



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

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October 10, 2009

TO: Committee on Education Affairs  
Faculty Senate of the College of Arts and Sciences

FROM: George Watson, Interim Dean  
College of Arts and Sciences

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George Watson".

RE: Proposed creation of the Department of Black American Studies

I am pleased to support the proposal to create a Department of Black American Studies at the University of Delaware. Since 2005, the Black American Studies Program has made impressive strides on several fronts. Its faculty size, commitments, and scholarship have grown dramatically. It has created a major that now averages twenty-five students a year in addition to a similarly-sized group of minors, placing the Program in the top half of those at our peer institutions. The Program's contributions to campus and community life have grown in breadth and variety. Overall enrollment in BAMS courses has risen nearly sixty percent in less than a decade. In short, the influx of resources invested since 2006 has enabled the Program to develop precisely the sort of academic culture and impact that had been anticipated at its inception.

The elevation of the Black American Studies Program to department status will not require additional resources. In recent years, the Program has functioned as a quasi-department led by a director whose terms of appointment are the same as those for department chairs. The Program has by-laws and the director conducts annual appraisals of faculty members whose primary appointments reside in the program. As with every department in our College, the Program has a separate budget and is subject to all the administrative policies that apply to departments.

It is time to advance the Black American Studies Program to the Department of Black American Studies, nearly thirty years since it was first recommended. It is the rational next step, will confirm current practice, and lay the foundation for further development of this important interdisciplinary area at the University of Delaware.

# UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE FORMS

## Academic Program Approval

This form is a routing document for the approval of new and revised academic programs. Proposing department should complete this form. For more information, call the Faculty Senate Office at 831-2921.

**Submitted by:** James M. Jones      phone number: 831-2897

**Department:** Black American Studies      email address: [jmjones@udel.edu](mailto:jmjones@udel.edu)

**Date:** October 9, 2009

**Action:** Change status from Black American Studies PROGRAM to DEPARTMENT of Black American Studies  
(Example: add major/minor/concentration, delete major/minor/concentration, revise major/minor/concentration, academic unit name change, request for permanent status, policy change, etc.)

**Effective term:**            09F  
(use format 04F, 05W)

**Current degree:** BA  
(Example: BA, BACH, BACJ, HBA, EDD, MA, MBA, etc.)

**Proposed change leads to the degree of:** No Change--BA  
(Example: BA, BACH, BACJ, HBA, EDD, MA, MBA, etc.)

**Proposed name:** Department of Black American Studies  
Proposed new name for revised or new major / minor / concentration / academic unit  
(if applicable)

### Revising or Deleting:

**Undergraduate major / Concentration:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Example: Applied Music – Instrumental degree BMAS)

**Undergraduate minor:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Example: African Studies, Business Administration, English, Leadership, etc.)

**Graduate Program Policy statement change:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Must attach your Graduate Program Policy Statement)

**Graduate Program of Study:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Example: Animal Science: MS Animal Science: PHD Economics: MA Economics: PHD)

**Graduate minor / concentration:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** all graduate studies proposals must include an electronic copy of the Graduate Program Policy Document, highlighting the changes made to the original policy document.

**List new courses required for the new or revised curriculum. How do they support the overall program objectives of the major/minor/concentrations)?**  
(Be aware that approval of the curriculum is dependent upon these courses successfully passing through

the Course Challenge list. If there are no new courses enter "None")

**Explain, when appropriate, how this new/revised curriculum supports the 10 goals of undergraduate education: <http://www.ugs.udel.edu/gened/>**

**Identify other units affected by the proposed changes:**

(Attach permission from the affected units. If no other unit is affected, enter "None")

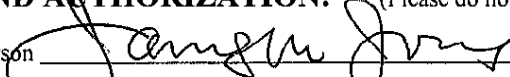
**Describe the rationale for the proposed program change(s):**

(Explain your reasons for creating, revising, or deleting the curriculum or program.)

**Program Requirements:**

(Show the new or revised curriculum as it should appear in the Course Catalog. If this is a revision, be sure to indicate the changes being made to the current curriculum and **include a side-by-side comparison** of the credit distribution before and after the proposed change.)

