

*Office of the Dean*

January 20, 2022

To: Charles Paine, Associate Professor, Chair of Academic Council, Faculty Senate

From: Arash Mafi, Professor, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Re: A88 Proposal for the creation of Africana Studies Department

## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Africana Studies Program at the University of New Mexico offers the only professional accredited degree of its kind in the state of New Mexico. This is a formal request to transition from an Academic Program to an Academic Department. This proposal details expected changes in curriculum and instruction, an expanded research profile, and continuation of a broad range of institutional and community service activities.

### **Instruction and Curriculum**

The reorganization includes reimagining the current undergraduate program's academic focus to reflect an emphasis on Africana Studies Philosophy, a variety of cultural studies foci within the Black Diaspora (especially the Circum-Caribbean, African, and Global South Studies), and a carefully mapped set of interdisciplinary offerings in Africana Studies including the humanities, social sciences, arts, and pre-professional programs. This shift in emphasis at the BA level is the first step in a three-step process that includes the development of an MA program and eventually the establishment of a flexible, innovative graduate studies program. The graduate studies program would support dual-PhD programs between Africana Studies and a variety of College of Arts and Sciences departments such as English, Sociology, Public Health, Spanish, French, or History, as well as truly interdisciplinary graduate-level study, including certificates, dual degrees, and micro-credentialing between the College of Arts and Sciences and other colleges such as the College of Education, the College of Fine Arts, the Law School, and the Anderson School of Management. The first step of this process, strengthening the BA degree, is currently underway. If approved, the MA program will matriculate its first cohort of students in the fall of 2025.

## **Research**

Currently, the Africana Studies Program at the University of New Mexico is a transdisciplinary academic unit that offers undergraduate courses on the politics and culture of Africa; the histories of African Americans in the U.S. (with a focus on Black people from the U.S. Southwest); and the history of peoples of African descent in the Diaspora, Latin America, and the Caribbean. African American Art, ARTH 453/553 (also offered as AFST 453), is the only upper-level course offered.

Our mission is to advance the discipline by contributing to the ongoing development of new theoretical, conceptual, and applied knowledge about people of Africa and the African diaspora. While this mission is rooted in the history of Africana Studies, we recognize the importance of acknowledging new trends in the discipline. We also recognize the importance of aligning Africana Studies' academic objectives with those of the University of New Mexico, the broader aspirations of our students, and the changing demands of today's national and global job market.

Hence, tenured and tenure-stream faculty in the Department of Africana Studies are expected to develop excellent pedagogical skills and an understanding of the intellectual needs of UNM students. Moreover, tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to develop research projects that will address questions and issues that are relevant to their specific scholarly agendas and to Africana Studies; present on a wide range of topics at national and international conferences; publish in refereed journals/books; publish book chapters; contribute to online scholarly publishing outlets; apply for external support that will facilitate the growth and development of the research and the discipline; and participate in national and international professional organizations.

The undergirding principle of the hiring plan that will shape this department is rooted in hiring scholars who are committed to innovative new lines of research in African American, Africana, and African Diaspora Studies, including intersectional inquiry and praxis that considers the simultaneity of overlapping systems of oppression including settler colonialism, racial capitalism, heteropatriarchy, heterosexism, nativism, ableism, etc. These scholars will complement current faculty who are producing scholarly work in a wide range of academic disciplines. We recognize that there are challenges particular to a truly transdisciplinary department, but these challenges will be met through effective mentorship and advocacy. The existing core faculty who are planning the formation of the Department of Africana Studies are highly published and recognized in their fields, and they have already proven willing to mentor junior faculty. In addition, these faculty have committed to continuing their mentorship once departmental status is attained.

Our primary goal is to gain national and international prominence in a specific set of diverse research areas by strengthening existing UNM faculty's research strengths and by bringing in new scholars to enhance existing areas of specialty. A second goal is to create methodological tools to battle intersecting systems of oppression among the existing departments and programs

on campus, such as Native American Studies, Chicana & Chicano Studies, Gender and Women Studies, and American Studies.

