THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICANA STUDIES

INDEPENDENT STUDY HANDBOOK

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I. DEPARTMENTAL GOALS

The Department of Africana Studies at The College of Wooster is an interdisciplinary program whose curriculum examines the history and culture of peoples and societies of the African Diaspora from an African-centered perspective--i.e., a critical part of the interdisciplinary inquiry focuses first, and foremost, upon Africana people from their perspective.

The goals and objectives of the department's curriculum for student learning are:

1. Students should be able to identify and articulate the intellectual, historical, and societal origins, purposes, and challenges of Africana Studies as an academic discipline;

2. Students should be able to identify and explain the connections of Africana Studies to the historic and contemporary experiences of peoples of African descent;

3. Students should be able to identify, articulate, and analyze major texts, theorists, schools of thought;

4. Students should be able to identify and explain major historical events considered central to the general experiences of peoples of African descent in Africa, North America, the Caribbean, and other parts of the world;

5. Students should be able to identify, articulate, and apply appropriate methods of inquiry grounded in an African-centered perspective and/or relevant analytical framework to the investigation or critical evaluation of topics, texts, artistic productions, events, or phenomena related to the experiences of peoples of African descent;

6. Students should demonstrate the ability to conceptualize, plan, research, and produce an Independent Study Project, analyzing or critically evaluating specific topics. artistic production, events, or phenomena related to the experiences of peoples of African descent that clearly reflects their command of the learning objectives et out by the Africana Studies Department.

7. Students should be able to discuss major aspects of an Independent Study Project, defend theoretical and methodological decisions made in its conception, plan of study, and organization, and adequately answer questions raised on these issues during an oral defense of the written I.S.

II. THE MAJOR & MINOR IN AFRICANA STUDIES

The major in Africana Studies consists of 12 courses:

- Africana Studies 100: Introduction to Africana Studies;
- Four 200-level courses chosen from Africana Studies 200, 212, 213 ("W"), 231, 240, 242, 244, 245, 246, or 247;
- One 300-level course chosen from Africana Studies 300, 301, or 302;
- Three semesters of Independent Study: Africana Studies 401, 451, and 452;
- Three electives taken from Africana Studies/or cross-listed interdepartmental courses.

A minor in Africana Studies consists of six courses:

- Africana Studies 100: Introduction to Africana Studies;
- Three 200-level courses chosen from Africana Studies 200, 212, 213 ("W"), 231, 240, 242, 244, 245, 246, or 247;
- One 300-level course chosen from Africana Studies 300, 301, or 302
- One elective taken from Africana Studies/or cross-listed interdepartmental course.

Only grades of C- or better are acceptable in courses for the major or minor. S/NC courses are not permitted in the major or minor.

The Junior I.S. in Africana Studies introduces students to research methodology germane to the discipline and is guided by the rules set forth in

the Africana Studies I.S. Handbook. All majors **must** take Africana Studies 401 (Junior I.S.) during the fall or spring semesters of the Junior Year.

The Senior I.S. thesis focuses upon a year-long independent research project under the supervision of an advisor in the Africana Studies Department. As part of the Senior I.S. thesis requirement, students **must** present a prospectus for approval by the Africana Studies Department by the **6th week** in which Africana Studies 451 is taken (see further explanation on page 6).

•A passing grade for Africana Studies 451 will be based on the successful completion of the introduction and two substantive chapters of the Senior I.S. This requirement represents the collective consensus of the Africana Studies Department and cannot be changed without unanimous consent of the department.

•The initial draft of the Senior I.S. thesis in Africana Studies 452 must be completed by the deadline specified by the adviser. The completed I.S. must exhibit intellectual rigor and proficiency in writing about the topic.

•The defense of the thesis will involve an oral examination that will cover the thesis (or project) as well as the general themes and paradigms in the discipline of Africana Studies. Submission of the Senior I.S. thesis must conform to all other College regulations.

III. THE NATURE OF INDEPENDENT STUDY

Both the Junior Independent Study and Senior Independent Study thesis involve research projects resulting in a substantial essay. The Junior I.S. should be at least 30 pages long and the Senior I.S. at least 50 pages. The department will accept longer theses.

A. DEFINITION OF JUNIOR I.S.

The Junior I.S. in Africana Studies is a group tutorial that includes bibliographical and methodological instruction and a written research paper/ or project designed by the student under supervision of a Africana Studies advisor.

It must demonstrate application of the basic elements of Africana Studies methodology as related to the chosen topic. This thesis is letter graded.

The Junior I.S. provides each student experience in developing, researching, and writing a thesis on a particular topic. Through weekly, one-hour meetings with a faculty advisor, each student develops a valid set of questions in the area of Africana Studies to guide the scope and treatment of the topic, discusses methods of research and documentation, becomes familiar with the literature and issues of the topic, and learns time management skills necessary for the successful completion of the I.S.

