Established in 1986, the Frederick Douglass Institute (FDI) has as its primary mandate the promotion of advanced research and intellectual exchange within the University community and the field of African and African-American studies (AAS). To fulfill this mandate, FDI offers two residential fellowships, a work-in-progress series, a lecture series, and an African film series. Since 2000, 18 FDI fellows have contributed to the intellectual exchange within the University community. On December 8 and 9, 2011, many of these fellows will return to campus to share their scholarly work on “The Neoliberal Deluge.”

“When it comes to intellectual diversity, the Frederick Douglass Institute has been part of the solution for the past 25 years,” says Cilas Kemedjio, director of the institute and associate professor of French and Francophone studies. “FDI has contributed to the development of graduate students and young scholars who have gone on to make significant contributions to the scholarship and teaching of African and African-American studies.” The FDI also offers a graduate certificate designed to encourage graduate students across the College to participate in African and African-American studies.

The FDI in collaboration with other departments has offered more than 400 AAS courses since 2000. About 50 to 90 students participate in the roughly 18 courses offered per semester. More than 30 students have graduated with an AAS major, with more than half of those students accomplishing a double major. Students graduating with an AAS major in the Class of 2011 received scholarships to attend Harvard University and Stanford University, among others. The Frederick Douglass Undergraduate Prize, which rewards excellence in research by a senior, has attracted more than 80 entries since 2000.