Associate Professor of Endogenous Development

Prof. Bonye holds a PhD from the University of Development Studies (GH). He is a senior lecturer and a head of department for the Department of Community Development at UDS.

- Dr. Dominic Alimbey Dery

Dr. Alimbey holds a PhD in Culture and Development Studies from UDS, and an MA in Human Resource Development from the University of Cape Coast. He is a senior lecturer at the Languages and Liberal Studies Department of Tamale Technical University.

- Prof. Anatoli Ignatov - Assistant Professor Sustainable Development
Prof. Anatoli Ignatov holds PhD in Political Science from Johns Hopkins University. He specializes in Ecologies of the Good Life: Forces, Bodies, and Cross-Cultural Encounters. He is an assistant professor at the Sustainable Development Department of Appalachian State University.
- Dr. Helen Akolgo-Azupogo – Lecturer of Sustainable Development Studies
Dr. Helen Akolgo-Azupogo holds a PhD in Endogenous Development and an MPhil in Development Studies of the University for Development Studies (GH). She is a lecturer at the Department of Planning and Land Administration at the University for Development Studies.
- Dr. Francis Niagia Santuah - Lecturer of Culture and Development
Dr. Francis Niagia Santuah is a Communication Scientist with 20 years of experience in implementation research and social mobilization in behavior change communication. He has conducted multi-country research studies in sub-Saharan Africa and has led the start-up and scale-up of innovative programs in health, education, and governance in the West Africa subregion.
- Dr. Wilfred Agumo Akapanga - Registrar
Dr. Wilfred Agumo Akapanga holds a PhD in Business Administration of Swiss Management University and a PhD in Culture and Development of the University for Development Studies. Experience in Business incubating, Investment and Portfolio Management, agribusiness and value development, training and staff development, fund raising, business and entrepreneurship development, business mentoring/coaching, strategic planning, operations management, marketing, financial management, leadership development, project management Insurance and risk management.
- Prof. Kenneth Bayetimani Pelig-ba – Associate professor.
Dr. Pelig-Ba holds a PhD in Sedimentology from Reading University and an MSc in Physical Chemistry from Cape Coast University.
- Dr. Joseph Ayembila – Lecturer of Endogenous Development
Dr. Ayembila holds a PhD in Endogenous Development from the University for Development Studies and an MSc in Applied Development Studies from the University of Reading.
- Dr. Shanunu Zakaria – Lecturer of Endogenous Development
Dr. Shanunu Zakaria holds a PhD in Culture and Development from the University for Development Studies. He is a Senior Lecturer at the department of Sociology and Social Work at the University for Development Studies.
- Dr. Francis Kwabena – Senior Lecturer
Dr. Kwabena holds a doctorate degree in Social and Behavioural Science from the University of Amsterdam (NL). As a senior lecturer at MITDS he specializes in agricultural extension, participatory approaches, climate change and rural development. He is the Vice Dean and head of the Department of Agricultural Extension, Rural Development and Gender Studies at the University for Development Studies.

The Delivery Partnership

About Millar Institute for Transdisciplinary Development Studies

Millar Institute is an open university that promotes practice-oriented education and training, integrating teaching, learning and research grounded in endogenous development for the equitable and sustainable development of a people. Its motto is ***finding African solutions to African challenges***. Based in Bolgatanga (Upper East Region of Ghana), the institute emphasizes teaching that fosters the cultural transformation of disadvantaged communities.

MITDS is founded on the conviction that Africans can, and indeed should, resolve their own problems by responding directly to their own challenges. MITDS has positioned itself to contribute towards solving these challenges, with Pan Africanism as a critical part of its scholarship. The Institute seeks to cultivate in every student a distinctive identity, referred to as the African Personality.

About Broos Institute

The Broos Institute for Afrocentric Studies and Research is an Amsterdam-based, mission-driven nonprofit organization dedicated to introducing Afrocentric perspectives into the predominantly Eurocentric education system.

The institute is establishing first African University Campus in the Netherlands. As people of African descent are an integral part of Dutch, as well as the wider European society, it follows that African educational institutions should also have presence here.

The courses and programs of The Broos Institute are offered in collaboration with affiliated universities and partners. All initiatives are rooted in the principles of the traditional university, enriched by a distinct Afrocentric perspective.

Broos Institute is named after Suriname's venerated Maroon leader Broos (Babel), the only anti-slavery freedom fighter from Suriname of whom a picture exists.

Next Steps and Application

Get in touch with Broos Institute to book a discovery call

Email: info@broos.institute