

THE CENTER FOR  
AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES  
*in*  
STANHOPE HALL

*Princeton University*



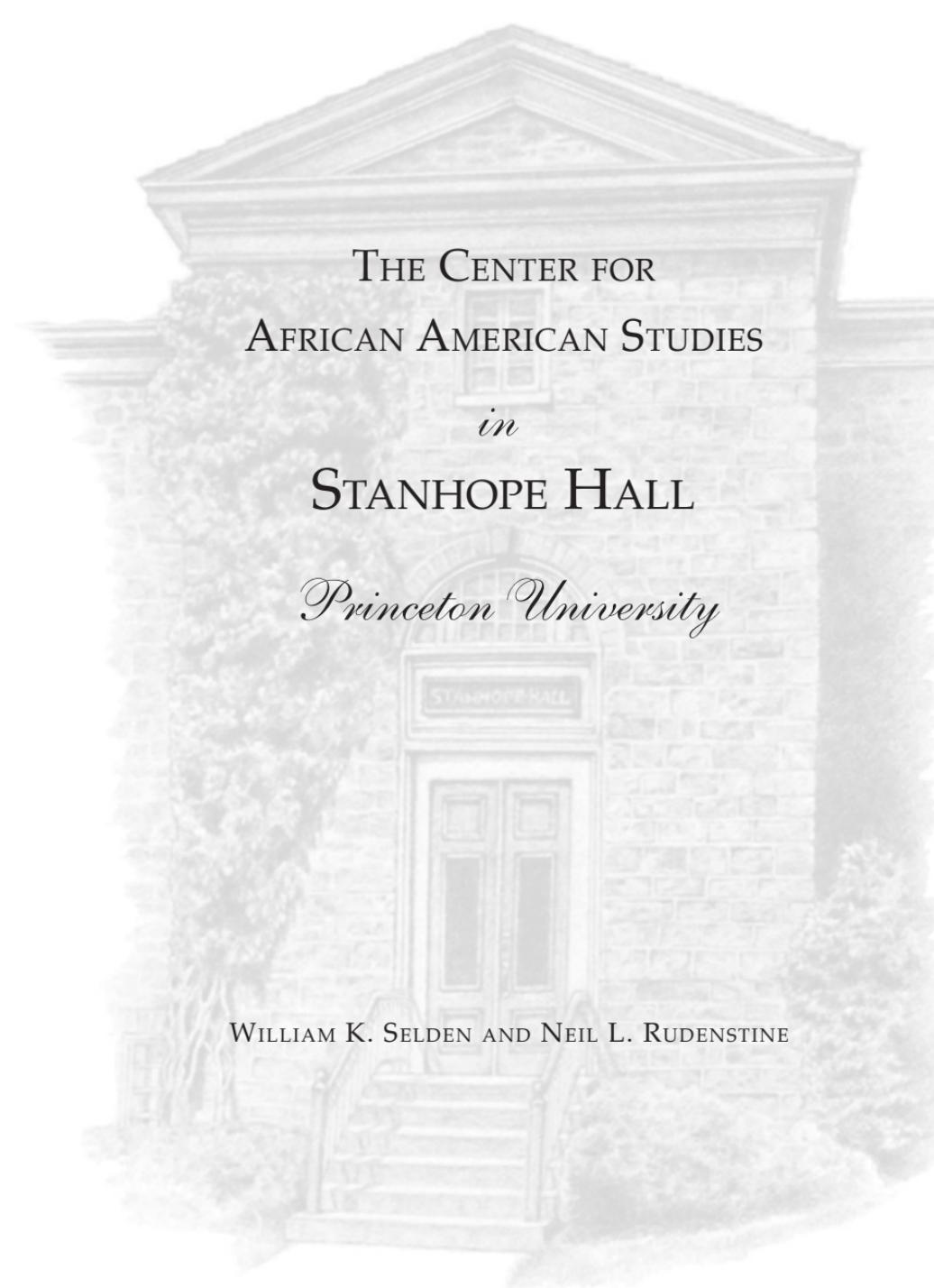
WILLIAM K. SELDEN AND NEIL L. RUDENSTINE

IN RECOGNITION OF

Robert F. Goheen

President, 1957–72

whose courage and foresight  
stimulated Princeton University  
to broaden its responsibilities  
as a leading  
multicultural and multiracial institution  
of higher education



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I am especially grateful to Neil L. Rudenstine for writing this exceptionally knowledgeable account of the development of African American studies at Princeton. Following Dr. Rudenstine's graduation from Princeton in 1956 and his subsequent studies at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, he obtained his doctoral degree at Harvard before serving as dean of students at Princeton during the administration of Robert F. Goheen. It was in this capacity that he participated in the constructive changes introduced at Princeton that resulted in the introduction of the Program in African American Studies concurrent with the admission of women. Before serving as president of Harvard University from 1991 to 2001, he was dean of the college and provost at Princeton during the administration of William G. Bowen and then executive vice president of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Among those individuals who were helpful to me as I wrote this monograph were Valerie A. Smith, the Woodrow Wilson Professor of Literature in the Department of English and director of the Center for African American Studies, Carla M. Hailey Penn,

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William K. Selden  
August 2007

FOREWORD  
BY  
NEIL L. RUDENSTINE

Thanks to William K. Selden, we now know a great deal about the history of Stanhope Hall's many mutations over the course of the past two centuries. As he describes in the following account, Stanhope began life as the College library. It also housed some early academic programs, and later became an administrative office building. Now, once again, as his narrative unfolds, it will be a place dedicated to significant study, research, and education.

