MISSION STATEMENT

African American Studies at the University of Montana connects African and African-American (including Latin America and the Caribbean) history, experiences, and perspectives with the 21st century. The goal of the African American Studies curriculum is to develop a basic knowledge of, and appreciation for, the diverse experiences of the African Diaspora, and their contributions to the nations into which they were incorporated. Through this study students will recognize that the African-American narrative connects to the core issues of nation formation, identity politics, social movements, and the liberal state. Those who take this minor will likewise be equipped to talk through the racial fracture lines that mark this nation as a country where the color of one’s skin is socially significant. In all these efforts, we promote scholarship that is driven first and foremost by an interest in creating knowledge and furthering our understanding of the African-American experience. The interdisciplinary curriculum of African-American Studies includes course offerings from the following academic disciplines: anthropology, economics, English, geography, history, music, political science, and sociology. Some topics of study include: African heritage and cultural continuity among African-Americans; African-American identity issues and cultural variation; the history of African-American protest and resistance, including the abolitionist, anti-lynching, and civil rights movements; the Harlem Renaissance; the social dynamics of integration and segregation; and the various circumstances of, and prospects for, African-Americans in the 21st century.

DEPARTMENT OBJECTIVES and ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC ISSUES

1. To deepen students’ knowledge about the history and contemporary experience of the African-American community. (Education for the Global Century and Dynamic Learning Environment)

2. To sharpen students’ critical thinking skills about racial dynamics, social change movements, and religious practice. (Education for the Global Century and Dynamic Learning Environment)

3. To prepare students to speak about, respond to, and engage contemporary racial issues. (Education for the Global Century and Dynamic Learning Environment)

4. To create new knowledge about the African-American experience through faculty research and writing. (Discovery and Creativity to Serve Montana and the World)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Goals and Measurement Tools</th>
<th>Imbedded Exam Questions</th>
<th>Essay Writing</th>
<th>Research Paper Writing</th>
<th>Exit Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Students will identify the primary social, cultural, and political movements and actors in African-American history from the Maafa through to the present.</td>
<td>Summative assessments in Parts I and II of the African-American History Survey</td>
<td>Essay writing</td>
<td>Research paper written in course of fulfilling upper-division course electives requirement.</td>
<td>Question included in oral exit interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Students will identify the primary questions and methodologies employed by scholars of the African-American experience including literary, historical, sociological, anthropological, and religious studies analysis.</td>
<td>Final exam question in Intro to African-American Studies/Black: From Africa to Hip-Hop.</td>
<td>Essay writing</td>
<td>Research paper written as part of an Independent Study</td>
<td>Question included in oral exit interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Students will analyze the nature and extent of contributions made by African Americans to host nations through protest movements, physical labor, technical expertise, political negotiations, and cultural contributions.</td>
<td>Research paper written in course of fulfilling upper-division course electives requirement.</td>
<td>Essay writing</td>
<td>Question included in oral exit interview.</td>
<td>Question included in oral exit interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Students will identify the metaphor that best interprets the African-American experience and defend their choice.</td>
<td>Essay writing</td>
<td>Essay writing</td>
<td>Question included in oral exit interview.</td>
<td>Question included in oral exit interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. [Honors designation] Students will develop an argument based on new research and synthesize of their class learning about a fundamental problem in the study of the African-American experience.</td>
<td>Essay writing</td>
<td>Essay writing</td>
<td>25-page research paper written as part of an Independent Study</td>
<td>Question included in oral exit interview.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## RESULTS AND MODIFICATIONS

(I will focus here on the results of our exit interview process as this is the major assessment initiative we have instituted in the period since our last submission of this report.)

**Goal:** Students will identify the primary social, cultural, and political movements and actors in African-American history from the Maafa through to the present.  
**Results:** 100% of students completing the minor in the last four years successfully identified and discussed the most influential African-American movements.  
**Modifications:** Given the high rate of success in this area, we have made no modifications.

| Goal: Students will identify the primary questions and methodologies employed by scholars of the African-American experience including literary, historical, sociological, anthropological, and religious studies analysis.  
**Results:** 78% of students completing the minor in the last four years successfully identified and discussed the primary questions and methodologies employed by scholars of the African-American experience.  
**Modifications:** We feel that a 78% success rate meets our primary goals, so again, we made no modifications. |
| --- |
| Goal: Students will analyze the nature and extent of contributions made by African Americans to host nations through protest movements, physical labor, technical expertise, political negotiations, and cultural contributions.  
**Results:** 86% of students completing the minor in the last four years successfully analyzed the nature and extent of contributions made by African Americans to host nations.  
**Modifications:** We feel that an 86% success rate meets our primary goals, so again, we made no modifications. |
| Goal: Students will identify the metaphor that best interprets the African-American experience and defend their choice.  
**Results:** 100% of students completing the minor in the last four years successfully identified and discussed the metaphor that best interprets the African-American experience and successfully defended their choice.  
**Modifications:** Given the high rate of success in this area, we have made no modifications. |

### APPENDICES

Please find attached our exit interview instrument.
We do not want to appear flippant in our responses above regarding noted changes. We are taking the assessment process seriously as evidenced by the institution of an exit-interview process. The evidence has made it clear that we are, in the best of the traditions of the humanities and interdisciplinary programs, producing students who are fluent, articulate, and capable analyzers of the African-American experience. We will continue that commitment to excellence by continuing to offer classes that prepare students through rigorous instruction to bring that skill into the Global community. We will also continue to implement our exit-interview process.