

**Form 201BC: Assessment Report Form for Instructional Programs (Spring 2015)**

Name Dr. Kelly Harris

Program: African American Studies

**A. Outcomes**

1. Demonstrate a high level of knowledge in the subject fields of African American Studies as specified in the African American Studies Matrix (attached).
2. Evaluate the complexity of the historical and Contemporary African American experience within both a national and global context.
3. Use interdisciplinary academic preparation in African American Studies for further graduate education in African American Studies and various other liberal arts disciplines and diverse careers in both the public and private sector.

**B. Method of Assessment**

<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Learning Outcome</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
1. Final Exam/paper from AFAM 1000, 1010, or 1020	1, 2,	70+
2. Final Exam/paper from AFAM 2020 or 3020	1, 2, 4, 6	A or B
3. A Term Paper from AFAM 3500 or upper level AFAM major course	1, 2, 6	A or B
4. Senior Assessment Portfolio	1, 2, 3	Satisfied or Very Satisfied

5. Alumni Survey

1, 2, 3

Satisfied or Very  
Satisfied

**African American Studies Assessment Matrix (developed Spring 2008)**

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1. Students should be familiar with the foundations of the discipline of African American Studies and recognize key figures and events in the intellectual genealogy and development of the field.

**Courses: AFAM 1000, 3010, 3030, 3500, 4000;**

2. Students should have a working knowledge and understanding of the general chronology of the global African experience, with particular emphasis on the period of late modernity and the experience of African people in the United States.

**Courses: AFAM 1000, 2010, 2020, 2040, 2050, 2100, 2450, 2900, 3030, 3040, 3500, 3510, 3520; HIST 2710, 2830, 2840; POL 3510; ENG 2910, 4322, 4382; ANTH 2120; ART 4121; GEOG 3060; SOC 4300; MUS 4040; PSYC 3200; ELCF 4610.**

3. Students should be familiar with the theories, methods of inquiry, techniques, and procedures employed in African American Studies.

**Courses: AFAM 1000, 2000, 2020, 3010, 3500, 4000**

4. Students should be familiar with understanding and theorizing the universal abstractions of oppression, resistance, and liberation in studying phenomena or solving human problems, especially as they relate to the African American experience.

**Courses: AFAM 1000, 1020, 2010, 2020, 2040, 2050, 2100, 2450, 2900, 3030, 3040, 3500, 3510, 3520; HIST 2710, 2830, 2840; POL 3510; ENG 2910, 4322, 4382; ANTH 2120; ART 4121; GEOG 3060; SOC 4300; MUS 4040; PSYC 3200; ELCF 4610.**

5. Students should demonstrate critical thinking skills for studying institutional dimensions of Africana life and activity (i.e., environment, history, economic organization, social organization, political organization, ideology, aesthetics, language and literature and the dynamics of cultural continuity and change).

**Courses: AFAM 1000, 1020, 2010, 2020, 2040, 2050, 2100, 2450, 2900, 3030, 3040, 3500, 3510, 3520; HIST 2710, 2830, 2840; POL 3510, 3520; ENG 2910, 4322, 4382; ANTH 2120; ART 4121; GEOG 3060; SOC 4300; MUS 4040; PSYC 3200; ELCF 4610.**

6. Students should have a working knowledge of the African American historical experience as a discrete element of world history and demonstrate sensitivity to a comparative approach in understanding the impact of cultural differences on human interaction.

**Courses: AFAM 1000, 1020, 2010, 2020, 2040, 2050, 2450, 2900, 3030, 3040, 3500, 3510.**

7. Students should understand basic facts, principles, and methods in other disciplines, especially as they relate to African American subject matter, including history, political science, literature, sociology, anthropology, and geography, and the arts.

**Courses: 9 hours of elective courses listed under four rubrics: 1) African American history and politics, 2) African American literature, 3) Black music, art, and theatre, and 4) Black Africa.**

8. Students should understand national and global issues related to issues of ethnic and cultural diversity.

**Courses: AFAM 1000, 1020, 2010, 2040, 2050, 3030, 3040.**

9. Students should develop reading, writing, and critical thinking skills.

**Courses: AFAM 1000, 1020, 2000, 2010, 2020, 2040, 2050, 2450, 2900, 3000, 3010, 3030, 3040, 3500, 3510, 4000.**

10. Students should develop critical thinking skills and be able to understand, compare, and evaluate competing theoretical perspectives.