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES AT PRINCETON

When Princeton's library moved from Stanhope, it did not—fortunately—wander very far. It has remained, since the 18th century, at the heart of the original campus: from Stanhope to Nassau Hall, then to Chancellor Green, and finally to Firestone. Those academic departments and programs most dependent on the library's collections have always been clustered in the buildings and quadrangles nearby: classics; the

“modern” European and Slavic languages and literatures; English and American literature; history, philosophy, art, and music. Many interdisciplinary programs—such as American studies, European cultural studies, the University Center for Human Values, East Asian studies, Near Eastern studies, and the Woodrow Wilson School—are also located in the same broad precinct. So it is a natural and happy development for Princeton’s vital and far-ranging work in the field of African American studies to take its place—geographically and otherwise—in the heartland of the campus, among so many other distinguished ventures in the humanities and related subjects.

“Vital and far-ranging” should now be taken literally. We know that African American studies in the U.S. scarcely existed—in terms of academic structure or recognition—half a century ago. Then, for the following quarter-century, its presence was often viewed as little more than the consequence of political and racial pressures. It was often said to have essentially no serious intellectual core. It was equally often considered to be a vehicle for propounding a self-enclosed “black” or “Afrocentric” view of the world. Moreover, there were—understandably—very few trained scholars in so new a field. As a result, most programs had great difficulty building a cadre of faculty, or attracting

many students. So the fundamental task of simply surviving, and then attempting to sustain one's modest gains, occupied a great deal of the time and energy of those genuine pioneers who risked associating themselves with an enterprise that was fragile, isolated, and frequently under assault.

Beginning in the 1980s and more dramatically in the 1990s, however, Afro-American studies (as it was usually termed in its early decades) emerged as African American studies. In fact, the entire conception of the field gradually changed and expanded in fruitful ways. It became, over time, more closely linked not only to African studies per se, but also to Caribbean and Latin American studies, to "Atlantic" and European studies, to Indology, religious studies, linguistics, philosophy, and other central fields of knowledge.

Indeed, it is now difficult to imagine undertaking comprehensive work in many subjects without some serious reference to important aspects of African American history and experience. These subjects include fields as different as Francophone literature, or the evolution of Christianity in the United States, or the philosophy and practice of non-violent political protest—or the geographic origins and later population migrations of the species *Homo sapiens*, the history of music, conceptions of race and ethnicity, the history

of Western colonialism, aspects of 20th-century European and American art, the history and consequences of Atlantic sea-trade patterns and conflicts, and (much more obviously) the complex history of the United States from its very beginnings.

Topics such as these constitute only a sample of the ways in which African American studies now possesses a fully mature and developing agenda in education and research. It also now has a wealth of discovered archival, published, visual, “material,” and other forms of documentation. Finally, a large and growing number of scholars and teachers are engaged in its work, with a diversity of students keenly interested in its subject matter.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the insights and prescience of early intellectual leaders such as Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Alain Locke. The later work and example of scholars and writers such as Gordon Allport, John Hope Franklin, Kenneth Clark, and C. Vann Woodward were no less crucial. Yet even these efforts might not have mattered so greatly without the willingness of some colleges and universities to be responsive in thoughtful and creative ways.

At Princeton, it was the moral clarity, intellectual understanding, and institutional commitment of President Robert F. Goheen that led, first, to the admission

(during the 1960s) of a growing number of African American students. The expansion of Princeton's recruiting efforts resulted—by the 1970s—in the enrollment of about 70 to 90 African American students per class. Moreover, a major faculty report recommended, in 1968, the creation of an interdisciplinary program in Afro-American studies, and the new venture actually began to offer courses within a year. Gradually—very gradually—young faculty began to be trained in the disciplines that comprised the program. In more recent years, an extraordinary group of senior faculty of national and international standing has made Princeton its home: Professors Kwame Anthony Appiah, Toni Morrison, Nell Painter, Valerie Smith, and Cornel West represent only some of the members of this extraordinary contingent.

### THE GOHEEN LEGACY

Robert F. Goheen was elected president of Princeton in 1957. By the time that he retired in 1972, he had—steadfastly and courageously—guided Princeton through the most dynamic and critical period in the entire history of American higher education. He had grasped, very early in his tenure, that Princeton would

be compelled—in the transformed and ambitious era of the post-war years—to choose between remaining an undergraduate college with only a select number of exceptional graduate programs, or becoming an absolutely major university with fully developed graduate studies and research facilities of the highest caliber across the entire institution.

Goheen's decision to re-create Princeton University required a substantial leap of faith. It was certainly not an altogether popular decision. It demanded fundraising on an unprecedented scale, as well as assembling a faculty that was as distinguished in research as in teaching. In barely a decade of energetic and dramatic action, Princeton managed a profound self-transformation that enabled it to play an absolutely central future role at the forefront of major universities worldwide.

This achievement would have been, in itself, more than sufficient to mark Goheen's presidency as extraordinary by any standard. But there was, of course, much more than that. When the entire complex of divisive social, political, racial, and other challenges grew—between the mid-1960s and the early 1970s—to crisis proportions, Goheen was virtually alone among major university leaders in being able to guide his institution throughout this entire protracted and tumult-

tuous period, and to do so without allowing Princeton to suffer any serious harm.

During this era, the issues related to race were, in my view, the most profound, complex, and difficult of all. The Vietnam War was the immediate pressure point for most student unrest, and it was consequently the most visible and urgent problem at hand. But by the very late 1960s, one could already begin to see that the war would end, and yet the deeper issues related to race—given the nation's long heritage of discrimination, violence, and deprivation of opportunity for blacks—would not be resolved at any time in the near future. Indeed, these issues, despite so many advances, still remain profound, complex, and far more than merely difficult.

To the extent that there was indeed so much progress at Princeton, however, Goheen made all the difference—in what he sometimes wisely refused to do, as well as in what he chose so decisively to set in motion. He won the trust of newly arrived African American students and faculty. And in the midst of so much disruption, he consistently took the long view, to make certain that whatever he helped to create would be capable of being sustained in order to serve the University's fundamental purposes.

His provost, William G. Bowen, also played a critical role at the time, as he continued to do during

his own very distinguished presidency. Later, Harold T. Shapiro never wavered in building upon the work of his predecessors. And now, President Shirley M. Tilghman has moved ahead boldly and yet soundly, with great conviction and equal buoyancy, to inaugurate this new Center for African American Studies in close association with the University's entire bright array of other programs in humane learning.

