

College of Arts and Sciences  
The University of Tennessee

Africana Studies Bylaws

These bylaws govern the Africana Studies, an interdisciplinary program of the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Tennessee. The Program's activities are also governed by policies of the College and of the University and applicable state and Federal regulations. Any provision within these bylaws that conflicts with College or University policies or with state or Federal regulations shall have no effect.

**I. Mission statement**

The Africana Studies Program at UTK is committed to producing and disseminating interdisciplinary knowledge and creative and critical thinking skills through rigorous research, teaching, service, and publication on the cultures, arts, institutions, histories, political economies, religious traditions, and philosophies of African peoples and the African Diasporas. Africana Studies as a multicultural, interdisciplinary, and transnational intellectual paradigm anchors its scholarship on local, national, regional, and global dimensions of the Africana World, which extend from Africa to North America, the Caribbean, South and Central America, Asia, and Europe.

As this program is rooted in the traditions, history, and agency of the African Americans who were instrumental in the emergence of Africana Studies in the United States, the discipline fulfills the changing needs of our society and the wider world and makes a serious effort toward implementing the objectives of the College of Arts and Sciences and the strategic plans of the University of Tennessee. The central goal of this program is to provide students with a comprehensive interdisciplinary education enabling them to gain a critical level of knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the Africana World experience in its multiple dimensions so that they will be ready for living in a globalized world.

Hence, the curriculum of the program focuses on interrelated issues including:

- The diversity and complexity of indigenous African cultures, histories, religions, and civilizations;
- the impacts of slavery, colonialism, war, terrorism, genocide, racism, and imperialism;
- the consequences of social inequalities in the form of race/ethnicity, class, and gender;
- the issues of globalization and the fast changing world of science and technology; training students for leadership and service;
- the disparities in health and education and environmental problems;
- the positive impacts of social and national/civil rights movements; and
- the importance of education, democracy, human rights, self-determination, multiculturalism, and sustainable development.

The program trains students of different backgrounds to explore and understand these and other relevant issues by using a variety of intellectual tools including critical interdisciplinary and multicultural approaches, theories, and comparative methodologies to develop thinking skills and

knowledge for involvement in public issues and to meet the personal and professional challenges of the twenty-first century. For its majors and minors, it offers specialized and general training to prepare them to be productive and responsible global citizens and enter job markets or graduate and professional fields. The program also trains students to become lifelong learners who are prepared not only for specific educational opportunities or jobs, but are equipped with creative and critical thinking skills that will allow them to succeed in an evolving job market. Furthermore, the program provides students with opportunities for scholarly and social interactions, exchange, and dialogue in classroom and beyond, and prepares them for the diversity of the global community.

Africana Studies enhances and expands the life of the mind of students through classroom training, and provides opportunities to study abroad and participate in extracurricular activities such as conferences and colloquia, while satisfying the academic standards of the College and the University. To fulfill its academic objectives, the program also brings together scholars from various disciplines who demonstrate their commitment to critical interdisciplinary scholarship and social justice; these scholars use this platform to deepen their ongoing scholarly interactions and relationships to offer diverse courses and collaborate in research and develop their cutting-edge scholarship to satisfy the needs of students and the demand of an increasingly diverse global environment.

## **II. Program Membership**

There are four types of UTK faculty involved with the program: Executive Faculty, Core Faculty, Advisory Board Faculty, and Affiliated Faculty.

- a) Executive Faculty are defined as the Chair and, if relevant, Vice Chair(s). Any UTK Tenured faculty who through their research, teaching, and life experience demonstrate their commitment to Africa and the African Diaspora can serve in this position. The Core Faculty and Advisory Board Faculty can nominate candidates for the Executive Faculty to the Dean of the College.
- b) Core Faculty are defined as faculty who, by contractual agreement, teach in Africana Studies. The Core Faculty is responsible for developing and approving all curricular matters pertinent to the major and minor of the Program. They are the only faculty with voting rights.
- c) Advisory Board Faculty are defined as faculty representing the major schools and colleges at the University of Tennessee who through their research, teaching, and life experience demonstrate their commitment to Africa and the African Diaspora. They are invited by the Executive Faculty to serve on the Board for a renewable two-year period.
- d) Affiliated Faculty are defined as faculty who teach courses with at least 30% Africana content or whose courses can be cross-listed with Africana Studies courses. This category of faculty may vary every semester.

