

**Department of Africana Studies  
University of Michigan-Flint**

**I. Intellectual Framework of Discipline**

Africana Studies is primarily a culture-based discipline which interrogates Africana people's experiences. These experiences range from earliest human civilizations to the tragic forced migration, displacement, and uprooting and enslavement of African peoples. The intellectual framework that sets Africana Studies apart from other disciplines is its exploration of subject areas from the perspective of African people's cosmologies, interests, and envisioned destinies. The foundation of the discipline rests on an understanding and appreciation of African worldviews and philosophies of life as the starting point for all Africana intellectual inquiry. This approach is informed by the need to liberate Africana scholarship from models and approaches derived from European knowledge systems and historical interpretations. The basic tenet that informs this people and culture-centered approach is that people carry their cultures with them, regardless of how far they may be moved from their historic homelands. Retention is, in part, aided by a number of social, political, and economic influences-including apartheid and segregation. African peoples have utilized their cultural foundation as a critical vehicle with which to affirm their humanity (e.g. African American church, social and political organizations, pan Africanist movements, etc).

**II. Theoretical and Philosophical Approach of Discipline**

The Department of Africana Studies is guided by the principle of respect and appreciation for Africana indigenous knowledge systems. Scholars are called upon to interrogate indigenous philosophies and survival strategies. The discipline of Africana Studies is informed by new theories and methodologies in analyzing human dynamics from the perspectives of lived experience of African peoples and societies. The theories of cultural continuity, assimilation, and reconstruction are critical to understanding the social and political dynamics of modernity. Such theories suggests that African cultural processes are undergoing an ongoing process of defining, redefining, and responding to forces within the global capitalist system. Such theories have made it possible for Africana scholars to examine and interrogate the African world experience from antiquity to the present. Moreover, the theory of cultural processes permits Africana scholars to fully gain insights into the human dynamics of conquest, domination and subordination of person-hood, as well as the consequence of experiencing dehumanization, victimization, and the intellectual assault against African humanity.

### [[A]]III. Mission Statement

The Department of Africana Studies at the University of Michigan-Flint exists to prepare students for the ever-demanding need to engage and to function successfully in a diverse society. In addition to providing an understanding of the histories, experiences, and contributions of the peoples of Africa and the African Diaspora, the Department supports a well-rounded education in the tradition of the liberal arts and sciences and its range of course offerings extend into education, health, policy, and management. The Department of Africana Studies is a multi-disciplinary unit dedicated to the production of cultural workers who would help transform communities into environments that are democratic, patrons of the arts, and economically sound. The spirit of inquiry and careful scholarship are the hallmarks of the Department's approach to the various disciplines that comprise Africana Studies.

The Department is first and foremost concerned with quality instruction that leads to a better understanding of the historical and contemporary dynamics of the African world.

The Department exists:

- to provide an excellent university education while challenging and stimulating students to contribute to the development of their communities' cultural, aesthetic, and economic environments;
- to generate new knowledge and research opportunities within the field of Africana Studies;
- to serve the university's external community with programming that contributes to life long education.

### IV. Programs

Housed within the College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Africana Studies features a major in the **General Program** leading to the B.A.

### [[B]]V. Educational Outcomes

General Program

Upon successful completion of the program of study students should have acquired the skills, knowledge, and/or abilities to:

- conduct independent research on selected Africana topics
- conduct a power analysis of a social/civil/institutional milieu
- write a critical essay using secondary sources
- communicate orally the histories of African and African Diaspora peoples
- use technology to advance professional and personal goals
- recognize the major contribution Africans and Diaspora people made to the development of world civilizations
- organize community groups

## [[C]] VI. Assessment Methods

Student outcomes are assessed via multiple instruments and at various times during the instructional careers of majors. Assessment instruments include:

- The Administration of the Assessment of General Knowledge and the Student Survey Questionnaires
- Portfolio Maintenance

These instruments are employed during the start, middle, and end of the students' instructional careers. Additionally, an Assessment Coordinator is appointed each year to track progress, maintain records and student files, and coordinate the distribution of instruments specific to the various levels of students' progress.

### Administration of Assessment of General Knowledge

The General Knowledge Questionnaire is largely designed to assess whether we have met instructional goals that lead to successful student educational outcomes. The questions found on the instrument cover a wide range of areas in African/Diaspora knowledge. As a measure of competency there are certain relevant movements, philosophies, people, and geographical locations all students should have knowledge of upon completion of the course of instruction in Africana Studies.

The General Knowledge Questionnaire is administered twice: at the completion of the required course AFA/HIS 230 Africa to the 1870s and at the completion of the senior seminar AFA 490. A score of 70% or above indicates satisfactory progress at the sophomore and junior levels. A score of 80% or above indicates proficiency at the senior level of instruction.