The creation of this center represents another important turning point in the development of African American studies nationally, not only at Princeton. It will have, appropriately, a historic place of residence on our campus, and it symbolizes many of the aspirations of those who look to Princeton's future as well as to the traditions of its past. So with all due ceremony and no less delight, let us celebrate this happy birth-date, in confidence that the center—like all of the University—*DEI SUB NUMINE VIGET*.

THE CENTER FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES  
IN STANHOPE HALL

*I*n the extensive literature about Princeton University that has accumulated over the years, comparatively little reference has been made to Stanhope Hall and to the man for whom it was belatedly named, the seventh president of the College of New Jersey, Samuel Stanhope Smith. It now seems appropriate to recount some pertinent historical facts, since the Center for African American Studies has become the most recent occupant of the building.

The third oldest building on the Princeton University campus is Stanhope Hall, built in 1803, a historic structure that has subsequently served a number of purposes. Only Nassau Hall and Maclean House are older, each having been constructed in 1746, the former to house all of the functions of the nascent College of New Jersey, as it was then known, and the latter to serve as a residence for the College's presidents.

During its first 60 years, Nassau Hall encountered two major catastrophes to which a less sturdy structure would have succumbed. It was occupied and severely damaged first when the British military forces took over



*Stanhope Hall, circa 1868. The building on the left is Reunion Hall, subsequently razed. The building on the right is Maclean House, home of the College presidents from 1746 to 1879, now home to the Alumni Association.*



*Student protests of the 1880s.*

the building during the Revolution in 1776, and subsequently by the American militia when they overpowered the British in the Battle of Princeton on January 3, 1777, and evicted them from Nassau Hall. Then, in March 1802, a devastating fire engulfed the entire interior of the building, causing the students to lose most of their possessions while the College was able to save much of its limited equipment, but only a fraction of its small library.

After each disaster, the College was faced with the burdensome task of raising funds to finance the rebuilding of what at the time of its original construction was the largest stone building in the American colonies. When hostilities ceased and the Continental Congress had been established, the College appropriated funds for the rebuilding of Nassau Hall, funds that were rapidly diminished, however, by widespread inflation. John Witherspoon, the College's esteemed patriot and president (1768–94), was sent to Britain to raise funds, but he returned with only a few British pounds to show for his efforts. Fortunately, contributions were procured from domestic solicitations, so that by 1782 the building was made partially habitable for some 40 students, and one room in the basement was assigned for use by a grammar school. The following year of 1783, still only partially repaired, the building served as the meeting

place for the Continental Congress, which had fled Philadelphia as the British were occupying the city.

Finally, by 1791 Nassau Hall was capable of providing lodgings for an enrollment of more than 100 students, and the trustees were considering the construction of one or two additional buildings, when the second catastrophe struck—the devastating fire in March 1802. Following this occasion, Samuel Stanhope Smith, president (1795–1812), made an extensive trip to solicit funds in the Southern states from where many students had come. More successful than his predecessor, Smith returned with sufficient support to rebuild Nassau Hall and additional funds assigned by the Board of Trustees for construction of two new buildings.

## GEOLOGICAL HALL

In their early years, the two new buildings were identified as Philosophical Hall and Geological Hall. Their identical design was influenced by Benjamin H. Latrobe, the nation's first professionally trained architect, who had offered his services in the rebuilding of Nassau Hall. These additions to the campus were located on the northeast and the southwest of Nassau

Hall, whose Georgian style of architecture they resembled.

Philosophical Hall, originally known as the Refectory because it housed the dining hall and kitchen in the basement, also contained classrooms for mathematics and natural philosophy, as well as the philosophic (scientific) equipment of the College: globe, quadrant, microscope, telescope, prism, and observatory. It was here that Joseph Henry, professor of natural philosophy (1832–48) and later the first secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, conducted his experiments in electromagnetism and the early stages of the telegraph. The building was demolished in 1873 to provide space for the construction of Chancellor Green, the first separate building on the campus devoted solely for library purposes.

On the southwest side of Nassau Hall stood Geological Hall, originally known as the Library, since it initially housed the College's small collection of books. It also contained study halls for freshmen and sophomores, a recitation room where the president held his classes, as well as separate rooms on the upper floor for the student debating and literary societies: the American Whig and the Cliosophic societies, founded in 1769 and 1770, respectively. During its life span of more than two centuries, this building has had several names identified by its successive purposes, and is now known as Stanhope Hall.

In 1838 the debating societies moved to new structures that were built on the present site of the current classical buildings located at the rear of Nassau Hall, and in 1860, the library moved to what is now the Faculty Room of Nassau Hall. This room was expanded at the time of the reconstruction of this historic building following the second fire, which occurred in 1855. Then, in 1879, the Philadelphian Society, the prominent and active student religious organization, which had been occupying available space in the building since its founding in 1825, moved to the recently constructed Murray Hall. At that time Geological Hall, renamed as the College Offices, was converted to office space to accommodate the treasurer of the college, the curator of grounds and buildings, and the registrar, plus space for faculty meetings.

By 1915, the building, now called the University Offices, was further remodeled and continued to provide space for the offices of the treasurer, the secretary of business administration, the purchasing department, the secretary of grounds and buildings, in addition to an office for the University power plant, the office for the dining halls, and later the office of personnel services and the campus proctors and police. Again in 1964 a major reshuffling of offices was instituted, and reconstruction was undertaken to provide space for its new occupants:

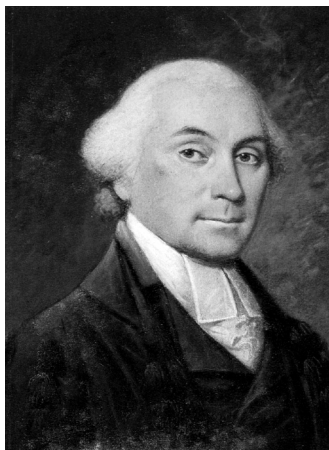
the Alumni Council, a new telephone system, public information, the campus police, the student shoe shop, the Orange Key guides, and public restrooms.