### **III. Program Governance**

#### **A. Program Chair and Vice Chair(s)**

The Chair oversees the day-to-day functioning of the Program, manages the Program's budget, coordinates academic advising of students, generates grant proposals and university linkages for program and research development at UTK vis-à-vis Africa and the African Diaspora, ensures that program activities are conducted in accord with these bylaws, and prepares an annual report for the Dean of the College summarizing the Program's activities and objectives.

The Chair is appointed by the Dean of the College from a slate of one or more candidates approved by the Core Faculty and the Advisory Board. The Chair ordinarily serves for a term of three years, and can be reappointed for subsequent terms by mutual agreement of the Chair and the Dean of the College and with the approval of the Core Faculty. For the purposes of an effective a meaningful evaluation of the Chair's performance, Core Faculty are expected to complete the three-year evaluation form.

The Chair is a member of the College's Interdisciplinary Studies Committee. Specific additional administrative duties of the Chair may be enumerated in the Chair's letter of appointment. The Chair will designate tasks, as seen fit, to the Vice Chair(s), should there be any.

The Chair also oversees the Program's curriculum and proposes changes to it in collaboration and consultation with the Core Faculty; these proposals are transmitted to the appropriate divisional Curriculum Committee(s) of the College for further review and approval. The Chair, in consultation with the Vice Chair(s) and Core Faculty reviews these bylaws on a regular basis and approves amendments to them.

Any current member of the Core Faculty, Advisory Board, and Affiliated Faculty can serve as Chair. The Chair may then recommend one or two faculty members to serve as Vice Chair(s).

The Chair shall prepare an agenda for all meetings and shall distribute it by electronic mail to all members of the Core Faculty and Advisory Faculty at least one week before the date of the meeting.

The Vice Chair(s) is appointed by the Chair and has such duties as may be assigned by the Chair. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair(s) serve as interim Chair(s).

#### **B. Core Faculty**

Core Faculty have voting rights in all decisions pertinent to the Program. Core Faculty meetings will be held at least twice a semester. Minutes of these meetings shall be recorded and distributed by electronic mail to all Core Faculty in a timely fashion.

#### **C. Advisory Board Faculty**

Advisory Board Faculty have no voting rights in the Program. The role of the Advisory Board in Africana Studies is to help infuse this program with ideas and make solid recommendations for growth and expansion in the areas of teaching, research, and campus/community outreach. Members of the Advisory Board will participate in proposing, planning, and supporting

strategies that raise the visibility of Africana Studies in the University community and in the East Tennessee region. Members will also advise on matters pertaining to curriculum development, faculty and student research, and training opportunities for students. Meetings will be held at least once a semester. All Advisory Board members are invited to serve a renewable two-year term.

#### D. Library Liaison

One faculty member from the Core Faculty will serve as the Program's Library Liaison. This person will be selected yearly, at the first meeting of the Core Faculty in the fall semester. The Library Liaison will coordinate and submit to the Library's Office of Development all requests for the acquisition of library materials pertinent to the study of Africa and the Diaspora (e.g., books, journals, audio visual materials). The Library Liaison will represent the Program at all meetings called by the Library and its staff; the Library Liaison will report to the Program Chair at least once each academic year about new acquisitions and those issues that affect the Program in general. All faculty are invited to submit their library requests to the Program's Library Liaison.

#### E. Ad hoc committees

As special needs and occasional projects arise, the Program Chair in consultation with the Vice Chair(s) and Core Faculty will appoint an appropriate ad hoc committee to supervise the required activities and duties. Committee members will select their committee chair who will submit in writing monthly progress reports to the Program Chair. The ad hoc committee will perform its duties until it completes its specific charge.