B. DEFINITION OF SENIOR I.S.

The Senior I.S. is an individually researched thesis that is completed over two semesters during the senior year under the guidance of a Africana Studies faculty advisor. It must demonstrate mastery of the basic elements of Africana Studies methodology as related to the chosen topic. Through weekly, one-hour meetings with a faculty advisor, each student develops a valid set of questions in the area of Africana Studies to guide the scope and treatment of the topic, discusses methods of research and documentation, becomes familiar with the literature and issues of the topic, and learns time management skills necessary for the successful completion of the I.S.

C. REQUIRED PROSPECTUS FOR THE SENIOR I.S.

A short written prospectus (4-5 type pages) is required for all Seniors enrolled in Africana Studies 451. It must be filed with the chair on/ or before 14 October 2012. Oral presentation of this prospectus will be made before the faculty and majors of the department on Thursday, 18 October 2012, from 4:30-6:00 P.M., in Scheide 134.

The prospectus is a short summary of the I.S. project. It must include the title of the Senior I.S., a clear thesis statement, hypothesis, or research question, as well as a statement of the methodology to be used. In addition, it must contain a <u>Literature Review</u> of at least five (5) sources, along with a preliminary bibliography.

IV. ASSESSMENT OF THE SENIOR I.S.

A. METHOD OF DIRECT ASSESSMENT OF THE SENIOR I.S. PROJECT

The Senior Independent Study Project in Africana Studies is evaluated for proficiency and intellectual rigor based upon three criteria: (1) content, (2) method, and (3) structure. An assessment form is to be completed by each faculty member who evaluates the Senior I.S. Thesis and returned to the Chair in accordance with the guidelines printed in the Africana Studies I.S. Handbook.

l. Content: The topic of the I.S. thesis should be manageable and feasible. The completed Thesis should represent a serious and systematic attempt to utilize available resources effectively. The study should reflect both familiarity with the literature as well as use of Africana Studies methodology and intellectual traditions.

_____ Honors _____Good _____Satisfactory ____Not Satisfactory

Excellent	**Good**	**Satisfactory**	**Not Satisfactory**
The I.S. demonstrates careful planning and organization in minute detail. The subject/topic is clearly defined and manageable within the confines of available library and IT resources.	The I.S demonstrates careful planning and organization. The subject/topic is defined and manageable within the confines of available library and IT resources..	The I.S. reflects some thought on the part of the student to planning and organization. The subject/topic is defined, but is too limited in scope.	The I.S. demonstrates poor planning. The subject/topic is poorly defined. and the project is poorly organized .
The I.S. reflects thorough bibliographical control of the basic literature on the topic.	The I.S. reflects good bibliographical control of the basic literature on the topic.	The I.S. reflects limited bibliographical control of the basic literature on the topic;	The I.S. reflects poor bibliographical control of the basic literature on the topic.
The I.S. reflects cutting-edge research on the topic by the student, or it revisits and explores an old topic in a new and inventive way.	The I.S. sheds some new light on the subject, or attempts to explore an old topic in an inventive way.	The I.S. basically summarizes the literature and theories of a few experts on the topic;	The I.S. erroneously Summarizes the literature and theories of a few experts on the topic.
The I.S. reflects thorough command of Africana Studies theories and paradigms.	The I.S. reflects familiarity with basic Africana Studies theories and paradigms.	The I.S. reflects limited knowledge of basic Africana Studies theories and paradigms.	The I.S. reflects no familiarity with basic Africana Studies theories and paradigms.

2. Method: There should be a clear statement of the methodology used that is consistent with the methodological traditions in either the humanities or social science areas of Africana Studies.

_____ Honors _____Good _____Satisfactory ____Not Satisfactory

Excellent	**Good**	**Satisfactory**	**Not Satisfactory**
The I.S. thoroughly articulates the student's engagement in critical thinking and application of an African-centered method of inquiry employing a theory or analytical frame-work within Africana Studies.	The I.S. articulates the student's engagement in critical thinking and application of an African-centered method of inquiry employing a theory or analytical frame-work within Africana Studies.	The I.S. reflects some engagement by the student in critical thinking and application of an African-centered method of inquiry employing a theory or analytical frame-work within Africana Studies	The I.S. reflects no engagement by the student in critical thinking and application of an African-centered method of inquiry employing a theory or analytical frame-work within Africana Studies

3. Structure: Structure is an essential element of clear expression. The Thesis should be well organized, coherent, and should pay particular attention to procedural details, methodology, and the mechanics of writing.

