### ASSESSMENT

**Date Submitted**

**Assessment Period Covered** 2000-2006

**Academic Program** Africana Studies minor only

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### Institutional Mission

Wittenberg University provides a liberal arts education dedicated to intellectual inquiry and wholeness of person within a diverse residential community. Reflecting its Lutheran heritage, Wittenberg challenges students to become responsible global citizens, to discover their callings, and to lead personal, professional, and civic lives of creativity, service, compassion, and integrity.

### Academic Program Mission

In keeping with Wittenberg’s mission to develop the whole person—intellectually, spiritually, aesthetically, socially, and physically, the Africana Studies program provides a “space” that is welcoming to all students, and respects and celebrates the diversity of all people. At its center, the Program seeks to improve the campus climate relative to race and other issues of diversity. It fully encourages frank discussions on race and those issues related to race as it touches people of African descent around the world.

Informally, instructors frequently solicit information from students about course content and methodology. Moreover, we are constantly looking to expand the disciplines which are currently represented in our program. Students as part of their individual classes, complete evaluations and are encouraged to meet with instructors should they have a question, problem or suggestion.

### Are Students Meeting Program and University Learning Goals?

#### Learning Goals

The Africana Studies program was approved to offer a minor in 2000. The learning goals are to:

1) foster interdisciplinary study in the humanities, arts and social sciences
2) stimulate students within a learning environment that encourages appreciation of the history and culture of African peoples
3) explore the diversity and range of thought in the African Diaspora
4) teach the economic, psychological and social situation of Blacks past and present

One course, AFST 201 Introduction to Africana Studies is the foundation course for the minor. The two-credit-hour senior capstone course is the main assessment method for the minor. We firmly believe that these courses, along with the above objectives are in keeping with a Wittenberg education and the Wittenberg mission.

We also typically assess student performance in AFST 201 using tests, quizzes, papers, presentations, journals and class discussions. The senior capstone is assessed through the final product. Frequently, in the introductory-level class, a pre-assessment survey is given to students. Using this tool, instructors have a better sense of student progress. The Africana Studies program does not have its own assessment document. It uses a University-course assessment tool once each semester.

#### Assessment method

**Senior capstone activities**

A capstone project of two credits is required for the Africana Studies minor. Students generally choose an area or topic that they have studied in one of their classes and develop it for their project. Students may also take an independent study course in which they explore a topic of interest which is not part of the program’s “regular” course offerings. In our independent study model, students work one-on-one with a faculty member. Twenty-four students have graduated with the Africana Studies minor since the year 2000. Capstone projects have ranged from a study of Black politics to the production of a composite of plays written by Black playwrights. Students have also completed senior capstone projects after travel abroad to South America and South Africa. These trips abroad often connected students with ongoing global service projects such as Habitat for Humanity. All student capstone projects must address some aspect of the Black Diaspora in their major field of study.

### Are Departmental and University Curricula Effectively Addressing the Learning Goals?

The course, AFST 201, Introduction to Africana Studies, is offered once per year in the fall semester and taught by a different member of the Africana Studies committee. Each member of the committee represents a different department at
Wittenberg University covering approximately 7 departments. All students who declare Africana Studies as their minor must take AFST 201 and the senior capstone. We strongly recommend AFST 201 be the first course students take toward their minor. Because each member of the Africana Studies committee teaches in a different University department, students are exposed to different learning goals through the general education requirement. For example, the first semester AFST 201 was offered, it was taught by an Africana Studies committee member in the history department and designated to meet the general education requirements C and H. At Wittenberg University the C represents “non Western cultures” and the H represents “Western historical perspectives.” The next two semesters AFST was offered by faculty members from the English department and from the Spanish department and met the A and C general education requirement. The A meets the general education requirement, “fine, performing and literary arts.” Once students have taken AFST 201 and before they can enroll in the Senior capstone course students must take other courses across the curriculum that meet the learning goals of the Africana Studies program. The courses are diverse and all must cover some aspect of the Black Diaspora experience. Generally faculty members from the Africana Studies committee offer a wide range of courses within their departments, but other faculty members at Wittenberg also create courses that can be cross listed in Africana Studies. The philosophy department has offered courses since 2000 even though there is no faculty representation on the Africana Studies committee. In the school year 2007-2008, we anticipate a new course in economics, another department without representation on the committee as well as the sociology department promises to offer a more permanent 300 level course in African American social theory. The current recommended courses are as follows:

A minimum of 22 semester hours is required for the minor, 10 of which must be at the 200 or higher course level, with at least 4 semester hours in the social sciences, 4 semester hours in history, and 4 semester hours in literature. Courses should be chosen in consultation with the minor advisor and the Program Advisory Committee.