#### F. Definition of quorum and majority; voting procedures

Unless otherwise specified in these bylaws, decisions of standing and ad hoc committees require a simple majority of the votes cast at a committee meeting. Depending upon the issues being discussed, the Program Chair will indicate if e-mail votes are permitted. Voting by secret ballot at meetings must be approved by the majority of those in attendance.

### **IV. Program Dissolution**

The Core Faculty, Chair, and Vice Chair(s) may choose to dissolve the Program. Program dissolution can only be considered at a meeting of the Core Faculty and Executive Faculty during the nine-month academic year, and requires the approval of a two-thirds majority. Dissolution of the Program will be effective on July 31.

### **V. Amendments**

These bylaws shall be reviewed by the Executive Faculty and the Core Faculty at least once every three years.

Amendments to these bylaws can only be considered at Core Faculty meeting and require the approval of a simple majority of votes cast at the meeting. The text of the proposed amendments must be distributed by electronic mail to faculty members of the Program at least one week before the date of the Core Faculty meeting at which the amendments are considered.

The Chair shall inform the Dean of the College (or an Associate Dean designated by the Dean) of any changes in these bylaws.

## **VI. Procedures for Appointment, Retention, Tenure, and Promotion Decisions**

The Program shall adhere strictly to the policies set forth in the UTK *Faculty Handbook*, *The Manual for Faculty Evaluation*, and the *Bylaws of the College of Arts & Sciences*. It is the Chair's responsibility to review personnel files regularly so as to assist home departments in tenure-line faculty tenure and promotion, as well as the Africana Studies lecturer promotion process.

### A. Probationary Faculty

For each probationary appointee the Chair will complete an annual report in the Fall semester. This will be forwarded to the Head of the appointee's home department as part of the promotion and tenure process. The faculty member's teaching and service will be assessed in relation to the general duties and expectations specified in the faculty member's letter of appointment and to the Guidelines for Tenure, Promotion, and Performance listed below. It is the faculty member's responsibility to provide the Chair with information relevant to his/her performance. It is the responsibility of the Chair to schedule individual evaluation meetings with each faculty member. The candidate may examine his/her file at any stage of the promotion and tenure process. A candidate who has received a notice of denial of tenure may request a statement of the reasons for that decision.

### B. Tenured Faculty

For each tenured faculty up for promotion the Chair will complete a report on teaching and service that will be forwarded to the Head of the appointee's home department as part of the promotion process. The faculty member's teaching and service will be assessed in relation to the general duties and expectations specified in the faculty member's letter of appointment and to the Guidelines for Tenure, Promotion, and Performance listed below. It is the faculty member's responsibility to provide the Chair with information relevant to his/her performance. It is the responsibility of the Chair to schedule individual evaluation meetings with each faculty member. The candidate may examine his/her file at any stage of the promotion and tenure process. A candidate who has received a notice of denial of tenure may request a statement of the reasons for that decision.

## **VII. Guidelines for Tenure, Promotion, and Performance Evaluations for Tenure Line Faculty**

The following guidelines for tenure and promotion are specific to the Africana Studies Program. They are designed to supplement the criteria and procedures for implementation set down for the University in general in the *Faculty Handbook and the Manual for Faculty Evaluation*. The essential qualification for tenure and promotion is the attainment of high standards in research, teaching, and service. In the Africana Studies Program evaluators should value the quality and quantity of teaching and service performed by faculty for promotion to associate professor and full professor.

## B. Evaluation Guidelines for Teaching

### *1) Areas for Assessment of Quality Teaching:*

- Preparation of syllabi, particularly at the 200 level that reflect agreed-upon program goals for those courses.
- Presentation course syllabi that clearly state the goals of the course, the expectations of the student, and the means of student evaluation.
- Development and experimentation of new courses.
- SAIS student evaluations for all courses taught in Fall and Spring.
- Peer review of teaching.
- Self-assessment.
- Regular participation in the program curricular process.
- Faculty members should also be available to oversee and direct student research.