### Service

President Stokes' UNM 2040 initiative indicates that service represents both maintenance of the systems that sustain the University and service that represents the possibility for change. The Department of Africana Studies expects its tenured and tenure-track faculty to be of service to the University through their participation in department, college, and university-wide committees throughout their careers at UNM. It is expected that tenure-stream faculty be engaged in service to professional organizations or, when appropriate, engaged with state, national, and global community activities. Consistent with UNM's Tenure and Promotion Guidelines, candidates for tenure and promotion must have made substantive contributions in one or more of these service areas by the time they submit their files for review. Evaluation of administrative and other professional services to the University, including service on the UNM Faculty Senate, should go beyond a simple enumeration to include an evaluation of the extent and quality of the services rendered. Public or community service may include work for professional organizations, as well as local, state, federal, or international agencies and institutions. It must relate to the basic mission of Africana Studies and UNM and capitalize on the faculty member's special professional expertise.

Africana Studies has a long history of serving the local Albuquerque community in a much broader range of activities than is typical for an academic department. In keeping with its mission, the Department of Africana Studies will continue to serve the local community as well as other communities across the State of New Mexico and will expand its service activities as a department to the University of New Mexico. This department will also expand its service nationally as members of the Africana Studies faculty participate in professional and academic organizations such as the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS), the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD), and the African American Review. This expansion is in keeping with the department's goal of gaining national and international prominence for the program.

Current Name	Proposed Name
Africana Studies Program (AFST)	Department of Africana Studies (AFST)
Current Degree(s) Offered	Proposed Degree(s) Offered
Bachelor of Arts in Africana Studies	Bachelor of Arts in Africana Studies Master of Arts in Africana Studies

## B. RATIONALE

The Africana Studies Program at the University of New Mexico provides students with a broad understanding of the political, social, and historic linkages between peoples of Africa and other African-descended people in the Southwest, the rest of the United States, and throughout the Black Diaspora in Mexico, Latin America, Europe, and the Caribbean. Since 1968, when San Francisco State College founded the first Black Studies program, universities across the U.S. have established rich and dynamic values, norms, research methodologies, lines of inquiry, and literature. Africana Studies is a member institution of the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS), a leading organization of Black Studies professionals in the world, which boasts thousands of members across the United States. Many members of our faculty hold professional membership in NCBS and other national professional organizations.

Africana Studies desires to join other major flagship campuses in the US such as the University of Virginia, Georgia State University, the University of Colorado Boulder, and the University of Texas at Austin, which have already transitioned their Africana Studies programs to departments. These transitions point to the field's maturation, growth, and demand. The same national trends that have contributed toward building comprehensive Africana Studies departments in these other institutions are encouraging for a flagship research institution such as the University of New Mexico.

From Fall 2017 to Fall 2021, the University of New Mexico's Office of Institutional Analytics reports a decrease of Africana Studies majors from 6 to 2, with a high of 8 in Fall 2019. [See Table 1]

Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
6	5	8	7	2

The uncertain future of the Director of Africana Studies and departmental status likely affected this precipitous drop. The formation of a department will certainly increase the number Africana Studies majors in future years. However, it must be noted that Africana Studies has contributed greatly to undergraduate teaching and the generation of student credit hours (SCH) in the College of Arts and Sciences. The SCH taught by Africana Studies over the past 4 academic years is presented in Table 2.

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Fall	792	681	648	552
Spring	733	639	716	495
Summer	138	168	192	36
Total	1663	1488	1556	1083

It is notable that the nearly steady SCH generation by Africana Studies has happened while the number of faculty (tenured/tenure-track and lecturer) has decreased substantially over the same number of years. (See Table 3)

2018	2019	2020	2021
6	4	4	2.25

The College of Arts and Sciences has recently seen a drop in SCH, primarily due to recent changes in general education course requirements and common course numbering, from a total of 326,958 SCH in 2018 to 253,690 SCH in 2021. [See Table 4]

2018	2019	2020	2021
326,958	293,280	275,834	253,690

Although the SCH drop in Africana Studies has been comparatively large in 2021, possibly due to the Covid19 pandemic, the SCH generated by Africana Studies in prior years dropped at a slower rate than the College's.

Nevertheless, local circumstances underscore the prospects and possibilities offered by having such a department at UNM, including growth in ethnic diversity and overall demographics in the state's population. The African immigrant and Hispanic population of the state also is diversifying, due both to immigration and rural/urban migration. Therefore, a critical need exists for exploring, researching, and producing scholarship on the varied experiences, cultural

expressions, and social locations of Afro Latinx/Native populations and to take advantage of the unique cultural diversity of the State of New Mexico.

