

Biography of Reverend Eric Lewis Williams, PhD.

A native of Rockford, Illinois, Dr. Eric Williams holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications and Sociology from the University of Illinois at Chicago, a Master of Arts in Theological Studies from the McCormick Theological Seminary, the Master of Divinity degree from Duke University and a Doctorate of Philosophy in Religious Studies from the University of Edinburgh in the United Kingdom. Alongside of his academic credentials, Williams is an ordained minister of the Church of God in Christ.

Williams has taught history, religion and African American Studies at several institutions including: Western Theological Seminary; Ashland Theological Seminary (Detroit); Iowa State University; Boston College; and Harvard University. Williams currently serves as the Curator of Religion for the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture in Washington, D.C.

Williams' current research examines the meanings of religion within African American history and culture, and the role and influences of African religions in the Atlantic world. Williams' research and studies have taken him to the continents of Africa, South America, Europe, extensively throughout the continental United States, Mexico, and to several islands of the Caribbean. Williams considers himself a transatlantic commuter, a collector of words, and an emergent jazz-man in the world of ideas. Being deeply committed to both the life of the mind and the life of the Spirit, Williams desires to utilize his faith and learning to serve the church, the academy, and the broader society.