

About CAS: Officially, the Center for African Studies (CAS) is a student-facing academic department that engages in interdisciplinary studies that engages in Africa and the factors that shape it. As an academic department, the Center for African Studies serves 350 students each week, hosts 120 events each year and has played an integral role in the experience of 88 fellowship recipients, 45 Masters students and 3,285 African language students over the course of its history.

The CAS community consists of the African students, students of Africa and everyone else who has sought and found community and academic interest in the space. CAS acts as a point of reference for many student groups including the Stanford African Students Association, Akwaaba (Stanford Ghanaian Students Association), Naija (Stanford Nigerian Students Association), Stanford Ethiopian and Eritrean Students Association, Stanford African Entrepreneurship Network and the African Business Club. CAS plays a central role in advising for these clubs as well as for individual students looking to study Africa, take part in fellowship or service programs and a host of other opportunities at Stanford.

The community of well over 300 students that has formed around CAS is distinctively unique in the way the Center for African Studies as an academic department and the African centered community have blended seamlessly creating a space in which community that engages in rigorous academic discourse both within the framework of African Studies, and outside of it on a daily basis and has become a home away from home for many students .

“For me, CAS is like **a sigh at the end of a long day**, when you return to the familiar warmth of **home or family** . Walking into CAS, I immediately feel **heard** , I feel **connected** and I feel **appreciated** ”
O. Lijadu, Political Science and Philosophy ‘17

Issue: In the summer of 2018, the building that CAS currently occupies in 100 Encina Commons is being retrofitted for Earthquakes and must be vacated. Thus CAS’ first move will be to a temporary space. However, CAS will not be allowed to move back into 100 Encina Commons. Our home has been bought by the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. Thus, CAS will be displaced again to a basement space in the summer of 2019 in Encina.

This basement space is severely disruptive to our community because it is:

- Split between 3 departments, two of which are purely academic centers, disallowing the vibrant and dynamic academic and community space that CAS has built over the years
- Set up as a group work space made up of sterile cubicles and white boards, no longer a student-facing layout
- Poor accessibility for students. Key card access would be needed to enter what is currently a dark
- IT center.

This space, and the two moves that come with it, are irreparably damaging to the current and future members of CAS and threaten the existence of this community. The lack of accessibility and the setup of the space make it wholly unsuitable for the community it serves . This move has come to a shock to many in the community. The move will destroy a vibrant and diverse community and does not align with Stanford ongoing emphasis on diversity and inclusivity.