

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR BLACK STUDIES **Black/Africana Studies Model Core Curriculum**

PREAMBLE

Since its inception, NCBS has endeavored to structure, clarify, and define the curricular dimensions of our discipline. Guided by the central praxis, academic excellence and social responsibility, the Council has embraced a mission to produce and transmit knowledge and for the empowerment of individuals and institutions in relation to the conditions, experiences, needs and imperatives of black communities, wherever they are found. A model Core Curriculum endeavoring to address these goals was included in the first Report of the Committee on Curriculum Standards, accepted and adopted by the Executive Board in 1980. The model outlined therein provided significant aid in the development of several programs through 1980s. Curriculum models developed in subsequent and recent years reflected the sizeable influence of Afrocentric, Diasporic, and Global perspectives in terms of both the practice and theory of the discipline in the 1990s and 2000's. The concurrent appearance of a variety of names in the field at large to name the enterprise through this period has accompanied this process, sometimes causing concern or controversy as to various priorities within the discipline. This current articulation seeks to retain an inclusive, broadened focus, in terms of geography and perspective, while also seeking to frame and characterize core elements essential to all perspectives, emphases and approaches in the field.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Black/Africana Studies (also called "African-American Studies, Afro-American Studies, Pan-African Studies, Black American Studies, African Diaspora Studies) is to advance and transmit broad knowledge of the histories, cultures, and linkages among peoples of Africa and their descendants in the New World, and to provide intellectual tools to analyze, understand, and address the significant social, political, economic and humanist problems they face. The discipline rests on efforts to focus in diverse ways on several different configurations of African people, as defined by their locations, migrations and reconstructions on the continent, in the Western Hemisphere and elsewhere. While (as indicated in the various names) programs vary in defining their focus as global, continental, diasporic, or national, the model core curriculum model proposed below offers a well-demarcated yet flexible common framework for the common task of integrating several disciplinary perspectives to examine the historical and contemporary experiences, conditions, and aspirations of African-descendant peoples.

CORE CURRICULUM OUTLINE

A model core curriculum (21-30 credits) would be comprised of the following elements:

1. Foundation Courses (3-6 Credits). Foundation courses are of three types:
 - a. Interdisciplinary Topical Survey Introduction ("Issues in the Black Experience)
 - b. Introduction to the discipline ("Introduction to Africana Studies"; study of the discipline itself is also a capstone activity).
 - c. Historical Introduction (African History, African-American History, etc.)
2. Topical/Thematic Tracks (15-18 credits)
 - a. Historical Investigation
African, Diasporic, African-American, Caribbean, global
 - b. Cultural Production and Expression
Literature, and writing, music/dance, visual and performing arts, film, video, mass media, contemporary culture
 - c. Social and Structural Analysis

Social thought, social institutions, political economy, social movement and liberation studies, social and public policy and community development, global issues and perspectives

3. Capstone Courses and Activities (3-6) credits

Seminars, advanced studies, fieldwork, travel, internships, theory and methods studies, research projects and activities.

Beyond the core requirements, electives and area concentration courses (6-15 credits) would fill out program requirements (36-40 total credits). Courses in the three topical thematic areas should include advanced offerings where theory and methods may be incorporated. Programs may structure the distribution of requirements among core courses to emphasize one track of study and knowledge or they may offer specialization tracks (e.g., “Cultural Studies and the Arts,” “Development and Public Policy,” “Global Interconnections,” “Black Transnationalism and the African Diaspora.”) with their own specific requirements or options.

Core Curriculum Structure

	Foundation Courses (3-6 Credits)		
Introductory	<i>Introduction to the Discipline, Topical Survey Introduction, Historical Introduction</i>		
	Topical/Thematic Tracks (15-18 credits)		
	<i>Cultural Production & Expression</i>	<i>Historical Investigation</i>	<i>Social & Structural Analysis</i>
Intermediate	Literature, and writing, music/dance, visual and performing arts, film, languages, linguistic studies, technology, video, mass media, contemporary culture, religion and spiritual practices	African, Diasporan African-American, Caribbean, global, regional, special topics, history surveys	Social thought, social institutions, political economy, gender and sexuality, identity and self-definition, social movement and liberation studies, social and public policy and community development, global issues and perspectives
Advanced			
	Capstone Courses and Activities (3-6) credits		
Upper (Senior/Graduate)	Theoretical and Methodological Studies		
	Seminars, Senior Theses, advanced studies, fieldwork, travel, internships, research projects and activities.		

NCBS Curriculum Committee

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