**ROUTING AND AUTHORIZATION:** (Please do not remove supporting documentation.)

Department Chairperson  Date 10/9/09

Dean of College \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, College Curriculum Committee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Senate Com. on UG or GR Studies \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Senate Coordinating Com. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary, Faculty Senate \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Senate Resolution \_\_\_\_\_ Date to be Effective \_\_\_\_\_

Registrar \_\_\_\_\_ Program Code \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & International Programs \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Provost \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Board of Trustee Notification \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

October 7, 2009

## **Proposal for Change of Status of Black American Studies from a Program to a Department in the College of Arts and Sciences**

### **I. GOAL AND RATIONALE**

This proposal seeks approval for the Black American Studies program (BAMS) to achieve the status of a Department in the College of Arts and Sciences. This proposal comes 38 years after a Task Force on Black Studies at the University of Delaware recommended that Black Studies become a Department. That original recommendation was tabled and Program Status was approved instead. Concerns about the “legitimacy” of Black studies as an academic field was the main impediment to granting the Program Departmental status. During the intervening four decades, BAMS has demonstrated its legitimacy in many ways including a continuing role in the curriculum of the university; exemplary service to the college, the university and the Delaware community; and faculty growth and scholarly productivity. Today, BAMS is a premier source of diverse scholarly ideas and perspectives on this campus just as similar departments provide the same diversity on top-tier campuses all across the nation.

BAMS-sponsored programs (weekly lectures, monthly brown bags, annual distinguished lectures) illustrate the significant role BAMS plays in University educational life. In response to the Academic Program Review completed in 2004, the BAMS faculty endorsed becoming a department. The faculty unanimously renewed this endorsement in the fall of 2009. Approving this proposal will bring into alignment the mission and role of BAMS at the University of Delaware. This new administrative structure will make the UD program consistent with programs in our peer institutions.

### **II. HISTORY**

#### ***Origins of Black American Studies***

The Black American Studies Program (BAMS) at the University of Delaware was established in 1971, in large measure, in response to the demands of the small black student body in the years 1968-69. In that period there were only 34 black students on campus. Although the University had been desegregated in the years following the *Brown vs. the Board of Education* decision in 1954, little attempt was made to provide a welcoming environment for blacks. In Spring 1968, the Black Student Union took direct action (in a coalition with some white students) by occupying the Student Center for a two-day period and presenting a list of demands to the University administration. These demands included the establishment of a Black Studies Program and an increase in the number of black faculty members.

The University responded to student pressures by including a program of Black Studies among the issues to be considered by The Community Design Planning Commission established in 1970. In June 1970, a Black Studies Task Force responsible for devising plans for a Black Studies Program was created as one aspect of this initiative. The Task Force made their

recommendations after a series of hearings and consultations with experts. Their conception of the elements of Black Studies included Africa and its Diaspora in North America and the Caribbean, with the Black North American experience as its special focus.

The Task Force recommended establishing a Black Studies Department, noting that it was the “only acceptable structure in order to safeguard and warrant a meaningful and academically successful program.” Among the main proposals of the Task Force was the appointment of a chair and four additional core faculty members, within the first two academic years, in order to cover the minimum of required courses and a number of electives. The foundation courses were identified as those dealing with Cultures and People of African Heritage, Black History, Black Literature, Black Symbolic Systems of Thought and Social Organization of People of African Heritage. In spite of these recommendations, over the next 33 years, Black American Studies had no more than three faculty members including the Director, offered only a minor, and continued as a Program rather than a department in the College of Arts and Sciences.

### ***BAMS in Transition***

BAMS underwent an Academic Program Review (APR) in 2004. The final report noted the minimal university support of the program for over thirty years, and that only one faculty member remained in the Program. Further, the APR report recommended that the university infuse it with significant support, or shut it down. The University opted to strengthen BAMS. During the last four years, the premise and promise of its establishment in 1971 is beginning to be realized.

- In 2005, Professor James Jones was appointed Director of BAMS.
- In 2006, two new faculty were hired: Dr. Yasser Payne a social psychologist and Dr. Maggie Ussery a sociologist.
- In 2006, BAMS provided scholarships to two of its students to study abroad in South Africa and Barbados
- In 2007, Dr. Arica Coleman, a cultural historian, was hired.
- In 2007, Dr. Carol Henderson-Belton (English) was appointed Associate Director of BAMS.
- In 2007, Dr. Amalia Amaki, Curator of the Paul R. Jones Collection, was granted full professor status in Black American studies.
- In 2007, W.O. Maloba moved his faculty line from History to BAMS.
- In 2007, a Major in Black American Studies was approved, and the BAMS Convocation for its first graduating class was held in 2008.
- In 2009 three new concentrations were approved: Black Art, Literature, and Cultural Studies; Black Gender Studies; and Law, Public Policy and Social Justice.