In 2007 it again underwent a major rejuvenation, this time to accommodate the expanding Center for African American Studies.

### SAMUEL STANHOPE SMITH

More than a century after Stanhope Hall was built and two decades after the College was renamed Princeton University, the seventh president of the College of New Jersey was accorded belated and well-deserved recognition. The third building on the campus was named for Samuel Stanhope Smith, an action taken in 1915 by the Board of Trustees on recommendation of President John Grier Hibben (1912–32).

Having been schooled in his father's academy in Pequea, Pennsylvania, Smith entered the College



of New Jersey as a junior in 1767 and was graduated in 1769 as the class salutatorian. A year of the study of theology with his father was followed by three years as a tutor at the College, after which he was ordained a Presbyterian minister. He then moved to Virginia, where he became active in founding two separate academies that were the forerunners of Hampden-Sydney College and Washington and Lee University. In 1779 he was recalled to Princeton as a professor of moral philosophy. He and his wife, Anne, the eldest daughter of President John Witherspoon, resided in the President's House (now Maclean House) from which Witherspoon had moved to Tusculum, a home that he built a few miles north of the town.

As a consequence of Witherspoon's active participation in the affairs of the Revolution and then of the Continental Congress, he was frequently absent from the College well into the 1780s. In his absence, Smith was responsible for directing Princeton's recovery, while the inspiration for this recovery continued to rest on "the educational vision, the patriotic vigor, the virile Christianity, and the philosophical assurance of its president." (Noll, p. 15) Witherspoon's subsequent advancing blindness, however, limited his ability to continue to provide the presidential leadership that he had exercised so vigorously and successfully heretofore.

As a result, Smith was forced during his tenure of 33 years at the College to assume a number of responsibilities, including clerk of the Board of Trustees (1783–95), treasurer of the college (1783–86), vice president (1780–95), followed by the presidency (1795–1812). During the years of his presidency, as Mark A. Noll has written:

Smith himself taught the senior and junior classes in eleven different subjects, ranging from belles lettres and composition to metaphysics and the laws of nature and nations. For his courses in moral philosophy and “Revealed Religion,” Smith also provided written lectures. He spent from ten to fourteen hours each week hearing the upper classes recite. In addition, he superintended evening prayers and the student orations that followed, he chaired the numerous meetings of the faculty, he directed the Monday evening meetings of the theological society, he ate in the refectory in rotation with other professors, he was chief disciplinary officer, and he received and answered a minimum of six hundred letters each year on college business. . . . he also played a major role in overseeing the restoration of Nassau Hall. (Noll, pp. 166–167)

In his history of *Princeton, 1746–1896*, Professor Thomas J. Wertenbaker wrote that Smith was a “progressive educator, an advanced scholar, an able teacher, a renowned pulpit orator, a man of commanding personality, and seemed ideally suited for the task which fell to his lot. He was a man of erect figure, penetrating blue eyes, and a quiet dignity which was softened by a winning smile.” (Wertenbaker, p. 118)

Despite these admirable personal qualities that Smith possessed, he was encouraged by the Board of Trustees to resign the presidency in 1812. The reasons that were announced involved Smith’s questionable health, a condition that was well known. There were, however, other factors that relate to the underlying theme of this narrative history and led to the long somnolent period of the College throughout the middle of the 19th century.

## THEOLOGICAL DOCTRINE

Following the fire of 1802 there were claims, which proved to be false, that the conflagration had been caused by fractious students, who had been permitted too much freedom of action. However, student riots that did erupt on the campus in 1807

brought further criticisms of Smith for the manner in which he enforced discipline. He had suspended some 120 students during a period in which student eruptions were also occurring on other college campuses, much to the horror of the trustees. It was also a time when the changing composition of the Princeton Board of Trustees became more theologically conservative.

Founded largely to prepare men for the Christian ministry, the College of New Jersey under John Witherspoon placed significant emphasis on “patriotic public service as Princeton’s primary contribution to morality, liberty and social cohesion.” (Noll, p. 36) During Smith’s tenure as president, this emphasis on public service was continued at the same time that there was a further proportionate reduction in the number of graduates entering the ministry, a trend that was a major concern of the trustees. As evidence of this development, it may be noted that of the 531 graduates during Smith’s administration between 1795 and 1812, one alumnus became a vice president of the United States; four were members of the president’s cabinets; 37 served as members of Congress, of whom nine were members of the Senate; 13 were United States judges; eight were governors; 24 state judges; four state attorneys general; and 21 were college presidents or professors. In addition to this list of

known graduates, there were others who entered public service but their identities were not known. (Maclean, pp. 112–117)

The trustees also became alarmed as Smith favored the introduction of modern languages and science in the curriculum. He had delivered a paper before the American Philosophical Society in which he “argued that all mankind belonged to the same family, and attributed diversity within the species to environmental influences.” (Leitch, p. 443) Even though Smith declared that he saw no conflict between revealed religion and science, conservative theologians, among whom were many newer members of the College’s independent Board of Trustees, took umbrage as they conceived of and planned for the establishment of a theological seminary under the direct control of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America.

These factors were sufficient for the board of the College to seek Smith’s resignation and elect as his successor Ashbel Green (1812–22), a member of the Board of Trustees, who with Samuel Miller, another board member, was actively developing plans for the new seminary. That same year the Princeton Theological Seminary was established, and Green was concurrently elected president of its Board of Directors, a position that he held until his death in 1848, and Samuel Miller was chosen to

be the second professor of the seminary. Green's incumbency as president of the college lasted 10 years, during which time student unrest continued, despite his steady emphasis on religious activities.

