

Undergraduate Academic Program Review Template

Name of Program: **African and African American Studies**

Name and contact information for person completing the review: **Professor Paul Griffin**

Indicate whether the program is

on campus

online

both

NCA Criterion 1—Mission and Integrity

NCA Criterion 2—Preparing for the Future

NCA Criterion 3—Student Learning and Effective Teaching

NCA Criterion 4—Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

NCA Criterion 5—Engagement and Service

I. Program Mission (NCA Criterion 1 and Criterion 5)

? program mission statement (should identify constituency served) (1A, 1B):

The primary mission of the African and African Studies Program is multilayered: (1) to promote and provide to Wright State undergraduates a critical and in-depth understanding of the history and experiences of persons of African descent, specifically as the history and experiences have played out in America; (2) to be a university-wide multidisciplinary program that provides courses that not only serve its major and minor but also complement, in varying ways and degrees, other certificate, minor, and degree programs across the university; (3) to promote and contribute to Wright State University's efforts for faculty diversity through the AFS ancillary Visiting Scholars Program; to help make more visible and palpable Wright State University's stated commitment to diversity, including in its curriculum.

The African and African American Studies (AFS) program originally was housed in the Provost Office but was moved to the College of Liberal Arts as a part of the college's humanities constituencies when so requested by former Dean Mary Ellen Mazey.

As a program without its own faculty, AFS, like other programs, relies on the teaching, research, and service of participating faculty to help accomplish its mission. By teaching the historic experiences of African Americans, students are brought to learn how social, racial, economic, political, educational, religious, and other material realities have all coalesced to give the lives, struggles, achievements, and contributions of Black people a history that is at once uniquely African-American and American. AFS strives to help produce graduates who are equipped to speak intelligently and authoritatively about the Black experience in and of itself as well as alongside experiences of other unique racial, gender, ethnic, and sexual preference histories that help comprise human diversity in America. Such ability, AFS believes, is a key foundation of an informed citizenry in a global world.

consistency with university mission (1C, 1E):

At the time the Ohio Board of regents approved the AFS major in 1999-2000, Wright State University's mantra was a "Metropolitan University" and a catalyst for academic excellence in the Greater Miami Valley. As a part of the university, ASF shares this mantra. Hence it provides students an opportunity to pursue rigorous scholarship that, in turn, will give them an intellectual background that can facilitate their becoming actively and creatively involved in their particular communities--local, state, and national levels.

? consistency with college mission (1C, 1E):

The College of Liberal Arts' mission is to provide its students a comprehensive undergraduate and graduate course of study that will enable them to become informed and upstanding citizens. AFS shares this mission. In addition to its major and minor requirements, AFS annually contributes three sections of AFS 200 to the Wright State University General Education program. Although AFS is a program and hence has no faculty of its own, faculty who contribute courses to the program pursue scholarship and professional service that enable the college to fulfill its mission.

? consistency of goals, learning objectives with program mission (1C):

The driving goals behind the creation of the AFS major were: (1) to make the WSU curriculum truly reflective of the university's mantra of being a "Metropolitan University;" (2) to provide an opportunity for major study, research, and service in a field that was heretofore nonexistent at our university; (3) to serve--especially through its Visiting Scholars Program--as an impetus and concrete mechanism for the university's goal of creating a "diverse" faculty.

? extent to which program prepares students to "live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society" (4C):

AFS fully supports diversity across all lines. This support is seen in course offerings that study the African Diaspora as it has unfolded not only in America but across the world. It is also seen in AFS' support of the Bolinga Black Cultural Resource Center, The Asian Hispanic Native American Center, and The Women's Center. Finally, students see and participate in diversity through their contact with faculty who come from diverse geographic backgrounds.

? extent to which program, through its curriculum and co-curriculum, fosters civic engagement and social responsibility (5A, 5C)

All AFS courses encourage civic involvement and social responsibility. One course, however--AFS 300--was consciously designed to expose students to the firsthand accounts of men and women whose work is in real-life civic and social areas. Because of staffing issues, this course is no longer offered on a regular basis. Additionally, although it no longer exists, from the time the major was granted by the Ohio Board of Regents, AFS directed the Wright State University *National Conference on the Future Shape of Black Religion*. This Conference's purpose was to bring to our campus and the broader Miami Valley Communities national and international leaders who writings and public activities exhibit civic engagements and social responsibilities. The

Conference annually attracted over 1000-1500 attendees to its Friday evening and all-day Saturday programs. As a part of its outreach work, AFS over the years has provided--through its collaborations with churches, the Dayton Public Schools, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the NAACP, United Way, and the Urban League--opportunities for its students as well as students across the university to gain first hand experience in such settings. The *First Grade Academic Improvement Initiative (FGAI)* which was a partnership between AFS, Corinthian Baptist Church and the Dayton Public School System is one notable example of how AFS seeks out and encourages students to become involved in co-curricular activities in the broader communities. From 2006 to 2007, FGAII had students from across our university serving as tutors in math, reading, science, and writing for first grade DPS students.

