

# RESTRUCTURING PROPOSAL: AFRICANA STUDIES

Submitted by: Dr. George H. Junne, Jr.  
Africana Studies  
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### **Proposal Narrative:**

The process of the restructuring of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences has been confusing at times and has generated some interesting submissions. Plans seem to range from those who, in a Crusader mentality, want to build a fortress to keep out the “infidels,” to others who have engaged in some conversations to see how some units might be able to work together. A few ideas emerged were so humorous that I have jokingly proposed that there be a School of Africana Studies. During reorganizations, at least one in which I was involved on another campus, there were clear definitions of what constitutes a college, a school, a department, a program, a center, etc. In addition, it was clearly defined what ramifications and powers/restrictions are associated with those nomenclatures. This lack of direction has led to more confusion and wasted time than it should.

### **Proposal:**

Under the new structure, Africana Studies would officially revert to its department status. Under *Charting the Future*, “departments” were changed to “programs” without any rational thought given to the implications of such alterations. In essence, there was a name change with “coordinators” who performed exactly the same job as “chairs.” Problems have arisen with hiring faculty and also, with students having the word “program” rather than “department” on their UNC documentation. In addition, departments can usually tenure their faculty and typically, programs cannot. Therefore, since Africana Studies has not operated in any way different under the new nomenclature, we should revert to the Department of Africana Studies.

### **Rationale:**

First, it is important to define Africana Studies:

**Africana Studies at UNC is an interdisciplinary national and transnational program that explores the complex experiences related to the histories, cultures, identities, politics, institutions, literatures, economies and theoretical expressions of Africans and those in the African Diaspora worldwide.**

Essentially, Africana Studies is multidisciplinary as well as cross-disciplinary, and is expanding to international study and research. We have been on the UNC campus since 1969 in its embryonic form to become one of the earliest Black Studies/Africana Studies departments in the US. As noted in our recent program evaluation, our proposed expansion into international areas was pointed out as a positive. We can no longer be viewed under the parochial lens of studying only African American history and culture. In fact, Africana Studies has been developing cross-campus collaborations to better benefit not only AFS faculty, but also, our students.

Current study and research now include the history of Afro-Turks and Afro-Germans, African peoples in Mexico and the Caribbean, and the political history of modern Somalia. The UNC Black Alumni Association will be making some funds available for AFS students to study overseas. The new secondary education teaching emphasis will also be able to provide limited overseas teaching experiences besides those opportunities in the United States.

### **Organization:**

As we slowly expand toward obtaining the desirable number of full-time and permanent number of faculty members to fulfill its mission, Africana Studies continues to operate as a department. A faculty “chair” is elected for a three-year term and we have an administrative assistant whom we now share. Under the new structure, that chair should have the same rights/privileges/restrictions as any other chair. Further, the chair should still have the one course release per year, but the richly deserved stipend should be reintroduced, as well as the summer stipend.

**Degree Offerings:**

Africana Studies has the following undergraduate major and minor programs, all of which have international aspects:

1. Africana Studies B.A.
2. Africana Studies B.A., Secondary Teaching Emphasis: Social Science Endorsement
3. Africana Studies Minor

**Current Personnel:**

Although Africana Studies falls short of the full-time FTE that the President’s Planning Council Subcommittee 1 has recommended for a unit to obtain department status, it should be noted that faculty who have left UNC have not been replaced. AFS has had no control over that situation. Hermon George, Leslie and Junne teach full-time (3 classes a semester) while Boyce and Fleming-Fife teach \_ time for AFS. Gardner and Bell teach one or two classes as needed. At the same time, our credit-hour production is significant.

|                         |                                       |                    |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Dr. Travis Boyce        | Asst. Professor                       | Tenure track       |
| Dr. Anita Fleming-Rife  | Full Professor                        | Visiting Professor |
| Dr. Hermon George Jr.   | Full Professor                        | Tenured            |
| Dr. George H. Junne Jr. | Full Professor                        | Tenured            |
| Dr. Reo Leslie Jr.      | LMFT, LPC, CAC III, ACS, RPT-S, DAACS |                    |

Part-time instructors:

Mitch Gardener  
James Bell

**Budget:**

Africana Studies has an established budget but under the proposed structure, its supervision and control should be transferred to AFS, to have the same controls as any other departments. Further, we request that the budget amount be more realistic to encompass all known operating expenses, such as full telephone costs, so that we are not constantly running a false deficit each year.

**Placement:**

Since it appears there are at least a couple proposed configurations for the School of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, I can address only certain aspects. Africana Studies should remain in the School of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, along with Women’s Studies and the new Modern Languages and International Studies De-

partment. When AFS was provided with the space in Candelaria 0190, we invited Women's Studies to "move in" with us, because they were also searching for office space. That has been a positive relationship over the years, and with their ideas of expanding into international aspects of women's studies/feminism, it offers more opportunities for further collaboration.

With Africana Studies pushing both for more international studies programs and for students taking a second language, an association with the School of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies only seems logical. Moreover, AFS has been discussing the introduction of an African language or Arabic as part of its course offerings. We have also made contact with two African universities for summer study.

**Timeline:**

July 1, 2009 Africana Studies becomes the Department of Africana Studies with the current coordinator appointed interim chair until the faculty election in early September. The appointment will be for three years. For the next cycle, the chair will be elected in the latter part of spring semester for the following three academic years. Appropriate signatory authority should be transferred at this time as well. The new department will be housed in Candelaria 0190, where it has its offices.