In his historical survey of this period, Noll has indicted the trustees for obstructing the fulfillment of Samuel Stanhope Smith's educational vision:

As a group, the new trustees lacked the comprehensive vision that the contemporaries of Witherspoon shared. They were, rather, particularists, expert in forming voluntary societies, eager to press the claims of Presbyterianism, and anxious to professionalize the ministerial calling. In the face of these interests the comprehensive purposes of Witherspoon and Samuel Stanhope Smith became secondary concerns. (Noll, p. 241)

As a summation of Samuel Stanhope Smith's contribution, Wertenbaker wrote:

From the first he bent his energies toward the widening scope of instruction in the sciences, securing adequate equipment in astronomy, physics and chemistry, increasing the numbers of the faculty, strengthening the ties with the alumni,

maintaining discipline without oppression, increasing the facilities for the study of religion, and perhaps, most important of all, using the weapon of research and modern scholarship to defend the tenets of revealed religion. But when he tried to put these policies into operation he found that the deciding voice was not his but the trustees', and the latter insisted that the college be first of all a place for instilling religious principles and for turning out pious men . . ." (Wertebaker, p. 119)

### PRINCETON IN THE NATION'S SERVICE

In 1896 at the Sesquicentennial Celebration of the founding of the College of New Jersey, Professor Woodrow Wilson addressed the large assemblage of alumni, trustees, faculty, and guests with a moving oration, titled "Princeton in the Nation's Service." On this occasion the trustees renamed the institution Princeton University and subsequently employed the title of the speech as its unofficial motto.

Wilson may have been stimulated by the influence that John Witherspoon and his successor, Samuel Stanhope Smith, had on the larger proportion of students

who a century earlier entered public service instead of the ministry, much to the frustration of the clerical members of the Board of Trustees.

This clerical influence was not modified until the presidency of James McCosh (1868–88), a Scottish Presbyterian minister, who appointed to the faculty men of academic competence regardless of their denominational affiliation. Establishing the direction in which the University was



moving, McCosh also modernized the plan of study, developed academic options, increased the scientific facilities, and supported the introduction of intercollegiate sports.

However, it was the dynamic era of Woodrow Wilson's presidency (1902–10) in which the greatest curricular changes at Princeton occurred. Wilson, the first non-clerical president of the institution, re-organized both the



faculty structure and the curricular requirements by which students pursued general studies the first two years and a major field the last two years. To conduct this program the faculty was enlarged with the appointment of some 50 able preceptors who led small classes, identified as preceptorials. Of special note, at the same time Henry B. Fine, who served as dean of science (1909–28), oversaw the development of exceptionally strong departments of astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, mathematics, and physics, departments that maintain their deserved reputations to the present day.

To provide biblical instruction, Wilson appointed an academic to the faculty, not an ordained minister, and the Board of Trustees in 1906 declared Princeton to be a nonsectarian institution. During this administration the first Roman Catholic and the first Jew were appointed to the faculty, whereas the appointment of an African American had to await another half century.

Wilson's short presidential tenure was terminated over two issues in which he held irreconcilable opinions: the position of the undergraduate eating clubs and the location of the Graduate College building that was soon to be constructed. Wilson was unyielding on these two issues, as he was in his segregationist attitude towards members of the "negro race."

His position with respect to the clubs was to abolish them, a stance strongly opposed by a majority of the members of the Board of Trustees, as well as by a large number of vociferous alumni. The location of the Graduate College represented a conflict, which became personal, between the president and the dean of the graduate school, Andrew Fleming West, and also some of the trustees.

Following Wilson's departure from the University, the location of the Graduate College was quickly settled; on the other hand, the eating clubs have continued to be an unending debatable subject. The issue of whether or not to allow African Americans to become students at Princeton was more intractable and not resolved until after the middle of the 20th century. By this time the Southern traditions that had pervaded the Princeton campus for two centuries had to a large extent been dissipated.

During its early years, Princeton attracted a proportionally large number of its students from the Southern states. Several of the presidents of the College were from the South and, in fact, several of its presidents, possibly including Samuel Stanhope Smith, owned slaves. It is, therefore, not surprising that the mores of the institution comported with the Southern traditions. It is, however, unfortunate that Princeton maintained a policy of racial exclusion to students of African American descent

until the Second World War, during which time *The Daily Princetonian*, the student newspaper, ran editorials fostering desegregation of the University.

At the turn of the 20th century, an African American, William Langston Roundtree, who was enrolled at the Princeton Theological Seminary, did concurrently obtain a master's degree in 1895 from the University. However, it was not until the Second World War, during the administration of Harold W. Dodds (1932–57), that the first undergraduate black student, John L. Howard, a Navy V-12 enrollee, was graduated from the University. He was followed during the remaining years of the 1950s by a very small number of black students whose presence, however, did not appreciably change the complexion of the Princeton campus.

It was also during this period that the faculty included its first African American, Charles T. Davis, who was appointed in 1955 as an assistant professor of English. A few years later W. Arthur Lewis, an authority on the economic development of nations and a subsequent recipient of the Nobel Prize for economics, was added to the faculty of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. And in 1964 Carl A. Fields, the first black administrative officer at Princeton and in the Ivy League, was appointed to the position of assistant director of the Bureau of Student Aid, and subsequently

assistant dean of the college. In these positions he maintained the respect of both students and faculty as he helped to resolve many confrontations before they grew out of control. These developments served as a precursor to the recognition of the need for attitudinal, cultural, and social changes to be recognized by all on the Princeton campus in the 1960s.



*Carl A. Fields, displaying a gift for his services to the University.*

## ROBERT F. GOHEEN



Among the many significant developments that Robert F. Goheen stimulated as the 16th president of Princeton (1957–72) were the admission of women and the long delayed admission of signifi-

cant numbers of African Americans, both in belated recognition of the changes in society that had been evolving during the 20th century. As has been recounted in the monograph, *Women of Princeton, 1746–1969*, women made many and varied contributions to the institution prior to their admission in 1969. In contrast, African Americans were prevented from doing so until after they were admitted as students under the auspices of the military during World War II.