Introduction to Africana Studies (AFST 201)
4 sem hours
One history course*
4 sem hours
One literature course*
4 sem hours
Two other courses: any two from the list of course offerings (one must be a social science course)
8 sem hours
Senior project
2 sem hours
*From course offering list

**COURSE OFFERINGS**

**English**
190A/C Afro-Caribbean Studies 4 sem hours
180A/C Slave Narrative 4 sem hours
313 Studies in African American Lit 4 sem hours
315 Studies in the Novel (selected courses) 4 sem hours
330 Major Author (when author is Africana) 4 sem hours

**Geography**
250C Geography of Africa 2 sem hours

**History**
170C Topics in African History 4 sem hours
171C/H African Societies to 1500 4 sem hours
172C/H Africa Since 1500 4 sem hours
203H Slavery in the Americas 4 sem hours
230H African American History 4 sem hours
270 Topics in African History 4 sem hours
370 Topics in African History 4 sem hours
390C/H South Africa 4 sem hours

**Music**
113A Jazz Styles 4 sem hours

**Political Science**
234S Black Politics 4 sem hours
Religion
176H  Racism and Social Ethics  4 sem hours
375R  Advanced Social Ethics: Racism  4 sem hours

Sociology
201S  Topics in Sociology (selected courses)  4 sem hours
301S  African American Social Thought  4 sem hours

Spanish
130A  Caribbean Literature  4 sem hours

Theatre and Dance
112A  Dance in Popular Culture  4 sem hours
210C  Dance Ethnology  4 sem hours

*Courses not listed may be acceptable by petition to Program Advisory Committee

We believe that the current permanent course offerings, along with new courses being designed by faculty each year and, allow students who minor to enhance their major degree program with a diverse study program. Africana Studies compliments most majors at Wittenberg University as witnessed by the cross listings in a variety of departments.

Toward Revising Program Learning Goals, Curricula, And/Or Other Aspects To Enhance Student Achievement
Four students have graduated from Wittenberg University with an INDP major that has an AFST focus since 2002. Currently 3 students are working toward the completion of an INDP major. Often students come to the decision to work toward an INDP major after travel abroad. One of the goals of the AFST committee is to be able to plan and coordinate more deliberate study abroad trips through The Africana Studies program. However, because of all committee members’ responsibilities to their own departments, planning Study Abroad trips that have a Black Diaspora focus is not always possible. Currently the Director of Multi-Cultural Student programs and the Director of Africana Studies are researching grant opportunities for trips within the United States that focus on the Black Diaspora experience here. We believe that study of the slave trade and its sociological remnants can also spark the same kind of impetus for intensified study as travel abroad can. Study trips within the United States to conduct research on the Gullah traditions of the Carolinas for example are in-line with the University mission and the mission and learning goals 2 and 4 of The Africana Studies Program. Study within the United States can also make Black Diaspora research more accessible for students who cannot afford the same extended time abroad.

Resource Needs
The Africana Studies program was designed to work within a small budget without the need for hiring of additional faculty members or equipment. However, as we grow in numbers and move toward meeting the goals of our new President’s strategic plan, we are concerned that we need to be more active in helping students to expand their horizons through travel-specific research. Therefore, we would need to be more active in helping students apply for Fulbright Scholarships and other travel scholarships. We also need to focus on programs that offer monies and scholarships for research within the United States. This kind of work often requires the precious resource of time.

Plans for Continued Assessment
During the next three years, The Africana Studies Committee will work toward finding an efficient method of finding grants and other monies for research travel and for diverse speakers who can bring the Black Diaspora to Wittenberg University. We will also continue to encourage faculty to develop courses that can be cross-listed for the Africana Studies minor.