Black critical practices and ideologies are essential to unpacking the vital role that the Black Diaspora plays in global cultural, revolutionary, and technological advances. Black diasporic traditions and values are also crucial to an understanding of the importance of Africa as an increasingly major player in the system of global interdependence. In keeping with this interdependence, Africana Studies embraces emerging as well as established modes of critical inquiry. Global South Studies, Afrofuturism, Transgender Studies, Transnational Intersectional Feminisms are but a few of the remarkably broad range of academic and research interests and social justice imperatives that Africana Studies embraces that are central to the overarching research mission of the University of New Mexico.

### **C. STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC BENEFIT**

UNM will benefit significantly in the transition of Africana Studies from Academic Program to Academic Department. One of the chief benefits of this transition will be the development and retention of tenured and tenure-track faculty that will guide this vital academic discipline. The newly constituted faculty will champion Africana principles in UNM's research, teaching, and service missions, and thereby strengthen faculty governance, broaden the set of course offerings, produce an expanded research profile, deliver greater leadership in university service, and strengthen institutional reputation.

Departmentalizing Africana Studies at UNM will enhance other departments' course offerings by the cross-sharing of historical, social, and political developments. Our conversations with educators, students, and the general population indicates that the establishment of a Department of Africana Studies will attract students enrolled in community colleges and high schools throughout the state, the Southwest region, and across the nation whose student populations are interested in pursuing the field of Africana Studies at the university level.

As noted in Table 1, Africana Studies has averaged 5.6 majors annually over the past 5 years. And as noted in Table 2, the Fall 2021 SCH is 552, with the yearly SCH of more than 1,000 in the past 5 years. It is our hope to create opportunities for students rooted in Albuquerque and the surrounding region to visit, apply to, and attend the University of New Mexico to receive their B.A. degree, and eventually an M.A., from the Department of Africana Studies. We believe they will be attracted to our focus on the African Diaspora in the Southwest United States, our high-impact practices, critical race and social theory, community-based learning, and diverse research areas.

A formally sanctioned Department offers a unique perspective that fills an epistemological gap and complements existing programs. A Department of Africana Studies matches the mission of the University to engage students, faculty, and staff in comprehensive educational, research, and service programs. In addition, a Department of Africana Studies would provide students with the tenets, intellectual practices, experience, and skills that they need to be progressive citizens who

contribute to the state, national, and global economies; would cultivate a campus community that creates, applies, and disseminates new knowledge and creative works in the discipline; and would build on the university's educational, research and creative resources to provide services directly to the City and State that promote economic development and enhance New Mexicans' quality of life.

Moreover, as a department, Africana Studies will significantly augment currently existing efforts to recruit, retain, and graduate underrepresented racial minority (URM) students, and contribute to the success of URM faculty and staff.

The University of New Mexico celebrates the Africana Studies program's five decades of serving students, faculty, staff, and countless community stakeholders including The Friends of Africana Studies Advisory Team and the newly renamed Freedom Now, Africana Studies chartered student organization. With the support of this coalition and University of New Mexico's academic affairs and administration, Africana Studies is poised to become the premier department in the Southwest United States.

#### **D. CONFLICT STATEMENT**

This committee has not identified actual or potential conflicts with the programs or services of existing academic units at UNM, branch community colleges of UNM, or other institutions or organizations within the State of New Mexico. A newly formed Department of Africana Studies will collaborate with other academic units and organizations at UNM and complement services currently offered to faculty, staff, students, and members of the local community.

#### **E. RESOURCE STATEMENT**

During the first five years of its existence, the Department of Africana Studies will require from the University the following investments in terms of human and physical resources, space, and equipment:

**Personnel (Salaries / FTE):** The hire of a new faculty member at the full professor level to serve as Chair would require \$95,000 and will be funded by the Provost's Office. Other additions to the department would involve a combination of MOUs and renegotiated joint appointments involving faculty already at UNM, and therefore are difficult to determine at this time. Adequate resources are planned by Dean's and Provost's Offices.

**Equipment:** No special equipment is needed for the formation of department. Office furniture, supplies, and computers will be needed for new faculty members. Departmental funds and College resources will be used to pay for these.

**Space Needs:** No new space needs are projected for the first five years.

**Administrative Support:** This would remain unchanged from current support levels, aside from UNM-wide raises.

Operating Budget: The budget will be commensurate with other departments of similar size and scope in the College. The current Operating Budget is \$16,000 and is provided by the College.

## **F. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The current structure consists of a Director, a small contingent of Lecturers and Adjunct Faculty, Postdoctoral Fellows, and undergraduate and graduate student workers. As a Department, Africana Studies will adopt an organizational structure that is in keeping with other similarly oriented Departments in the College of Arts and Sciences such as Chicana & Chicano Studies and Native American Studies.