**Courses: AFAM 1000, 1020, 2000, 2010, 2020, 2450, 2900, 3000, 3010, 3030, 3040, 3500, 3510, 3520, 4000.**

11. Students should be computer literate and acquire basic literacy for engaging in qualitative and quantitative research.

**Courses: AFAM 1000, 1020, 2000, 2010, 2020, 2040, 2050, 2450, 2900, 3000, 3010, 3030, 3040, 3500, 3510, 3520, 4000.**

12. Students should develop research and library skills through the use of important bibliographic reference tools that display a wide variety of

primary and secondary source material on the African-American experience.

**Courses: AFAM 1000, 1020, 2000, 2010, 2020, 2450, 2900, 3000, 3010, 3030, 3040, 3500, 3510, 3520, 4000.**

### **EXPLANATION OF ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS**

#### **INSTRUMENT #1**

Final exam or major assignment from AFAM 1000 or 1020.

#### **INSTRUMENT #2**

Final exam/paper from AFAM 2020, the first required 2000-level course that satisfies African American Studies major requirements or AFAM 3020 or 3030 the term paper, a grade of A or B earned.

#### **INSTRUMENT #3**

Term paper from preferably AFAM 3500 (Seminar in African American Studies) or from any upper level course (2000 or 3000) used to fulfill part of the requirements for the major in African American Studies. For the term paper, a grade of A or B earned. These high grades are demonstrated in the following ways:

**Grade of A:** An A paper is characterized by outstanding informative research and writing marked by superior readability and competent handling of content in African American Studies. The substance and organization follow a clear, logical sequence that makes the information easily accessible to the reader. The purpose is clearly expressed, and the selected details of the assignment reflect this purpose. The grammar, mechanics, and format of the research paper are flawless. Words are chosen and sentences are constructed to make the information easily understandable.

**Grade of B:** A B paper is characterized by excellent informative research and writing that successfully fulfills the requirements but contains some relatively minor, yet significant weaknesses. Although the research and writing is essentially well organized, the statement of purpose and/or the handling of African American Studies content is flawed. Although sentences are grammatically correct, their structure and/or length sometimes cause the reader to work unnecessarily hard in deciphering meaning. Some evidence of ambiguous or vague wording hinders precise communication. Evidence of some grammar, mechanics, and/or format flaws interferes with reading comprehension.

**Grade of C:** A C paper is characterized by satisfactory research and writing that is generally effective but contains some major weaknesses. Although satisfactorily written, the purpose is not clear and/or the body of the assignment is not clearly organized. There are fundamental problems in some aspect of the handling of African American Studies content in the paper. Frequent awkward sentences often make information and meaning difficult to extract. Wording interferes with readability, but the reader can still discern the basic meaning. Repeated errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or format mar the paper.

#### **INSTRUMENT #4**

An assessment portfolio submitted to the Department of African American Studies at the time of graduation. The portfolio should consist of a current resume, personal statement and a table of contents. The resume is a chronological account (from recent to past events) of pertinent information including ones full name, current mailing address, phone number, and email, a brief statement of one's career objectives, educational background, employment history, organizational affiliations, awards, any special technical skills, and the names of at least three individuals who can provide references. The personal statement provides an overview of the students experience while at Chicago State University, especially in the African American Studies major. The personal statement should explain 1) why one chose to major in African American Studies and 2) how well certain courses and experiences in African American Studies have met your academic goals and serve as preparation for the next step after undergraduate school (i.e. graduate studies or the job market). The table of contents should provide a detailed description of the coursework to be submitted from Assessment instruments #1, #2, and #3, demonstrating progressive academic achievement in 1000 level, 2000 level, and 3000 level course work in African American Studies. Each entry should include the course number and title, and the title of the assignment.

#### **INSTRUMENT #5**

Within one year after graduation, the coordinator will contact you to request information about your experience after completing the program, and in particular, to find out how well your education at Chicago State facilitated success in your subsequent occupation or pursuit of further education, as well as to what degree your education has instilled an ongoing interest in the study and appreciation of African American Studies. You will be mailed Alumni survey instruments designed to measure your level of satisfaction with the African American Studies program in academically preparing you for future academic and/or job success.