### *2) Peer Assessment of Teaching for Tenure-Line Faculty*

A peer teaching review for tenure-line faculty will be conducted at least once during the first two years of their probationary period and once more prior to their consideration for tenure and promotion. At least one peer teaching review will be conducted for tenured faculty prior to consideration for promotion.

The peer assessment team for pre-tenure and post-tenure faculty will normally consist of three tenured faculty members, but in the case of a pre-tenure review, the review team may include one pre-tenure faculty member. The faculty member under review, the home department Head, and the Chair of Africana Studies should each select one team member. The peer assessment team may include members from outside the department and Africana Studies. A chair is chosen by the team members

Members of the team will review all materials submitted by the faculty member under review as a teaching portfolio and they will normally observe at least two different classes taught by the faculty member under review. Following the review of the teaching portfolio and the class observations, the team will meet to discuss their assessments of the following: 1) the content of the courses observed as well as other courses taught by the faculty member; 2) the grading and evaluation tools; 3) the effectiveness of the teaching methods employed.

The team will then meet with the faculty member to discuss his/her teaching and the chair of the team will generate a written report reflecting the prominent views of all team members. The written report will become a part of the faculty member's tenure and promotion file, and, at the option of the reviewed faculty member, it may become part of the annual performance review materials as evidence of teaching effectiveness. The faculty member being reviewed has the right to submit a written response to the report. Any pre-tenure or post-tenure faculty member has the right to request the convening of a peer assessment team to review their teaching at any time.

(Specific numerical criteria for "meets" and "needs" in Teaching will be placed in the Appendices of these Bylaws.)

### C. Evaluation Guidelines for Service

Service includes service to the program, the university, the profession, and the general public. Activities such as the following can constitute service:

- Ad-hoc program committees
- College or university committees
- Student advising in the program
- Service on professional committees or officers on professional organizations
- Review of grant proposals and manuscripts submitted to professional agencies and journals
- Service on journal editorial boards;
- Service as editor of a journal;
- Service as university representative to a professional organization
- Academic presentations at all professional and academic forums
- Presentations at community forums, including schools
- Contributing expertise to university-sponsored events

(Specific criteria for evaluating “meets” and “exceeds” in Service will be placed in the Appendices of these Bylaws.)

### **VIII. Guidelines for Retention, Promotion, and Performance Evaluations for Non-Tenure-Line Faculty**

Non-tenure-line faculty will be evaluated annually by the Chair (or designate).

Upon completion of five years of teaching all lecturers can apply for promotion to Senior Lecturer. Upon completion of a three to five year term as Senior Lecturer, lecturers are eligible to apply for Distinguished Lecturer. Promotions will be awarded based upon evidence of exceptional merit (consistently exceeding performance expectations), continued professional development, and contribution to the unit, campus, and beyond within the faculty member’s assigned role.

#### B. Teaching

##### *1) Areas for Assessment of Quality Teaching:*

- Preparation of syllabi, particularly at the 200 level that reflect agreed-upon program goals for those courses.
- Presentation of course syllabi that clearly state the goals of the course, the expectations of the student, and the means of student evaluation.
- SAIS student evaluations for all courses taught in Fall and Spring.
- Class observations and review of teaching.
- Self-assessment.
- Professional development of teaching
- Regular participation in the program curricular process.
- Compliance with program policies, such as office hours, following of syllabus, willingness to substitute for colleagues, etc.

*2) Areas for Assessment of Service:*

Evaluation Guidelines for Service

Service includes service to the program, the university, the profession, and the general public.

Activities such as the following can constitute service:

- Regular attendance at program workshops and meetings
- Ad-hoc program committees
- College or university committees
- Student advising in the program
- Service on professional committees or officers on professional organizations
- Service as university representative to a professional organization
- Presentations at all professional and academic forums
- Presentations at community forums, including schools
- Contributing expertise to university-sponsored events

(Specific criteria for evaluating “meets” and “exceeds” in Teaching and Service will be placed in the Appendices of these Bylaws.)