Excellent	**Good**	**Satisfactory**	**Not Satisfactory**
The I.S. is exceptionally well written. It demonstrates total command of the mechanics of writing--namely, organization, grammar, coherence, logic, syntax.	The I.S. is well written. It demonstrates total command of the mechanics of writing--namely, organization, grammar, coherence, logic, syntax.	The I.S. demonstrates basic command of the mechanics of writing --namely, organization, grammar, coherence, logic, syntax.	The I.S. does not demonstrate basic command of the mechanics of writing--namely, organization, grammar, coherence, logic, syntax.

D. The adviser will provide each student a short written evaluation of the Senior I.S. that incorporates the written assessment of the second reader. A copy of this evaluation will be filed with the chair of the Africana Studies Department.

B. METHOD OF DIRECT ASSESSMENT OF THE SENIOR I.S. ORALS

After a copy of the Senior I.S. thesis has been submitted to the Registrar's Office, the student is expected to present a successful oral defense of his or her paper before the adviser and a second reader. The second reader will provide the student a short critique/commentary on the I.S. at least twenty-four hours prior to the oral defense.

The Senior I.S. Orals address **goals 5-7** of the Africana Studies Department (refer to page 3 of the I.S. Handbook)

•***Goal 5***. Students should be able to identify, articulate, and apply appropriate methods of inquiry grounded in an African-centered perspective and/or relevant analytical framework to the investigation or critical evaluation of topics, texts, artistic productions, events, or phenomena related to the experiences of peoples of African descent.

Excellent	**Good**	**Satisfactory**	**Not Satisfactory**
Student gives well-articulated explanation for research choices for the project consistent with the methodological approaches specified in the I.S.	Student gives well-articulated explanation for research choices for the project consistent with the methodological approaches specified in the I.S.; explains analytical , theoretical, and/or methodological approaches guiding the I.S.	Student explains research choices for the project; does not always explain the analytical, theoretical, and/or methodological approaches guiding the I.S.	Student gives a rambling and inarticulate explanation of research choices for the I.S. project; does not demonstrate internalization of theoretical, and/or methodological approaches guiding the I.S.

•***Goal 6***. Students should demonstrate the ability to conceptualize, plan, research, and produce an Independent Study Project, analyzing or critically evaluating specific topics, artistic production, event, or phenomena related to the experiences of peoples of African descent that clearly reflects their command of the learning objectives set out by the Africana Studies Department.

Excellent	**Good**	**Satisfactory**	**Not Satisfactory**
Student gives well-articulated and succinct summary of the I.S. project.	Student gives well-articulated and succinct summary of the I.S. project;.	Student explains the I.S. project.	Student presents a rambling and inarticulate summary of the I.S. project.

•*Goal 7*. Students should be able to discuss major aspects of an Independent Study Project, defend theoretical and methodological decisions made in its conception, plan of study, and organization, and adequately answer questions raised on these issues during an oral defense of the written I.S.

Excellent	**Good**	**Satisfactory**	**Not Satisfactory**
Student gives well-articulated explanation of the analytical , theoretical, and/or methodological approaches guiding the I.S.; responses to examiners' criticisms are completely focused on the topic.	Student gives an articulate explanation of the analytical, theoretical, and/or methodological approaches guiding the I.S.; responses to examiners' criticisms are focused mostly on the topic.	Student gives an explanation of the analytical, theoretical, and/or methodological approaches guiding the I.S.; responses to examiners' criticisms sometimes stray from the topic.	Student gives a rambling and inarticulate explanation of the analytical, theoretical, and/or methodological approaches guiding the I.S.; responses to examiners' criticisms often stray from the topic.

C. INDIRECT ASSESSMENT: SENIOR I.S. EXIT SURVEY

All seniors are expected to complete a departmental Senior I.S. Exit Survey and submit it in a sealed envelop to the Coordination of the department of Africana Studies, Di Springer (010 Kauke Hall), prior to scheduling of Orals. Copies of the Senior I.S. Exit Survey may be picked up from Di Springer's office (extension #2129).

D. POLICY REGARDING PLAGIARISM AND MISREPRESENTATION OF WORK

The College of Wooster has defined plagiarism as follows in its Code of Academic Integrity (Appendix II):

> "To use or imitate the language, ideas, or thoughts of another person and represent them as one's own is to commit an act of plagiarism. This is true whether:
>
> •The material used is only a brief excerpt or an entire paper or articles;
> •The original source is the work of another student or in a publication, including publications available electronically, either on the Internet or from such electronic media as CD-Rom;

•The product is a written paper, oral presentation, or an electronic publication such as a Web page.

It is not the use of others' ideas that is unethical; writers expect and hope their work will be read and used. However, to use others' ideas without acknowledgment is literary kidnapping. (In fact, the word 'plagiarism' derives from the Latin word for kidnapper.) Merely to paraphrase (as opposed to quoting verbatim and at length) does not relieve one of the obligation to make clear the source of the ideas or to indicate specifically direct quotations.