Immediately after the war, the number of African American students at Princeton remained small and their social acceptance was impeded by the traditions of the institution. To help overcome this heritage, at the encouragement of Carl Fields, African American residents

of the town opened their homes under a Parent Sponsor Program by which the initial black students resided off campus in a congenial and welcoming atmosphere. For several years the University also conducted a three-week orientation program for black students prior to the opening of college to prepare them for their exposure to University life. It was during this period that the University administration and its Board of Trustees also recognized that an active recruitment program was required to encourage more black students to consider applying to Princeton for admission.

The results are revealing. The composition of the undergraduate student body for the total of the classes from 1972 through 2010 demonstrates that the Princeton University of today represents a much broader social and cultural environment than it had for most of its earlier history. Whereas the academic quality of all the students admitted in recent years is generally superior, collectively they are now quite diverse culturally and socially. This combination of qualities has created an environment, both harmonious and at times contentious, that is stimulating for both the students themselves and for most of the faculty personnel who, as a consequence, find Princeton a more desirable place in which to teach and do research.

Some statistics are illuminating. For this 35-year period, the total admitted who attended Princeton was

33,155, of whom 21,061 were men and 12,094 were women. These totals include 3,285 African Americans, 2,164 Hispanics, 220 American Indians, 3,549 Asians, and 2,960 students from various countries.

Contending with various forms of protest, including the occupation of University buildings, the University encountered groups of minority students insisting that Princeton was not acting with sufficient rapidity to meet their needs, while others claimed that the University was abandoning its traditions and its heritage. Throughout these sometimes turbulent times, the administration maintained a steady commitment to support multicultural policies and practices among all University personnel, including faculty and staff.

As the number of minority students increased in the late 1960s and early 1970s, students created organizations to provide group support based on their ethnicity: for example, the Princeton University Chinese Club, Asian American Student Association, Union Latinamericana, and Association of Black Collegians. By the early years of the 21st century, there were more than 20 student organizations pursuing the various interests of African American students. In 1971, the Third World Center was established in the Field House, formerly used by athletic teams. At this time the building was “dedicated to stimulating and intensifying the intellectual, cultural, social,

and political interests of students with Third World ancestry (African American, Latino, Asian American, and Native American) and those interested in Third World cultures, issues, and affairs.” Subsequently in 2004, the building was renamed for Carl A. Fields, as previously noted, the first African American appointed to the administration of the University.



*“Conflicts and Contradictions in the Black Experience,” a seminar led by Professor of History Henry Drewry (far right), part of Black Solidarity Day, November 1, 1982, an event organized by the Organization of Black Unity and undergraduate members of the Third World Center, now the Carl A. Fields Center for Equality and Cultural Understanding.*

Sensing that it was time that the curriculum of the University should give recognition to the cultural heritage of the millions of African Americans who had contributed so much to the development of this nation, Goheen in 1968 appointed a special faculty committee with F. Sheldon Hackney, a professor whose primary field of interest was the American South, to serve as its chairman. Responding partially to appeals from black students, the committee



*President William G. Bowen and Coretta Scott King on the steps of Whig Hall, during the concluding event of Black Soliday Day, November 1, 1982. President Goheen hosted her husband, Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1960.*

recommended that a program in African American studies be established at Princeton.

The following year the faculty approved the recommendation that a program be created, one that involved 12 cooperating departments. The example for such an interdepartmental structure had been established when the School of Public and International Affairs was organized in 1930 with the involvement of the departments of economics, history, and politics. Similarly, in 1953 the Council of the Humanities had been established on the basis of an interdepartmental approach to serve as a means of fostering significant teaching and research in the humanities. By the 21st century, the Princeton faculty had created more than forty-some interdepartmental programs as a cooperative means of addressing, in both teaching and research, issues that extend beyond the limitations of a single field of study.

The changes that occurred during the administration of Goheen were profound and socially significant. They represented the moral convictions of the president as expressed in a small book that he wrote in 1969, *The Human Nature of a University*. In his concluding chapter he wrote of courage:

Hostile forces anchoring on selfish interests, or the status quo, have in every century opposed

those institutions dedicated to the advancement of learning and the betterment of human life, and we should be rash indeed to underestimate these forces. Nevertheless, born as it is of our society, the American university must not surrender its role as foregazer and critic—as searching mind and probing conscience—of that society. Perhaps the highest and most difficult function of the university, its most irreplaceable form of service in a free society, lies here: that is, not merely to be an instrument responsive to popular pressures, but, with due temperance born of long heritage and enduring tradition, to be willing to stand up as a judge of society's tastes and actions. . . . Courage, with temperance, is always needed to hold the university to its role and mission: courage on the part of men and women of good will who cherish the spirit of liberal learning and seek a better day for their fellowmen. (Goheen, p. 116)

It was with courage that Goheen led the University to broaden its social awareness and responsibility to include both men and women of different cultures and racial inheritances among students, faculty, and trustees.

He did so with a steadfast moral conviction that was admired and respected. At his final faculty meeting the statement of a senior faculty member epitomized the respect with which he was held by all.

It was not simply that we trusted your judgment, good as it has proved to be. . . . We admired your dignity and calmness in times of stress, your open-mindedness and fairness in times of controversy, and your endless patience as we groped towards a solution of our problems. And it is because we trusted you and because you deserved our trust that Princeton still flourishes under the grace of God. (Leitch, p. 221)



*Small class sizes and easy access to faculty encourage discussion among students, who bring to the table a variety of viewpoints and ideas on many issues that inform the field of African American studies.*

#### PROGRAM IN AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

According to a faculty report, for more than 35 years the Program in African American Studies has been recognized “as a center for the study of African American life and history of race and ethnicity as social and cultural phenomena in both the domestic and global contexts, and of cutting-edge interdisciplinary cultural studies

(involving) research and teaching.” The curriculum began in the fall of 1969 with two courses: a seminar on black American writers and a course on African American history. In the subsequent semester the number of courses was increased to five, and the enrollment in the seven courses amounted to more than five hundred students. Twenty-six of the students, half of them white, were concentrating in this new field of study.