**IX. Ratification of Bylaws and Amendments**

These bylaws must be ratified by a majority vote of the Core Faculty and shall become effective immediately upon ratification by the core faculty and approval of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the Core Faculty as needed and as circumstances demand.

Any faculty member wishing to amend the bylaws should submit a proposal, including the suggested context, wording, and rationale for the amendment to the Chair for review by the fourth week of the spring semester. The Chair will review the proposal and forward it to the Core Faculty for discussion and a vote.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Performance Evaluation Criteria for Tenure-Line Faculty

The following descriptions, which vary slightly according to rank, will serve to guide evaluators in their assessment of the annual performance of faculty members. The rating of “exceeds” represents exceptional accomplishment in the categories of teaching and service. Faculty and lecturers are encouraged to state their case for such a rating by appending a narrative on significant measures of teaching accomplishment, and significant measures of service accomplishment.

### Scale for Tenured Faculty

#### **Teaching**

Meets=

- teach assigned number of classes
- on-going revision of class materials
- satisfactory SAIS scores, previous AY (minimum of 3 with special reference to “instructor’s contribution”)

Exceeds =

- everything for “Meets” **plus**
- college, university, or other significant teaching award

OR

• Three other significant measures of teaching accomplishment to be developed in the narrative statement e.g., creating and directing a summer study abroad program, theses directed and completed, and SAISs of 4-5.

#### **Service**

Meets=

- attend regularly all program meetings
- assume fair share of responsibilities
- advise and/or mentor fair share of majors/ minors
- serve as active member of at least one program committee (or library representative)

Exceeds=

- everything for “Meets”

Plus

- a college or university service award

OR

Three or more other significant measures of service accomplishment to the program, college, university, community, or professions, which are to be developed in the brief narrative statement e.g., organized significant cultural event, authored important policy as part of a program, college, or senate committee, extramural review work, conference organization, editorial work, outreach services, etc.

## Scale for Untenured Faculty

### Teaching

Meets =

- teach assigned number of classes
- on-going revision of class materials
- satisfactory SAIS scores (minimum scores of 3 in categories 3 and 4: “instructor’s contribution” and “instructor’s effectiveness”)

Exceeds =

Everything for “Meets”

Plus

- college, university, or other significant teaching award in the past 3 years

Or

•Two other significant measures of teaching accomplishment to be developed in the one-page statement e.g., creating and directing a summer study abroad program, student research, student theses directed and/or completed, SAISs of 4-5.

### Service

Meets=

- attend regularly all departmental meetings
- assume fair share of responsibilities
- advise/mentor fair share of majors/ minors
- serve as active member of at least one departmental committee (or library representative)

Exceeds=

Everything for “Meets”

Plus

- a college or university service award

Or

• Three or more other significant measures of service accomplishment to the program, college, university, community, or professions, which are to be developed in the one-page statement e.g., organized significant cultural event, authored important policy as part of a program, college, or senate committee, extramural review work, conference organization, editorial work, outreach services, etc.

## Appendix B: Performance Evaluation Criteria for Non-Tenure-Line Faculty

### Teaching

Meets =

- teach assigned number of classes
- on-going revision of class materials
- satisfactory SAIS scores (minimum scores of 3 in categories 3 and 4: “instructor’s contribution” and “instructor’s effectiveness”)

Exceeds =

Everything for “Meets”

Plus

- college, university, or other significant teaching awards

Or

·Two other significant measures of teaching accomplishment to be developed in the one-page statement e.g., creating and directing a summer study abroad program, student research or student theses directed and/or completed, SAISs of 4-5.

### **Service**

Meets=

- attend regularly all departmental meetings
- assume fair share of responsibilities
- advise/mentor fair share of majors/ minors
- serve as active member of at least one departmental committee (or library representative)

Exceeds=

Everything for “Meets”

Plus

- a college or university service award

Or

- Three or more other significant measures of service accomplishment to program, college, university, community, or professions, which are to be developed in the one-page statement e.g., organized significant cultural event, authored important policy as part of a program, college, or senate committee, extramural review work, editorial work, outreach services, etc.

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