#### **C. Assessment Findings/Interpretations/Conclusion**

The Department of African American Studies has merged with Geography, History, Sociology, and Anthropology to form the GHSAA department. The African American Studies program has two full-time faculty members, of which one is tenured. African American Studies is unique in the College of Arts and Sciences because it is significantly interdisciplinary, allowing student majors to select course offerings in various departments in addition to African American Studies to fulfill the requirements of the major. During the period from 2006-2015, an analysis of data show that African American Studies had only one First-time Full-time freshman enrolled during the Fall 2010 semester. Fall enrollment for African American Studies majors from 2006 to 2014 is as follows: 10 (2006), 10 (2007), and 12 (2008), 15 (2009), 15 (2010), 15 (2011), 11 (2012), 20 (2013), and 24 (2014). This data indicates that students who pursue a major in African American Studies are either transfer students or students who have decided to change their major. The department formulated the assessment plan during the Spring semester of 2008, one year after the beginning of the tenure of the new Chairperson, and began to institute the assessment

instruments in Fall semester of 2009. This assessment report marks the third year of the second year trend data reporting cycle. Students again were told of the various assessment instruments to be included in their respective assessment portfolios at the beginning of the academic year. During the 2013-2014 academic year assessment instruments #3 and #5 were utilized. For instrument #3 AFAM 3020 (The Great Debate) was utilized. We selected this course because six (6) majors were registered for the class. Four out of the six students met or exceeded the criteria. One of the students will have to retake the class. For Instrument #1 we utilized AFAM 1010 (which is now AFAM 3030). Five majors were registered for the class and four out of five met or exceeded the requirements for instrument #1 ( $\geq 70\%$ ). Two students earned an A on their final exam; one student scored a B and one student earned a grade of C. One student failed the final exam and will have to retake the course. In the third assessment instrument, the department surveyed eight recent graduates and found the following: Two graduates successfully completed Masters programs. One graduate is in the final year of their M.A. program and recently completed an internship in Public Relations with a firm in California. One graduate continues to teach in the Chicago Public School system and two graduates from the 2013-2014 academic year were preparing to take the GRE and apply for graduate school. One graduate from the 2013-2014 academic year had no plans for graduate school or clearly identified career opportunities. Finally, our spring 2015 graduate will be attending graduate school in the fall.

#### **D. Decision-making Using Findings**

After considering the findings, particularly our alumni survey, we have concluded to restructure our student preparation for graduation. Rather than collect a portfolio at the time of graduation, we are now asking students to provide a portfolio shortly after declaring African American Studies as their major. This will allow us to provide greater guidance for the students as they prepare for graduate school and/or seeking employment after graduation. We have already begun this process by actively seeking out internships for our students and bringing in a graduate school recruiter from Clark Atlanta University.

#### **E. Demonstrating Improved Learning**

In the collected papers and final exams of students in 3020 and 1010 (now 3030) we have noticed a high level of comprehension, synthesis, and analysis. Simply put: our students are writing better. We believe this is attributed to our students engaging the material in a variety of ways (i.e. readings, lectures, essays).

#### **F. Publicizing Student Learning**

The program collected information from eight alumnus this year and plans to publicize this information on the web site and other internal and external print materials. Phone calls were made and emails were sent out to alumni requesting this information. The program

will continue to seek this information from alumni. The program has collected information to document student learning in the context of the student activities of the African American Studies Association, the departmental club. This information is ready to be posted on the web site at the beginning of the next academic year.

### **G. Accomplishments and Challenges**

The program has accepted assessment as an important component of the teaching and learning process and looks forward to using the information to continuously improve student learning. The program continues to be understaffed. There are only two full-time faculty members and only one tenured member. The other full-time faculty member is non-tenure track. This should not be the case for a program that is growing and that have two courses that meet university or college requirements. While we remain the largest program in terms of majors in Illinois, we also have the smallest number of faculty members. Olive Harvey college, one of the City colleges of Chicago, even has four full-time faculty members. The program continues to be challenged with a small program budget which impacts the ability to enhance student learning and creative recruitment and retention. Student enrollment numbers have grown for the past two years and could increase with more institutional support from the university. This growth has occurred despite decreasing university enrollment.