### **Current Structure:**

Program Director (Professor Kirsten Buick, 0.5 FTE)

Joint Appointment Faculty (Assistant Professor Natasha Howard, 0.25 FTE)

Lecturer III (Dr. Jamal Martin, 1.0 FTE)

Post-Doctoral Fellows (2)

Adjunct Faculty

Department Administrator (0.25 FTE)

Undergraduate and Graduate Student Workers

### **Proposed Structure:**

Department Chair (Tenured)

Department Associate Chair (Tenured/Tenure-Track)

Tenured and Tenure Track Faculty

Joint Appointment Faculty

Affiliated Faculty

Lecturers

Post-Doctoral Fellows

Adjunct Faculty

Department Administrator

Undergraduate and Graduate Student Workers

The final structure of the department will, of course, depend upon the bylaws developed and adopted by the core faculty. The distribution of rank will be determined by the hiring priorities across the curriculum and the research priorities set by the faculty. The primary line of



responsibility from the Department to the College of Arts and Sciences will be managed through the Chair, who will report to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

### **G. ACADEMIC OFFERINGS**

Within a five-year period following departmentalization, Africana Studies proposes to offer: 1) a continuation of the current B.A. major and minor; 2) a new on-line degree; 3) a graduate certificate and micro-credentialing dedicated to training APS teachers to be more proficient in dismantling anti-Blackness and centering Africana Studies inquiry and praxis; and 4) an MA in Africana Studies. The instructional programs the academic unit will offer are undergraduate and eventually graduate courses. The department will offer a continuation of the current B.A. in Africana Studies and add an M.A. in Africana Studies at the end of the five-year transition period. The department will offer 9 courses at the lower-division level, 24 at the upper-division level, and eventually 8 courses at the M.A. level.

The existing lower-division courses with SCH are as follows:

- 101. Swahili I. (3)
- 102. Swahili II. (3)
- 1110. Introduction to Africana Studies. (3)
- 1120. Race in the Digital Age. (3)
- 1996. Topics. (1-6)
- 2110. African American History. (3)
- 2140. Black Women in the African Diaspora. (3)
- 299. Black Leadership. (3)
- 2996. Topics. (1-6)

The existing upper-division courses with SCH are as follows:

- 303. Black Liberation and Religion. (3)
- 307. African Diaspora in the Southwest. (3)
- 309. Black Politics. (3)
- 315. Race and the Law. (3)
- 322. Africana Study Abroad. (1-6)

- 329. Introduction to African Politics. (3)
- 333. Black Political Theory. (3)
- 335. Sociology of Black Communities. (3)
- 340. Race and Globalization. (3)
- 345. Foundations in Critical Race Theory. (3)
- 360. The Harlem Renaissance. (3)
- 380. African Literature. (3)
- 381. African-American Literature II. (3)
- 385. The African World. (3)
- 388. Blacks in Latin America. (3)
- 391. Problems. (1-3)
- 395. Education in Colonial Africa. (3)
- 396. Emancipation and Equality. (3)
- 397. Interdisciplinary Topics. (1-3)
- 398. Africana Philosophy and Methods. (3)
- 399. Race, Culture and Education. (3)
- 453. African American Art. (3)
- 495. Topics in Africana Studies. (1-3)
- 498. Research Seminar. (3)

New courses for the proposed M.A. program will need to be developed by the new departmental faculty. The new courses will be necessary as, except for ARTH 453-African American Art, there are currently no M.A. level courses.

None of the existing or proposed courses overlap, or will overlap, with existing course offerings at UNM so there is no need to resolve potential duplication and conflict with units offering those courses. There is, however, the potential to cross-list a number of courses, including SOCI 420, Race & Inequality, and SOCI 430, Intersectionality Race Gender Class for Social Policy (a grad/undergrad for-credit class).

Currently, the program accomplishes its mission by offering an undergraduate major, second major and a minor, as well as by sponsoring and participating in community initiatives and public lectures. The curricula and community engagement efforts maintain a regional and transnational focus on: (1) The African Diaspora in New Mexico, the Southwest United States, Mexico, Latin American, Africa, Europe, and the Caribbean, and; 2) critical race theory and racial/social justice. Our curricula areas allow us to offer courses concerned with gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity, arts and culture, political and social mobilization, education and religion, immigration and citizenship, history and heritage, and Black feminism/Womanist theory.