By 2007, then, BAMS was able to offer the major that had been recommended, and our faculty ranks had increased from 1 to 8. These developments are at the core of the current proposal to fulfill the vision of the original Task Force to create a Department of Black American Studies at the University of Delaware.

## *Current Status*

BAMS offers over 30 courses (BAMS or cross-listed) yearly in which an average of 1100 students enroll. In the last four years, compared to the preceding four years, the number of BAMS courses offered has increased 49% and the number of students enrolled has increased 45%. Since BAMS became available as a major in 2007, we have averaged 23 majors and 25 minors. All of these majors have transferred into BAMS from other majors, most keeping their original major. These totals are comparable to those found at our peer institutions, both aspirational and actual.<sup>1</sup> Of 20 peer institutions only two do not have Black/African American Studies units. Of the 18 that do, 9 are organized as Departments and offer a B.A. degree (50%); 5 are organized as Programs and only one of them offers the BA degree. The other four are organized as Centers or Institutes and offer a variety of degrees but mainly advanced degrees (MA, PHD). Creating a Department at UD will bring us into conformity with the predominant model among our peer institutions.

Among our peer institutions, the numbers of majors and minors varies widely. At the high end, the University of Virginia has 81 majors and 20 minors. But Penn State has only 10 majors and 35 minors. The University of Connecticut has 10 majors and 10 minors. And Notre Dame has 9 majors and 27 minors. After only two years of offering the major, BAMS at UD falls in the upper portion of the numbers of majors (21) and minors (21) in Black American Studies among our peer institutions.

## **III. Program Description**

### *Faculty and Staff*

The BAMS faculty are central to our ability to deliver a broad multidisciplinary curriculum on Black Americans and the African Diaspora. BAMS faculty consist of 6 core faculty and 13 joint faculty<sup>2</sup>. Core faculty include four with tenure lines within BAMS (Prof. Johnson, and Drs. Payne, Coleman and Ussery), and the Director (Prof. Jones whose line is in psychology) and Associate Director (Dr. Henderson-Belton whose line is in English). The joint faculty represent a diverse set of disciplines including Anthropology, History, English, Art History, Sociology and Criminal Justice, Political Science and International Relations, Education and Urban Affairs and Public Policy. The joint faculty are an integral part of the BAMS Program; each has accepted the appointment based on regularly teaching a course within the BAMS major curriculum (3

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<sup>1</sup> Institutions include Boston College, Carnegie Mellon University, College of William and Mary, Georgia Institute of Technology, Lehigh University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, University of Florida, Notre Dame, UNC Chapel Hill, University of Virginia, SUNY Binghamton, Boston University, Miami University of Ohio, Pennsylvania State University, Rutgers- New Brunswick, Syracuse, University of Connecticut, University of Maryland College Park, Mass- Amherst, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

<sup>2</sup> In the last two years two BAMS faculty have left the program; Professor Amaki who left the university and Professor Maloba who returned to the History Department. Professor Amaki's line was reclaimed by the Dean, and Professor Maloba continues as a BAMS joint faculty member.

times in a five year period), and participating in BAMS activities from committee assignments to advisement and decision making. BAMS joint faculty have voting rights enumerated in the By-laws.

BAMS faculty have won university teaching awards, and are nominated often for college teaching awards. BAMS faculty have also received research grants including a Transformation Grant from the College, GUR grants (all junior faculty received one), and have submitted grants to federal agencies (NIH and NSF). Professor Howard Johnson holds a named professorship. One faculty member (Payne) is the research director of a major grant from the State of Delaware to the HOPE commission in Wilmington. It is not possible to represent all the disciplines that are relevant to the teaching and scholarship related to Blacks in the African Diaspora within a single unit. Therefore, the strong mix of core and joint faculty provides a rich array of teaching and research activities that focus on the program's mission.