During its early years, the program depended heavily upon visiting faculty members and upon members of related departments who taught courses that involved aspects of African American history and culture. As a consequence of changing faculty personnel in its early years, the emphasis at the beginning was on the humanities, and subsequently on the social sciences.

By 1986 a self-study was conducted that reported recommendations including a rigorous recruitment of full-time faculty to replace the appointment of visiting instructors, an increase in library resources, the creation of an external advisory council, and the development of a regular series of lectures, conferences, and special events, the last leading to the establishment of a Works-in-Progress Colloquium Series. From its inception the Program in African American Studies has been blessed with both outstanding faculty and by being the beneficiary of various foundation grants.

At the same time it has suffered a series of personnel losses, primarily due to the mobility and attractiveness of its exceptional faculty. In 2007, President Shirley M. Tilghman made a commitment to further strengthen African American studies by expanding the program into the Center for African American Studies. The move of the center to Stanhope Hall, in the very heart of the campus, is only a tangible example of this commitment.



The current director of the program—Valerie A. Smith, the Woodrow Wilson Professor of Literature in the Department of English—is an energetic, perceptive individual, who has projected an exciting future for African American studies at Princeton:

As a field, African American studies focuses on the interplay among the political, religious, economic, artistic, cultural, and social dynamics that have shaped the historical and contemporary challenges

and opportunities of communities and societies in which people of African descent work and live as well as the larger cultures of which they are a part. African American studies has thus changed the face of American higher education. . . . Through innovative teaching, the Works-in-Progress series and workshops, and the sponsorship of national conferences and cultural events, CAAS [the Center for African American Studies] has fostered, and will continue to foster, an intellectual environment that encourages and promotes rigorous inquiry and critical thinking and analysis. It has attracted and helped to create the sorts of well-rounded and intellectually curious students that are the hallmark of a liberal arts education. To the extent that Princeton invests in its future, CAAS will further solidify the University's status as a visionary institution in American higher education.

The Center for African American Studies is broadly based and includes the cooperation of many academic departments: anthropology, English, history, music, philosophy, politics, psychology, religion, sociology, and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. From the year of its establishment as a program in 1969 to the present, 2007, the center has offered courses

whose total enrollment in recent years has averaged annually more than 300 students of various backgrounds. During this same period the number of students who have earned certificates in African American studies in addition to their degrees in other academic departments has averaged 23.5, a significant accomplishment at an institution that failed to participate meaningfully in the lives of African Americans until the 20th century.

In pursuit of its goals, Smith noted that the center plans to concentrate on three areas of study: African American life and culture; comparative race and ethnicity; and African Americans and public policy. She noted that “these areas reflect our existing strengths and important new directions in the field.” To accomplish these goals, the center “will bring together an outstanding array of scholars, all committed to equipping students with the tools they need to think critically about race in both the national and global contexts.”

The center builds on the powerful changes of the 1960s and early 1970s when, concurrent with the development of African American studies, African American students themselves organized an undergraduate Association of Black Collegians to provide group identity and mutual support. As the number of black students continued to increase, this development led to the creation of the Association of Black Princeton Alumni, which is

now an active organization supported by the Princeton University Alumni Association. It sponsors three campus meetings each year: one during football season, one at Alumni Day in February, and the largest attended at the time of Reunions in late May or early June.

In addition, as part of ongoing efforts to support a diversity of black alumni, during one recent academic year the University sponsored three conferences to consider gender and racial diversity and ways by which these factors may be addressed in science and technology, as well as in business and public policy.



*Commencement 2007.*

## THE FUTURE

As one reflects on the history of Stanhope Hall, the president for whom it was named, and the relocation of the Center for African American Studies to this historic structure, one can be stimulated to recognize that Princeton University has undergone many cultural and social changes since it was founded more than 260 years ago. Of these changes, none is more significant culturally and socially than the changes that have occurred since 1969 when the Program in Afro-American Studies was established and the admission of women was initiated by the University.

During Goheen's presidency, the University recognized that to fulfill its responsibilities of educating its students for the multicultural and multiracial environment in which they will live in the future, the University needed to institute a major transformation of itself. It has done so, not without some trauma and controversy. However, the University has demonstrated its commitment to the education of students with superior academic and leadership qualities, regardless of race, gender, or cultural identity.

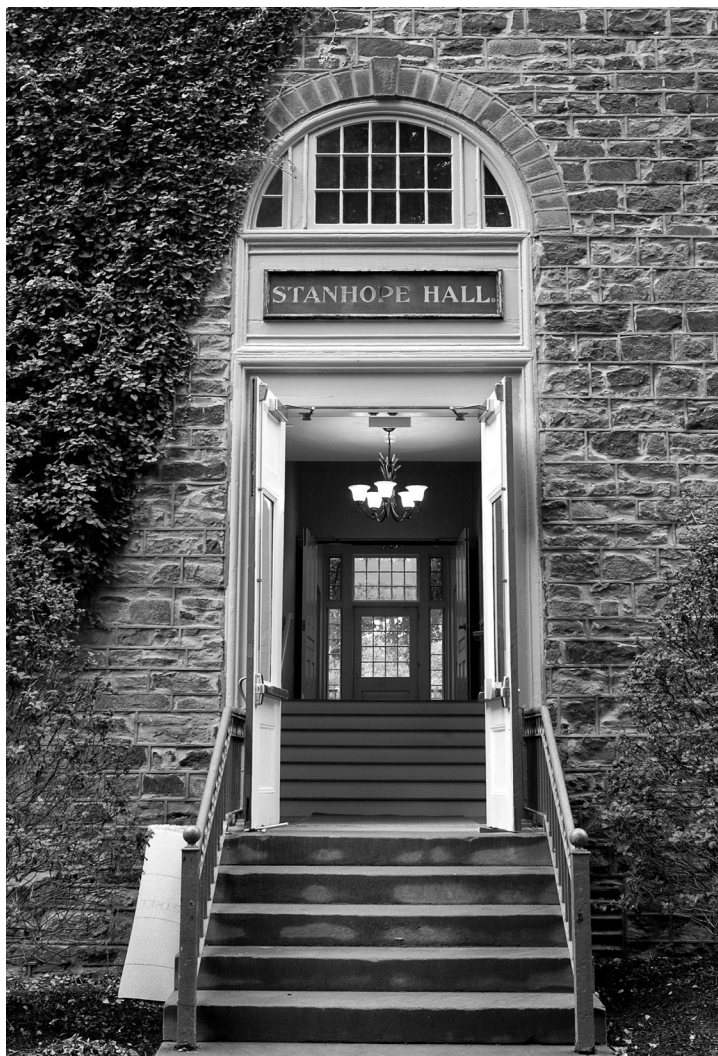
As President Shirley M. Tilghman, has declared,