### Administration of the Student Survey Questionnaire

The Student Survey Questionnaire is designed to assess students' attitudes toward instruction and progress made in subject areas. Students will be administered the questionnaire twice: at the end of the course AFA 220 and as a required exit instrument for graduating seniors.

### Portfolios

Students will maintain a portfolio of their best critical essays/research papers produced during each academic year. The final portfolio will contain at least 4 essays—including the research project produced in AFA 490. Portfolios will be kept in the students' files in the department. The portfolio represents the best work of students produced over the course of enrollment in the major program. We wish to ensure that students are well grounded and have reached a level of competency that would allow them to communicate effectively the theories, ideas, and philosophies that undergird the discipline.

### Scoring Rubric for Essays and Portfolios

The student portfolio will contain a minimum of 4 essays produced during various stages of instruction in the degree program. The essays should be indicative of students' best efforts in the composition of research and critical essays. One of the 4 essays must be the final research project produced in AFA 490 Seminar in Africana Studies.

Two faculty members will individually evaluate the essays submitted using the criteria listed below. The final score for the submission will be arrived at via consensus among portfolio raters. The score, with written comments from the faculty members, will be attached to individual essays and placed in the portfolio.

By the end of the program, portfolios with a total score of 232 or above will constitute satisfactory progress in the field of study. Minimally, the Department expects a score of 58 or better on individual essay submissions. A perfect essay score is 84 points.

**Instructions:** Determine level of paper by extent to which criterion for each item is met. All items are level 3, if met.

	1 (D) Does not meet expectations	2 (C) Partially meets expectations	3 (B) Meets expectations	4 (A) Exceeds expectations
<b>MECHANICS</b>				
1. Does the essay contain an introduction, body, and conclusion?				
2. Does the essay contain an explicit thesis statement?				
3. Is the thesis clear, limiting, and debatable?				
4. Is the thesis well supported with details (facts and/or examples)?				
5. Are the supporting details relevant to the central argument (thesis)?				
<b>SUBSCALE TOTAL:</b>				
<b>CONTENT</b>				
1. Are the ideas in the essay original?				
2. Does the essay contain substance?				
3. Did you learn something that you had not known before?				
4. Is the content run of the mill/overused and /or standard knowledge?				
<b>SUBSCALE TOTAL:</b>				
<b>GRAMMAR</b>				
1. Does the essay contain run on sentences or comma splices?				
2. Does the essay contain spelling errors?				
3. Is the author's diction level appropriate?				

4. Are there other specific problems with grammar?				
<b>SUBSCALE TOTAL:</b>				

	1 (D) Does not meet expectations	2 (C) Partially meets expectations	3 (B) Meets expectations	4 (A) Exceeds expectations
<b>STYLE</b>				
1. Are the author's ideas easy to follow?				
2. Does the author's language flow?				
3. Is the author's use of language compelling?				
4. Does the author use varied syntax?				
<b>SUBSCALE TOTAL:</b>				
<b>USE OF SECONDARY SOURCES</b>				
1. Are the secondary sources used relevant to the central argument?				
2. Are secondary sources effectively used?				
3. Do the secondary sources dominate the work's content?				
4. How well does the author document secondary sources?				
<b>SUBSCALE TOTAL:</b>				
<b>TOTAL SCORE:</b>				

**[[D]]VII. Department Goals**

Expectations associated with student performance on all instruments are covered in the previous section and in the table below. The department expects a score of 70% or above the first time the general Knowledge Questionnaire is administered and an 80% or above for the second administration of the instrument.

The Student Survey Questionnaire measures responses to instruction and attitudes toward progress, explicitly linking educational outcomes with assessment as well as departmental objectives.

### Assessment Table

<u>Assessment Instrument</u>	<u>Time Frame</u>	<u>Performance Expectation</u>	<u>Departmental Objective(s)</u>
Performance in AFA 201	Sophomore Year	100 % of majors will earn a score of 70 % or above on General Knowledge Test	to provide a better understanding of the dynamics of the African world experience
Performance in AFA 220	Junior Year	100 % of majors will earn a score of 70% or above on General Knowledge Test	to provide a better understanding of the dynamics of the African world experience
Performance in AFA 375	Sophomr/Junior	100 % of majors will earn a score of 70% or higher on Research Project	to challenge and stimulate students to contribute to the development of their communities
Performance in AFA 490	Senior Year	100 % of majors will earn a score of 58 or higher on Research Projects <sup>1</sup> and 80 % on General Knowledge Test	to generate new knowledge and research opportunities in the field
Portfolio	Sophomore-Senior	100 % of majors will earn an overall score of 232 or above	to provide a better understanding of the dynamics of the African world experience; to generate new knowledge and research opportunities in the field

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<sup>1</sup> Inherent in critical investigations of Africana peoples is the analysis of power relations--who controls what. Research projects will address, in myriad ways, power relationships via a power analysis.