? extent to which program fosters life-long learning (4A)

With emphasis upon critical and rigorous study, AFS strives to encourage life-long learning in two ways. On the one hand, it provides students with tools that should enable them to continue the search for knowledge throughout their lives. On the other hand, AFS places a high premium upon teaching its students that education has long been invaluable not only in majority situations but also and, especially in the African American community.

? interrelationship with general education (1C, 4B)

African American Studies supports General Education by contributing its AFS 200 course to the GE curriculum. At least one section of AFS 200 is offered each quarter. Faculty who participate with AFS also contribute courses to General Education through their home departments.

? interrelationship with other WSU programs (1C)

AFS works with the Women's Studies program, the Bolinga Black Cultural Resources Center, the Women's Center, and the Asian Hispanic Native American Center. AFS also cross lists courses with the Department of Religion and the Department of Political Science. AFS has established collaboration with Dean Berkwood Farmer in the Raj Soin Business College with regards to AFS' Visiting Scholars Program.

? community engagement (5C, 5D)

The AFS Director is regularly involved with broader Miami Valley communities. Community organizations, civic and governmental agencies, churches, the Dayton Public Schools, United Theological Seminary are some of the entities with which he frequently interacts as a professional consultant and/or public scholar. On the national level, the director frequently contributes as a public scholar to columns dealing with African American figures and issues that are written by Ms. Megan Scott who is a syndicated columnist for the Associated Press.

II. Program Description (NCA Criterion 2)

- ? brief history of program, emphasizing past seven years (e.g., changes in administration, change in program direction, new degrees, minors, or certificates, de- or re-activation of program), including recommendations of any previous internal and/or external program reviews

As already stated, the purpose in creating the AFS minor in 1989 and the major in 2000 was to fill a gap in the university's academic fields and--through its Visiting Scholars program--to bring nationally known African American faculty to teach (from several weeks to one year, depending upon circumstances) in colleges where such presence is absent or underrepresented. The program was removed from the Provost's Office and placed in the College of Liberal Arts in 2005 during the tenure of Dean Mary Ellen Mazey. This change in administrative oversight altered the original mission of AFS and its Visiting Scholars component as university-wide programs whose mission included helping facilitate the university efforts at recruitment of diverse faculty, especially in colleges where such need exists. AFS is presently in the process of working with the Boonshoft School of Medicine and the College of Education and Human Services to establish certificate programs in each of these colleges. AFS is also working with the Department of Economics in the Raj Soin College of Business to create a minor field of study in Race and Gender in Business.

- ? number of students served:

Since 2002, AFS 200 has served approximately 840 students. The other two courses belonging strictly to the program and not to other departments--AFS 402 and AFS 403--have served approximately 300 + students over the past seven years. A count of students served in courses that are housed in other departments was not determined.

- ? number of majors:

AFS has averaged seven (7) majors per year for each of the past seven years.

- ? number of minors:

AFS has averaged approximately eight minors per year for each of the past seven years.

- ? number enrolled in certificate program (if applicable): **N/A**

- ? number of faculty:

As a program and not a department, AFS has only one faculty member and this is its director. All other participating faculty are drawn from the departments in which they are tenured. These faculty permit the relevant courses that they teach for their home departments to be a part of the body of courses that comprise the curriculum of African and African American Studies.

- ? student/faculty ratio, average class size:

Except for AFS 200 which is a GE course that averages about 40 students, the average class size of the AFS' foundation courses fluctuates between 18 and 33 students. This ratio is within Wright State's norm.

- ? balance in rank of program faculty:

I Full Professor

? rank of number of staff:

2000-2003 = 1 Secretary, full time.

2004-present = 1 Administrative Specialist, 50% time.

? diversity (gender, race, ethnicity) of majors, faculty, and staff:

Majors (by gender) 2008 = 7 males and 7 females

Faculty (by race) 2008 = 9 African Americans, 4 Caucasians, 1 African, 1 Indian

2000 = 9 African Americans, 5 Caucasians, 1 African, 1 Indian

Faculty (by gender) 2008 = 8 females, 6 males

2000 = 9 females, 6 males

Staff (by race and gender) 2008 = 1 African American female

2000 = 1 Caucasian

? budget:

The operating budget for the AFS program has remained unchanged since 2000, except for a significant reduction in the Visiting Scholars budget this past year.

? facilities and equipment/instrumentation:

Most classrooms' equipment meets the needs of the AFS faculty and program. Classroom shortage or occasional sub-par classroom location does impact AFS.

? technology and information resources and services:

Technology and information resources and services are used by participating AFS faculty. No courses are offered on-line.

? program cost:

The program's cost has not changed from 2000 when the major was approved.

