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Grinnell College seeks an Endowed Chair, African Diaspora Studies

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Location: Grinnell, Iowa

The Position:

Grinnell College seeks an experienced educator and scholar to join its rich, interdisciplinary, inclusive, student-centered community and anchor its newly established Department of African Diaspora Studies. The successful candidate may come from any disciplinary field or methodological tradition within the broad umbrella of African diaspora studies. As the inaugural occupant of an endowed chair, this pivotal leader will have the opportunity to drive strategic program development that impacts the institution and the community for decades to come. In collaboration with key campus and community partners, the Chair will articulate the vision for the department, lead the foundational design of a cutting-edge curriculum, provide mentoring and support for new faculty colleagues, and forge meaningful relationships with students that transcend the classroom. Fortified by years of thoughtful advocacy, preparation, and identification of resources, this new leader will be poised for transformative action through the launch phase and beyond.

Responsibilities:

The Chair will:

- Collaborate with campus partners to articulate a comprehensive vision for the Department of African Diaspora Studies, including curricular priorities and pedagogical modalities crucial to building this vital new program at Grinnell College.
- Provide curricular and scholarly contributions to the intellectual life of Grinnell College.
- Cultivate relationships with partners nationally and internationally to integrate the Department of African Diaspora Studies into relevant communities and networks of inquiry and practice.
- Collaborate with partners on and off campus to ensure the support necessary to build and sustain curricular and co-curricular programming in African diaspora studies.

Qualifications:

The successful candidate for this position will have achieved the rank of associate or full professor and will demonstrate a combination of the following:

- A record of scholarship, teaching, and service rank of associate or full professor.
- A record of excellence in undergraduate education.
- A commitment to undergraduate advising and mentorship.
- Evidence of an active scholarly life that engages key themes in African diaspora studies.
- Connection with and contributions to scholarly communities and networks relating to African diaspora studies.
- Engagement with audiences and communities beyond the academy.
- Administrative capacity developed at departmental and/or institutional levels.
- Evidence of collaborative leadership in curricular assessment and development, especially concerning interdisciplinary studies.
- Knowledge of alumni engagement and the work of institutional advancement.

The Department of African Diaspora Studies:

In 1971, the members of Concerned Black Students presented Grinnell College President [Glenn Leggett](#) with a list of 10 demands to improve life on campus for Black students and faculty. Among these demands was the creation of a Black studies major.

In the decades that followed, institutional offerings in Black studies at Grinnell were cyclical, waxing and waning over the years. The College created several programs, including an interdisciplinary concentration, Africana studies, which lasted almost a decade.

According to Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs Beronda Montgomery an exciting new chapter, spurred by student interest and faculty support, is about to begin at Grinnell as the College launches the Department of African Diaspora Studies (ADS), which was recently approved by the Board of Trustees.

The department will offer a curriculum aligned with Grinnell's commitment to social justice and human liberation. ADS will reside within the Division of Social Studies; however, its course offerings will be highly interdisciplinary. Coursework will focus on Black intellectual and cultural activity, drawing on past and present contributions from Africa, the Americas, and the Caribbean.

"The creation of this new department — to be led by a senior-level endowed chair with plans for two additional tenure-track faculty lines — will provide permanence and continuity for Grinnell students and faculty working in this important academic area," Montgomery says, "Grinnell is making a long-term and significant commitment to create the Department of African Diaspora Studies, with a strong foundation and ongoing support," Montgomery adds.

The College will recruit a senior faculty member who will hold an endowed chair, which represents an additional investment in the new department. The chair will work, with guidance from an ADS steering committee, to design the new curriculum and major.

"This robust start demonstrates the seriousness and commitment the College brings to this expansion of Grinnell's academic landscape, in this moment," Montgomery says. "It's a deeply impactful endeavor to have such an investment."

Considering ongoing national conversations around affirmative action, critical race studies, and more, establishing an African diaspora studies department highlights Grinnell's commitment to diversity. [Click here](#) to read more.