To have mastered material about which you write implies having read and digested it, so that it comes easily in your own words and you could talk with others about it intelligently. Your obligations--out of respect both to the writers you have read and to good craftsmanship--are to make the ideas you have absorbed a part of you and to acknowledge the sources you have used.

More detailed information about the proper use of others' work and appropriate methods of acknowledging borrowed material may be found in most handbooks on composition and will be discussed in various classes in which writing plays a part. Additionally, the proliferation of electronic sources of information has created heightened awareness of the ease with which unauthorized material can be obtained and used. The obligation to document material that has been taken from electronic sources is absolutely the same as the obligation to document any sources. Guides on accepted methods of attributing electronic material are available on-line through Wooster's library at the following address: http://www.wooster.edu/library/writer.html."

E. THESIS DEADLINES

Two copies of the completed Senior Independent Study thesis are due in the Registrar's Office by 4:00 P.M. on the first day of classes following Spring Break. In the case of a project, two copies of a written synopsis of the nature of the project and a statement that the I.S. has been presented in its final form are due in the Registrar's Office at the time specified above.

One copy of the revised, corrected I.S. must be deposited with the chair of the Department of Africana Studies before an I.S. grade will be submitted to the Registrar's Office.

If the thesis or project is to be completed on a different time-schedule, the rules of submission that apply are those published in the Official College Calendar.

Any delay in turning in a thesis (or project) beyond the deadlines specified above automatically establishes the grade of Incomplete for the thesis. The conditions for changing the Incomplete grade to a passing grade will be established by the Dean of the Faculty after consultation with the student's faculty adviser. The Incomplete grade automatically becomes NC two weeks after the deadline for the submission of the thesis unless prior approval for an extension has been given by the Dean. No thesis turned in after the deadline will receive a grade of Honors without the unanimous vote of the department and the approval of the Dean.

Advisers may impose deadlines for the purpose of commenting and advising the student while work on the I.S. is in progress. The student may not expect editorial comment, guidance, and advice on drafts of the thesis or versions of a project submitted after the last day of classes during the term in which the student is enrolled in Africana Studies 452.

F. GRADING PROCEDURES (refer to Direct Measure of Assessment, pages 6-9 of this I.S. Handbook).

G. DEPARTMENTAL HONORS

A graduating senior will receive departmental honors by meeting all of the following conditions:

1. A cumulative grade point average of 3.500 or better for all courses completed in the major department.

A cumulative average of 3.200 or better for all courses completed at

The College.

Honors for the Independent Study thesis or a unanimous vote of the Africana Studies Department.

H. DEPARTMENTAL EXPECTATIONS FOR THE SENIOR I.S.

The Department of Africana Studies' expectations for students enrolled in 451-452 are as follows:

- That the student meet weekly in one-hour conferences with the faculty I.S. adviser and present written progress reports upon request;

- That the major focus of the Senior I.S. thesis be in Africana Studies in all cases, regardless of the emphasis that the student chooses to take;

- That the student select a topic in consultation with the faculty I.S. adviser. In all cases, however, final approval of the topic must be given by the Department of Africana Studies upon review of the student's prospectus. The primary concern in the choice of a topic should be the availability of resources.

I. ASSIGNING INDEPENDENT STUDY ADVISORS

The advisor for all Senior I.S. theses will be selected by the chair of the Department of Africana Studies in consultation with the Department. The responsibilities of the advisor are as follows:

- To encourage the student to attempt an inquiry or project of appropriate rigor within the limitations of the student's potential, the timeframe, and available resources;

- To supervise the student in the successful completion of the chosen I.S. topic, while meeting the general College expectations as interpreted by the department;

- To review and critique the I.S. thesis. All drafts of the thesis, including

the final draft (if received by specified deadlines set by the advisor), will be critiqued by the advisor, who will be responsible for pointing out to the student typical errors of logic, style, and the mechanics of writing, as well as theoretical and bibliographic construction. Advisors are not required to edit and proofread drafts paragraph by paragraph or sentence by sentence. The review of any draft by the advisor does not imply the ultimate acceptance of the thesis by the department.

J. FORMAT AND FOOTNOTE STYLE

Students are expected to write both the Junior and Senior I.S. theses using one of the following style manuals:

l. The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers;

2. Turabian's Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations;

3. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA Manual of Style);

4. The American Political Science Association Style Manual (APSA Manual of Style).

All questions concerning format, bibliography, documentation, etc. should be discussed with the faculty I.S. advisor.

The completed I.S. thesis must be typed on paper 8 and l/2 by 11 inches, with the left-hand margin set one and one-half inches and the right-hand margin no less than one inch. The I.S. must be double-spaced throughout. The font size may not exceed 12 points.

K. CRITIQUE AND DEFENSE (refer to Direct Measure of Assessment of the Orals, pages 8-9 of the I.S. Handbook).