III. Program Effectiveness (NCA Criterion 3 and Criterion 4)

? achievement of student learning outcomes (Please summarize program assessment findings for past five years and subsequent improvements to program) **(3A)**

African and African American Studies gives special emphasis to the following learning outcomes: students will be effective writers, students will demonstrate ability to engage in critical analysis of information, and students will be able to produce papers that are well-researched and rigorous. All AFS foundation courses are writing intensive and hence provide students the opportunity to learn how to engage in effective writing. The Senior Research paper is another place where students can continue to improve their writing skills. This paper also requires students to demonstrate ability to critically think and carefully analyze documents.

Over the past five years, AFS' assessment of its effectiveness has shown that students are meeting the following objectives:

1. Students are either finding new employment upon graduation or continuing in jobs they held while studying here.
2. Students--both majors and minors--regularly gain admission into Ph.D. or Masters Degree programs. Since 2000, AFS, working closely with Ms. Debra Winburn , Assistant Director of Career Services and Wright State's liaison with the *Institute for the Recruitment of Teachers program*, has had six students accepted into Ph.D. programs.

student retention rate (3A):

AFS has not formally tracked the retention rate of its majors.

? number of graduates annually (3A):

AFS has averaged over 1 graduate per year since 2000.

? placement of graduates (e.g., employment, graduate study) (3A):

As already said above, AFS graduates have either continued employment in jobs they held while studying here or go on to advanced degree study. One graduate has become a manager with Wal-Mart near Cleveland, Ohio. Another graduate, minor, has become a high-level administrator in the office of the Governor of Indiana.

? teaching effectiveness (3B, 3D):

AFS faculty are effective teachers in their home departments and hence in AFS. The Director recently was recognized by the Wright State University Writing Across the Curriculum Program for his "Excellence in teaching with Writing."

? faculty productivity (e.g., publications, grants) (4A):

Again, AFS as a program has no faculty of its own except for the Director. His publication record since 2000 includes one nationally and internationally heralded book, one book chapter, a number of book reviews, and several comments\consultations as a "public scholar" for articles written by Megan Scott—an Associated Press syndicate columnist.

? interrelations of program's teaching, research, service activities (3A-D, 4A-C, 5 A-C):

Faculty participating with AFS conduct teaching, research and service for their home departments. The courses they contribute to AFS reflects this teacher, scholar, and service expertise.

? integration of technology into curriculum and instruction (3C)

AFS has not offered on-line or web-based courses. Some participating faculty use multimedia technologies, including PowerPoint.

? description of how program ensures that it is always current (4C)

Faculty participate in national conferences as a part of the requirements of their home departments. Their research and publications also contribute to their currency in their fields.

- ? comparative advantage” (e.g., distinctiveness in terms of students served, differentiation from programs offered at other regional institutions, strengths attributable to collaborative/interdisciplinary nature of program, etc.):

AFS serves a student population whose interest in major and minor study in African and African American history otherwise would not be served on our campus. Except for Sinclair Community College, no other university or college in our area offers this study. The closest would be The Ohio State University.

AFS finds its mission of helping produce intelligent and contributing citizens greatly aided by its ability to call on the knowledge and expertise of faculty from several different disciplines.

If the program is online, respond to the following questions (**drawn from NCA Best Practices**): **N/A**

- ? Is the online program taught by the same faculty as the on-campus program?
- ? How do the retention and graduation rates of the online and on-campus programs compare?
- ? How does the achievement of learning outcomes by online students compare with those by on-campus students?
- ? How does student evaluation of instruction for online classes compare to that for on-campus courses?
- ? How does the online program provide for appropriate interaction (synchronous or asynchronous) between students and instructor and among students?
- ? How does access to academic and technical support programs compare for online and on-campus students and for online and on-campus faculty?
- ? How does the program provide a coherent plan for student access to all courses necessary to complete the program (or provide clear notification of requirements not included in electronic offerings)?
- ? How have issues of workload, compensation, and ownership of intellectual property been addressed by the program?
- ? How have issues of security of personal information been addressed?

IV. Program Needs/Areas in Need of Improvement

Summarize the program needs (e.g., personnel, facilities, equipment) identified in this program review and the areas in need of improvement:

Staffing is always an issue in the academe. AFS is no different here. Faculty who would be housed in AFS would be able to more widely promote the program; would have a more intense interest in its growth; and would be more accessible to students. Another notable need is for academic advisors to make students more aware of the opportunity to study and pursue degrees in African and African American studies on this campus. Still another need is for a conversation with the appropriate persons about whether AFS could better meet its original goals and objectives if it was returned to its original location as a university-wide program, housed in the Provost Office.

V. Proposed Improvement Action Plan

Summarize the actions that will be taken in response to the findings of this program assessment. Provide a timeline that indicates how these changes will be implemented and assessed over the next seven years:

As AFS looks to the implementation of two Certificate Programs (Boonshoft School of Medicine and College of Education and Human Services) and one Minor in Minority and Gender in Business (Raj Soin Business College), there will be a need for an additional full time faculty-administrative position to help teach courses as well as help administer the program.