BAMS has been staffed by an office coordinator, Gail Brittingham who has been in this position for over 35 years. A graduate assistant is also assigned to the office who works 20 hours per week. Main duties of the GA are maintaining the website and providing project-based research and analysis as assigned by the director. BAMS is ably assisted by Dr. Carol Henderson-Belton who, as Associate Director, has responsibility for the Undergraduate Program. As a Program, the Director is appointed for a 3-year term and is responsible for all aspects of the program, identical with those of a department in all but name. As a department, the director's term would become five years.

BAMS faculty are also substantially engaged in the communities of Newark and Wilmington through both research and service. Collaborations with the HOPE commission and the Redding House in Wilmington, oral history projects with the Iron Hill Museum and the Delaware Academy of Science in Newark, and Delaware Humanities forum lecturers are some of the activities that connect BAMS faculty to the wider Delaware community.

### ***Curriculum***

The BAMS curriculum is designed to provide an array of courses that cover Black American issues as well as African Diasporic topics from multiple disciplinary perspectives. It is also constructed to provide more focused in-depth research and service experiences through its research methods and Capstone courses. The BAMS major is only two years old, consists of 31 credits and is designed to provide maximum flexibility recognizing that a large majority of BAMS majors are also majoring in other disciplines. Required courses include the entry level survey course, and African history course and two mid-level courses; one in contemporary Black culture and another in black History. Upper level required courses include a research methods course and a senior seminar which is also a Capstone course. We believe that research and scholarship in Black American Studies is important and provide for it in both the methods and capstone courses. The remaining 12 credits are fulfilled by meeting breadth requirements across four "pillars"—History; Arts and Humanities; Social/Behavioral Science and Comparative Studies.

Also, in recognition of the multiple discipline and career pathways of our students, we created three concentrations to provide opportunities for students interested in careers in law and social policy, journalism, arts and humanities. We also capitalize on the extensive work done on gender through the Women's Studies Program and among faculty across the university. Students who elect to do a concentration must take 9 credits in their concentration and 3 as an elective course.

This curriculum amply reflects the *multidisciplinary* nature of Black American Studies (in that several different disciplines are represented in our faculty training and research and our course offerings), provides scholarly opportunities for research and analysis, and provides enough flexibility that majors can have choices that are relevant and useful to a variety of career paths. We are also *interdisciplinary* in that our faculty work collaboratively with faculty in specific other disciplines, and our BAMS majors almost always also have majors in other academic units.

### ***Study Abroad***

We value international experiences for our students and have partnered with other units to co-sponsor study abroad courses. BAMS majors are encouraged to participate in regularly scheduled study abroad courses in the Caribbean (Barbados), and Africa (South Africa and Ghana). New study abroad opportunities are planned for Nevis (Dr. Henderson-Belton) and Egypt (Dr. Payne) and discussions for collaborations in other venues in the Caribbean (Jamaica, Martinique), South and Central America are also underway. BAMS has devoted significant resources to funding BAMS majors to participate in study abroad. In the past two years we have partially funded 6 students in study abroad courses in Africa and the Caribbean.

### ***Students and Enrollment***

During 2009-2010, BAMS has twenty-one majors and twenty-one minors. As noted earlier this number is above the mid-point among peer intuitions. Almost all BAMS majors are at least double and some are triple majors. The other majors are a broad representation of disciplines across colleges, including Chemistry, Biological Sciences, Communication, Political Science, Sociology and Criminal Justice, English, History and Engineering. When it was created, the intent was to create a BAMS major that made it possible for students to double major. This strategy has succeeded. Most BAMS majors have changed their academic program to include a BAMS major. This usually happens in their third year, though several have transferred in their senior year. Since BAMS has only been available as a major for two years, this is the only way for students to acquire it who entered more than two years ago. Many students convert their minor into a major in their senior year. Many students find that they have taken almost enough for the major because of their interests in the field and their engagement in the courses. It then becomes easy to add those final courses and declare the major as late as their senior year without adding time to attaining their degree. But it is important to note that the average number of students in BAMS courses is well above the number who are majors. This strongly suggests a demand for BAMS courses that goes well beyond the desire to major.

Enrollment in BAMS courses averaged around 750 per year in the early part of this decade, and increased to over 1200 in the past year. This is related directly to the expanded BAMS core



faculty, and a growing number of joint faculty who teach BAMS courses. We built the major and students came. The introductory BAMS course routinely fills all 50 allocated seats. We are planning to expand that number to 75 in the coming year. Our mid-level courses also regularly reach capacity of 40 seats. Many of our courses meet multicultural and breadth requirements in the college and university. We have identified 8 BAMS courses that will meet the new breadth requirements. There are several more cross-listed courses that will also meet them. Most BAMS courses also meet the multicultural requirement and several meet the second writing requirement. So the BAMS curriculum enables students to learn about Black American studies and fulfill a variety of course requirements in the process. We anticipate that our enrollments will rise in the coming years.