“Of all the challenges that confront America, none is more profound than the struggle to achieve racial equality and understand the impact of race on the life and institutions of the United States.”

She added that it is incumbent on Princeton University to contribute to this effort through “research that yields invaluable insights into the nature of racial identity and social justice, and through education that trains new generations of leaders to solve problems that have persisted too long, both in this country and abroad.

The Center for African American Studies has been established in Stanhope Hall to assist in the fulfillment of this challenge.

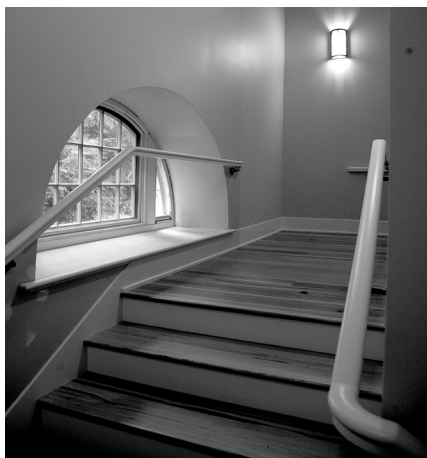




*Looking in Stanhope Hall's front door, September 2007.*



*Looking out of Stanhope Hall toward the front campus.*



## AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

### DIRECTORS

F. Sheldon Hackney	Jan. 1969 – Feb. 1970	
C. Sylvester Whitaker	Feb. 1970	
Badi G. Foster	1970–1973	
Howard F. Taylor	1973–1987	
Ruth Simmons	1985–1988	Acting
Cornel R. West	1988–1994	
Nell I. Painter	1990–1991	Acting
Arnold Rampersad	1994–1997	
Nell I. Painter	1997–2000	
Noliwe M. Rooks	2000–2001	Acting
Colin A. Palmer	2001–2002	Acting
Valerie A. Smith	2002–	
Eddie S. Glaude Jr.	2005–2006	Acting

## CORE FACULTY, 2007–08

Wallace Best

Professor, Department of Religion

Daphne Brooks

Associate Professor, Department of English

Anne Cheng

Professor, Department of English

Eddie Glaude Jr.

Professor, Department of Religion

Joshua Guild

Assistant Professor, Department of History

Angel Harris

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology

Melissa Harris-Lacewell

Associate Professor, Department of Politics

Tera Hunter

Professor, Department of History

Noliwe Rooks

Associate Director, Center for African American  
Studies

Carolyn Rouse

Associate Professor, Department of  
Anthropology

Valerie Smith

Woodrow Wilson Professor of Literature,  
Department of English; Director, Center for  
African American Studies

Cornel West

Class of 1943 University Professor of in the  
Center for African American Studies

ASSOCIATED FACULTY, 2007–08

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Laurence S. Rockefeller University Professor  
of Philosophy and the University Center for  
Human Values

Eduardo Cadava

Professor, Department of English

Paul DiMaggio

Professor, Department of Sociology

Mitchell Duneier

Professor, Department of Sociology

Simon Gikandi

Professor, Department of English

William Gleason

Associate Professor, Department of English

Hendrik Hartog

Professor, Department of History

Albert Raboteau

Henry Putnam Professor of Religion,  
Department of Religion

Judith Weisenfeld

Professor, Department of Religion

## AFFILIATED FACULTY, 2007–08

Rachael DeLue

Assistant Professor of Art and Archaeology

Susan Fiske

Eugene Higgins Professor of Psychology

Jennifer Greeson

Assistant Professor of English

Douglas Massey

Henry G. Bryant Professor of Sociology and  
Public Affairs, Woodrow Wilson School

William Massey

Edwin S. Wilsey Professor of Operations  
Research and Financial Engineering

Cecilia Rouse

Theodore A. Wells '29 Professor of Economics  
and Public Affairs; Director, Education  
Research Section

Nicole Shelton

Associate Professor of Psychology

Tracy K. Smith

Assistant Professor of Creative Writing,  
University Center for the Creative and  
Performing Arts

Winston O. Soboyejo

Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace  
Engineering and Princeton Institute for Science  
and Technology of Materials

## PROFESSORS EMERITI

Toni Morrison

Robert F. Goheen Professor, Emerita

Nell Painter

Edwards Professor of American History, Emerita

Howard Taylor

Professor of Sociology, Emeritus

## STAFF

Valerie A. Smith, Director

Noliwe M. Rooks, Associate Director

Carla M. Hailey Penn, Center Manager

Farah Bhopti, Center Office Support

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*Students at Princeton Inn College  
(later renamed Forbes College),  
circa 1983.*

## BLACK STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS, 2006–07

**AKWAABA.** Strives to stimulate interest in diverse cultures, political situations, and general knowledge of Africa.

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REVISED 10/16/07

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