**[[E]]VIII. Feedback**

At the last department meeting of the academic year, the Department will analyze the assessment data from the performance in AFA 201, AFA 220 and AFA 490 as determined by scores achieved on the General Knowledge Test. We will also analyze the assessment data from performance in AFA 375 as determined by research project grades, and assessment data collected from the portfolio.

Based on the data, the Department will frame goals and consider strategies for meeting its goals and the educational outcome for the students it services. The idea here is to construct an on-going program review of effectiveness.

Students are also encouraged to meet with their advisors twice a semester during the regular academic year. In this way, the Department tracks both progress and needs as meeting outcomes are entered into a form placed in the student's file. See attached form.

**[[F]]IX. Budget**

The expense for Assessment is minimal and will be absorbed by the Department.

<u>Expense Item</u>	<u>Annual Amount</u>
Portfolio Supplies	\$175.00
• Binders	
• Page protectors	
• Dividers	
• Miscellaneous	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$175.00</b>



6. **Do you consider yourself primarily:**

- (A) A part-time undergraduate student (less than 12 units per semester)
- (B) A full-time undergraduate student (12+ units/semester)
- (C) A part-time graduate student (less than 9 units/semester)
- (D) A full-time graduate student 9+ units/semester)

7. **If you transferred to UM-Flint from another institution, what type of institution was it?**

- (A) Did not transfer
- (B) A Michigan community college
- (C) A community college from outside the state
- (D) Another Michigan State University campus
- (E) A University of Michigan campus
- (F) Another Michigan 4 year campus
- (G) A 4-year college or university from out of state
- (H) A foreign institution

8. **At the time of admission to UM-Flint, what was your class level?**

- |               |            |   |
|---------------|------------|---|
| (A) Freshman  | (C) Junior | (E) Graduate Student                      |
| (B) Sophomore | (D) Senior | (F) 2 <sup>nd</sup> Baccalaureate Student |
|               |            | (G) Other                                 |

9. **What sets Africana Studies above/apart from other majors/minors in the College of Arts and Sciences.**

10. **Did you declare a subject other than Africana Studies as a major before declaring Africana Studies as a major?**

- (A) Yes                      (B) No                      (C) Not Applicable

11. **If so, what was your previous major?**

**12. Did you declare a subject other Africana Studies as a minor before declaring Africana Studies as a minor?**

(A) Yes

(B) No

(C) Not Applicable

**13. If so, what was your minor?**

**Many diverse factors play a part in determining the quality of a student's experience with his/her academic program. Please rate the degree of your satisfaction with the following factors (items 14-31):**

(A) Very satisfied

(B) Satisfied

(C) Neutral

(D) Dissatisfied

(E) Very Dissatisfied

(F) Don't Know

**14. Quality of instruction for courses in major**

**15. Faculty command of the subject**

**16. Faculty ability to communicate the subject matter**

**17. Faculty enthusiasm for teaching**

**18. Faculty preparation for class**

**19. Intellectual stimulation from faculty**

**20. Intellectual stimulation from other student's in major**

**21. Faculty receptivity to student's questions**

**22. Opportunity to examine different points of view**

**23. Fairness and appropriateness of testing, grading and evaluation**

**24. Course work in major that is consistent with the instructor's stated objectives or syllabus**

**25. Relevance of course work to major**

**26. Adequacy of library materials relevant to your major**

**27. Instructional facilities (laboratories, equipment, computers) in major**

28. **Availability of necessary classes in major**
29. **Career guidance from faculty in major**
30. **Academic advising from faculty in major**
31. **Helpfulness of major department's office personnel and /or technical staff**
32. **Overall, how satisfied are you with your instructional experiences with Africana Studies?**

- (A) Very satisfied                      (C) Neutral                      (D) Dissatisfied  
 (B) Satisfied                              (E) Very Dissatisfied

33. **If you could start college over, would you choose to attend UM-Flint again?**

- (A) Definitely Yes                      (C) Uncertain                      (D) Probably No  
 (B) Probably Yes                        (E) Definitely No

34. **If you could start college over, would you choose the same major again?**

- (A) Definitely Yes                      (C) Uncertain                      (D) Probably No  
 (B) Probably Yes                        (E) Definitely No

35. **I would recommend my major at this campus to others.**

- (A) Strongly Agree                      (D) Disagree  
 (B) Agree                                    (E) Strongly Disagree  
 (C) Neutral

**To what extent did the class \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify course number and title in Africana Studies contribute to your improvement in the following skills (items 36-42):**

- (A) Greatly Contributed                      (C) Had little effect  
 (B) Somewhat Contributed                      (D) Had no effect

36. **Your competent to conduct independent research on selected Africana Topics**
37. **Your ability to conduct a power analysis**
38. **Your adeptness in writing a critical essay using secondary sources**
39. **Your proficiency to communicate the history of African and African Disapora people**

40. **Your proficiency in the use of technology to advance professional and personal goals**
41. **Your ability to recognize the major contributions Africans and Diaspora people make to the development of world civilization**