### ***Programs and Community Outreach***

BAMS takes as a significant part of its mission fostering a strong intellectual climate around issues that affect Blacks in the region, the United States and around the world. Our monthly brown bag series, distinguished lecture series, and seminars and workshops support this role. We also host small faculty dinner seminars as a way to support the scholarship of junior faculty and to create a strong and nurturing intellectual climate.

As important as our scholarly focus is our community engagement. We regularly invite community leaders to participate in BAMS programs as was the case last spring when Mayor James Baker and Reverend Livingston participated in a community panels as part of the Obama symposium BAMS sponsored during February's Black Month. We also have invited the 21<sup>st</sup> Village cast of teens who presented a video of their trip to Washington for Obama's inauguration and spoke about their involvement in a television program in Wilmington. We are engaged in oral history of the students of the all-Black Iron Hill School in Newark and have plans for oral histories of the New London Road Black community. In addition, several of our faculty are engaged in research projects in collaboration with organizations in Wilmington, and regularly sit on boards and consult with and speak at a variety of community events. Thus BAMS plays an important role in the intellectual life of the university, and the local communities in which we reside.

## **IV. Impacts of Departmental Status**

### ***On Curriculum***

We anticipate no immediate impact of departmental status on the BAMS curriculum. We have only recently constructed the major and concentrations within it. We are satisfied with what we have and feel they meet the goal of the Major. However, we are always looking to refine and improve our instruction and training of undergraduates particularly in research. So we will continue to review and modify the program as we deem necessary.

### ***On Resources and Administrative Structure***

This proposal for departmental status does not require any additional resources.

We do not need additional space now to fulfill the mission of the Department.

### ***On Future planning***

As with other units at the University, we are engaged in an ongoing strategic planning process, designed to align BAMS with the Path to Prominence priorities, the College of Arts and Science Priorities, and continue to refine and strengthen the BAMS mission and its implementation.

We have begun exploring the possibility of developing additional programs at the graduate level. We hope to begin by considering a Certificate Program in Diversity Studies. We will engage in a process to identify the consumers, the curriculum, cost, teaching faculty and overall feasibility. We have already begun discussions with Jim Broomall and will continue over the next few years. We also see this program as a bridge to a Master's program in African American and Diasporic Studies. The idea of a Master's Program is already supported by the Diversity Task Force and Action Councils and will be developed in conjunction with the Certificate Program. We anticipate that the two will be operational in the 3-5 year time frame.

Most of our peer institutions support research centers or institutes in conjunction with their African American or Africana studies departments. The academic teaching mission is vital to the success of any department, but the research and scholarly mission draws on a different set of resources, collaborations and partnerships and is vital to the national prominence we seek. The idea of a "Center for the Study of Black Life and Culture" has been circulating for a few years and is endorsed by the Strategic Planning Committee, and the Diversity Action Task Force and Council. The development of plans for a Center, including its name, mission, funding capacity, relationship to the college and university strategic initiatives and so forth) will be an ongoing priority in the coming year and within 3 years, we anticipate it will be operational.

An APR for BAMS is currently scheduled for Fall 2012. We will flesh out the above issues and benefit from an APR to help us formulate clearly these objectives and ways in which they can be met in our self-study, and get the advice and counsel of nationally prominent scholars who can help us think through these objectives. We will prepare a self-study during the 2010-2011 academic year in preparation for the 2012 APR.

### ***Conclusion***

BAMS has been functioning like a department since 2005-2006, and this proposal seeks to formalize that fact by conferring official departmental status. We have the faculty, curriculum, scholarship and students to warrant it. BAMS plays a strategic role in both in foster diversity of scholarship and course offerings, as well as providing a natural link to inter- and multi-disciplinary opportunities for collaboration and partnerships.

This proposal was fully discussed, edited and agreed to in principle at a BAMS faculty Retreat September 25-27, 2009. It was formally approved by the BAMS faculty October 8, 2009 by vote of 18-0.