About the Institution:

[Grinnell College](#) is a private, coed, residential liberal arts and sciences college recognized for its rigorous curriculum and strong tradition of social responsibility. Founded in 1846, Grinnell enrolls approximately 1,700 students, generally from all states and over 50 countries, in 28 major fields and 19 concentrations. Among the nation's small liberal arts colleges, Grinnell is widely viewed as an institution of the first rank, with an excellent faculty, a skilled staff, a consistently strong and diverse student body, and a well-equipped, beautiful campus. It is a national leader in college access, dedicating \$74.5 million in financial aid and being one of fewer than ten institutions of higher education in the country that are simultaneously need-blind, test-optional, and no-loan, making it possible to graduate debt-free. This is possible because of Grinnell's exceptional financial and investment management. Both Standard & Poor and Moody's Investor's Services recently affirmed the College's credit rating of AAA/Stable.

The Grinnell College community embraces intellectual journeys of all kinds and provides students with individualized guidance to dive deeply into their interests, define new directions, and move knowledge into action.

At a time when higher education has become enormously expensive, Grinnell maintains core commitments to access and diversity. Approximately 90 percent of Grinnell students receive some form of aid, and one in four receives a grant totaling at least the full cost of tuition. In 2021, the Board of Trustees renewed and reaffirmed Grinnell's long-standing need-blind admissions policy for domestic students and initiated the corresponding commitment to meet 100 percent of demonstrated financial need without requiring student loans.

Grinnell's commitment to civic engagement is embodied in its long-term commitment to social responsibility, as students learn the skills to enact change locally, nationally, and internationally. The College has developed programs and initiatives that encourage students to learn about and from transformative leaders around the world, exemplified by the Social Innovator in Residence program, which gives students direct opportunities to interact with individuals who have demonstrated leadership in their fields and who show creativity, commitment, and extraordinary accomplishment in effecting positive social change.

Academics

With its enviable student-faculty ratio of nine to one and its sound financial resources, Grinnell can pioneer innovative pedagogies that realize the goal of inquiry-based and experiential learning. Grinnell was one of the first colleges to replace distribution requirements with an individually advised curriculum. In close consultation with their advisers and informed by six elements of a liberal education, students plan their course of study by selecting courses from departments in the three divisions: humanities, social studies, and sciences. With a strong focus on the advising relationship, faculty members have an early and in-depth understanding of their advisees, and students are made responsible for the quality of their own education, an approach that emerges from Grinnell's historic ethos of self-governance and personal responsibility.

Notably, almost all students choose a genuinely balanced and varied curriculum, often enrolling in double majors or combining a major with one or more interdisciplinary concentrations. Comparative studies reveal that Grinnell students roughly equal their counterparts at peer colleges in the breadth of their studies, and significantly surpass them in depth. Inquiry-based and interactive teaching is encouraged, as is collaboration. The College's Center for Careers, Life, and Service (CLS) works with students to envision what they want their life to become and connect with ways of getting there. Working with students from before their arrival at Grinnell through graduation and beyond, the CLS provides guidance and resources that enable students to design a life that encompasses their personal, professional, and civic ambitions. This approach leads to outstanding post-graduate outcomes, with 57% of Grinnellians going straight to full-time employment and 85% saying their first job is completely or moderately related to their ultimate career goals. Almost 30% go on to pursue advanced degrees or continuing education, with the remainder choosing post-graduate service, fellowships, or other pursuits.

To Apply:

Acceptance of inquiries, nominations, and applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and CV/resume for consideration. Parties are encouraged to apply by February 1, 2024.

All applications and nominations will be held in strict confidence.

To apply online, go to:

<https://theapplicantmanager.com/jobs?pos=su395>

For more information or to offer recommendations, please contact:

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Grinnell College is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe and nondiscriminatory educational and working environment for all College community members. It is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in matters of admission, employment, and housing, and in access to and participation in its education programs, services, and activities. The College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, religion, disability, creed or any other protected class. Discrimination and harassment on any of the bases covered by state or federal antidiscrimination statutes is unlawful and a violation of Grinnell College policy.

Application URL: <https://theapplicantmanager.com/jobs?pos=su395>