## **H. RESEARCH PROFILE**

As a program, our current teaching and research strengths include: the Black Diasporic Southwest, Caribbean, and Mexico; Geography and Digital Humanities; Health Sciences; Education; Indigenous Sign Language in Africa. We also benefit from cooperative courses taught in Communications and Journalism, English, Geography, Sociology, Political Science, and Art History.

AFST will establish a Faculty Working Group to mentor junior faculty and to negotiate a point system amongst AFST faculty, with specific attribution to the weight of scholarly publications. These weights will by no means reflect a subjective evaluation of the content. Their use is to create transparency in decision-making regarding merit, tenure, and promotion. We envisage giving differential weights to single-authored, lead-authored, and co-authored publications. We will also pursue discussions concerning journal groupings linked to impact. The categories of scholarly publications could include (but are not limited to):

Books published by an academic (peer-reviewed) press

Books published by a trade (non-reviewed) press

Edited volumes, or special issues of a journal

Articles in peer-reviewed journals

Book chapters

Review essays

Book reviews

Editorials and opinion pieces

In addition to scholarly production, research funding will be included in merit raise and promotion considerations. External funding (with partial or full overhead) will have a higher value in the department's point system than internal university funding, as will funding used to support graduate student training.

Since publication and funding determine the main benchmarks for the department's ranking, the Faculty Working Group will explore possibilities for expanded faculty administrative assistance. In addition, we will examine possibilities for instituting Research Semesters that allow time off from teaching to finalize a major publication or to submit a major external grant.

## **I. SERVICE PROFILE**

We recognize that administrative service must be allocated fairly and with transparency. The department must display a visible presence in administrative committees at the campus level. Membership in campus-wide committees will be particularly recognized in merit evaluation.

In general, academic service involves positive contributions to (a) the intellectual and administrative life of the department; (b) administration and governance at the University of New Mexico; (c) the greater profession of sociology; and (d) local, state, national, and international audiences in ways appropriate to Africana Studies.

The balance among service, scholarship, and teaching will vary over the course of an academic career. Non-tenured faculty are expected to dedicate their service primarily to the department with a close secondary commitment to certain aspects of the profession. A relatively light service load for junior faculty is intended to assist them in the primary tasks of building teaching and research records acceptable for tenure and promotion. Assistant professors should avoid taking on service commitments that become so great that they hinder teaching and scholarly development.

Service to the department: As a basic rule, assistant professors will serve on one departmental standing committee and one ad hoc committee per year. During their probationary period, they should not serve as chair of either a standing or ad hoc committee.

Service to the profession: Assistant professors should focus on activities that directly draw on or augment their research and teaching. These include reviewing manuscripts for academic journals and presses; reviewing grant proposals; organizing conferences or panels at professional meetings; and chairing sessions at professional meetings.

Service to UNM: On occasion, assistant professors may do university-level service. Such service might include work on the boards and committees of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Graduate School, the Faculty Senate, the Committee on Governance, and other University committees.

Service to the broader community: Although community service is not required of faculty members when they are considered for tenure or promotion, the department will view this activity as another element that can be used to judge a faculty member's strengths; again, as long as such commitments do not interfere with the development of a teaching and research record that would support tenure and promotion.

## **J. NEAR-TERM PLANNING STATEMENT**

The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences will appoint an Inaugural Chair to lead the formation of the department, to serve an initial two-year term. Faculty wishing to transfer part or all of their FTE to the department will use the Faculty Transfer Policy issued Oct. 1, 2021, by Academic Affairs.

Faculty, under the leadership of the Chair, will write a Governance/Rules document and a Workload Policy as required by Article 13 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and provide this to the dean of A&S and Academic Affairs for approval and publication. Standing and ad hoc committees will be formed and conduct business according to the Governance/Rules document.

## **K. PRELIMINARY BUDGET**

The following budget summary is based on A&S departments of similar planned size and scope. There are no planned expenses for space upkeep or rental, utilities, contracted services, or equipment maintenance and replacement; however, the Operating Budget can pay for such expenses if incurred.

Operating Budget: \$16,000

Chair Salary (1 FTE): \$95,000

Full Professor (1 FTE): \$87,000

Associate Professor (1 FTE): \$77,000

Assistant Professor (1 FTE): \$70,000

Lecturer (1 FTE): \$56,000

Department Administrator (0.5 FTE): \$20,000

GA/TA (0.5 FTE) including tuition and health insurance: \$30,000

Estimated Fringe: \$142,000

**Total estimated Budget: \$593,000**