

Assessment Plan

The Department in African and African American Studies will use the following Indirect and Direct measures to evaluate the success of its teaching mission.

Indirect Measures

- 1) Course evaluations. Course evaluations, reviewed by the Chair at the end of each semester, will be used to assess the effectiveness of classroom instruction. Special attention will be paid not only to the overall quality of instruction but also to comments that bear on our specific learning objectives.
- 2) Number of majors and minors. Class enrollments, and the numbers of those majoring or minoring in African and African American Studies, provide one index of whether or not we are achieving our classroom objectives. The Chair will annually monitor this index – especially increases and decreases in the numbers – and report back to faculty on his/her findings.

Direct Measures

1. Each student will fill out a short on-line survey – about what they expect to learn from the major – when they declare the major at the end of sophomore year. They will fill out a retrospective survey – about what they felt they learned from the major – before graduation.
2. Each major will take a short on-line exam when they declare the major, and they will take a similar exam when they graduate. The exam will test intellectual and critical skills in the analysis of race, class, and gender, as applied to the study of peoples of the African diaspora.
3. Majors will keep portfolios of all written work – both exams and essays – completed in courses for the major. A faculty committee will examine the portfolios of graduating seniors to assess the overall quality of the work and improvement along the way – and report back to the entire faculty about their findings.

This plan will be put into practice over a three year period. The first year will be spent developing Direct Measures 1 and 2. The second and third years will be spent implementing, assessing and revising all three instruments. Annual discussion of these measures at the year-end faculty retreat will offer a useful period of reflection about the Department's teaching mission at the end of each academic year.