

Montana University System New Academic Program Proposal Summary

Campus:	The University of Montana-Missoula	Item Number: 116-1006-R0902
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Program Title:	African American Studies	Date: August 26, 2002
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1. How does this program advance the campus' academic mission and fit priorities?

The proposed minor in African American Studies has two goals. The first is the provision of a forum for students, regardless of racial, ethnic, cultural or religious backgrounds to engage in the dissemination and exchange of ideas, values and perspectives, while challenging them to critically reflect upon those ideas. The second goal is to provide a holistic education that allows students to explore, within a challenging but stimulating academic context, a wide range of issues pertaining to race, identity, gender, family, ethnicity, social justice and inequality. Hence, the proposed minor will provide students of the University of Montana-Missoula with an interdisciplinary and integrated program that will enable them to explore important issues from diverse perspectives and disciplines.

This proposed minor fits with both the articulated strategic directions and the academic vision for the University of Montana-Missoula. Specifically, the minor helps meet our mission to "increase the diversity of students, faculty, and staff for an enriched campus culture" and our core value of "diversity and community among students, faculty, and staff." Additionally, the minor reflects our academic vision to "engage students in global cultural perspectives (which are) infused throughout programs."

2. How does this program fit the Board of Regents' goals and objectives?

The proposed minor fits the Regents' vision of preparing students for success by creating an environment of ideas and excellence that nurtures intellectual, social, economic, and cultural development, coupled with improving rates of student retention and degree completion."

3. How does this program support or advance Montana's needs and interests?

The program serves Montana's needs and interests by adding to the development of our students to become "informed, educated and culturally aware citizenry...prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century, engage in life-long learning, and lead productive lives in an increasingly diverse and global society."

Additionally, the development of an African American Studies program at UM also matches a steadily growing interest in African American history and culture among young Americans of all colors and ethnic groups. As American society has become more inclusive, and more African Americans have risen to prominence in the last four decades, we have seen an increase in the desire to learn about the various roles of African Americans in the building of America. This interest is reflected in the increasing enrollment in AAS courses, and in student demand for more course offerings, and for an AAS minor.

4. How will this program contribute to economic development in Montana? (Note projected annual economic impact both regionally and statewide.)

This proposed minor will address, *inter alia*, the problem of attrition of African-American students. The attrition rate of African-American students at integrated institutions of higher learning is higher than that of any other group. In addition to other reasons, African-American students cite two additional major reasons for leaving--systemic racism, and a lack of academic offerings reflecting the history, contributions, and interests of Africans and African-Americans. Hence, the minor is likely to contribute to the retention of African American students.

5. What is the Program's planned capacity?

Break-even point? FTE students

Enrollments/year? 320

Graduates/year?

MT jobs/year?

6. Resource Allocation

Total program budget? \$

Faculty FTE? 1.0

Staff FTE?

Does this program require new resources? Amount?

The program requires no new resources. The program can be delivered using existing faculty, operational expenses, and physical facilities. No additional capital outlay or reallocation of resources is needed.

How will the campus fund the program?

Existing resources.

If internal reallocation is necessary, name the sources?

NA