

York University

Final Assessment Report – Executive Summary

# **AFRICAN STUDIES UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM**

Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies

African Studies Undergraduate Program, Department of Social Science

Cyclical Program Review – 2008 to 2015

This Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the programs listed below.

### **Program(s) Reviewed**

Honours Double Major Interdisciplinary BA, African Studies  
Honours Minor BA, African Studies

### **Reviewers appointed by the Vice-Provost Academic:**

Dr. Jane Parpart, Professor Emeritus, International Development, Gender and African History, Carleton University  
Dr. John Cameron, Associate Professor, International Development Studies, Dalhousie University  
Dr. Anne Rubenstein, Associate, History, York University

### **Cyclical Program Review Key Milestones**

Cyclical Program Review Launch: September 2015  
Self-study submitted to Vice-Provost Academic: August 19, 2016  
Date of the Site Visit: October 24-25, 2016  
Review Report received: January 9, 2017  
Program Response received: June 15, 2017  
Dean's Response received: May 2018

Implementation Plan and FAR confirmed by Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance, May 2018

Submitted by Alice Pitt, Vice-Provost Academic, York University



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*This review was conducted under the York University Quality Assurance Protocol, August 2013.*

**Outcome:**

An implementation plan has been approved that addresses the recommendations.

The Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance concurred with the recommendation of the Vice-Provost Academic that a post-CPR review involving the Department of Social Science is required in light of the departmental omnibus statement and the Dean's statement on departmental challenges. The outcomes of this departmental review, which will be undertaken collaboratively with the Office of the Vice-Provost, the Office of the Dean of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies and the Department, will form part of the 18 month program Follow-up Report for African Studies as well as other programs housed in the Department. The Follow-up Report will provide an update on specific aspects of the implementation plan resulting from the cyclical program review as well as any further recommendations or action plans made in consideration of the Departmental Review.

The Follow-up Report will be due 18 months after the review of this report by the York University Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance (January 2020).

The next Cyclical Program Review will begin in the Fall of 2023 with a site visit expected in the Fall of 2024 or Winter of 2025.

**Program Description and Strengths:**

The African Studies program is one of the older area studies programs at York, dating back to the mid-1970s; and is one of only three such programs in Canada (the others are in University of Toronto and Carleton University). Since its inception in 1974, the African Studies Program has been an interdisciplinary program providing students with the opportunity to combine their interest in Africa with a proficiency in a given discipline.

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**Recommendation 1:** De-linking the minor-major course structure and development of a stand-alone major in African Studies to increase student numbers and flexibility in the program.

Program to develop a clear vision for the program and articulate a plan to recruit and retain an appropriate number of Major and double Major students to justify a stand-alone Honours Major and Major.

Proposal to be submitted to the LAPS Curriculum committee by June 1, 2018 (or a date agreed upon by the Curriculum Committee and the program) and brought to Senate no later than February 2019 meeting.

**Recommendation 2:** An increase in dedicated faculty for the program.

Faculty members from other Departments should be invited to contribute to the development of the program's vision as described above. Given the small number of students who select to major in African Studies, additional dedicated faculty members are not warranted. Program proposal for vision and curriculum to be submitted to LAPS Curriculum Committee by June 1, 2018, or a date agreed upon by the Curriculum Committee and the program.

**Recommendation 3:** A commitment to the program for five years minimum.

Program to work with Department of Social Science to develop a 3-year plan with clear targets for enrolments and curriculum clarity for review by the Dean's Office with articulated options should enrolment targets not be met.

Curriculum plan due June 1, 2018 (as above) with enrolment plan due in November 2019.

**Recommendation 4:** A rubric for the program as well as stronger support for student advising.

Program to request rubric change to be submitted by June 1, 2018 to LAPS Curriculum Committee.

**Recommendation 5:** A new first year course as well as one on Africa in the Global South. Revive the Ghanaian experiential learning course.

No action: this recommendation will be part of the broader planning undertaken under recommendation 1.

**Recommendation 6:** Clarification on the impact of the Markham campus and closer ties with the Tubman Institute.

No action with respect to Markham Centre Campus.

No action with respect to Tubman Institute as this is entirely within the purview of the Institute and the program.

**Recommendation 7:** Creation of a certificate in African Studies.

No action required: program and dean responses are adequate

**Recommendation 8:** Greater space for African Studies faculty and students.

No action required: program and dean responses are adequate

**Recommendation 9:** Better data on students and alumni. Support for students regarding employment and on-going study.

African Studies will benefit from broader efforts to generate information about alumni.

Vice Provost Academic, on behalf of all Faculties to resume discussion with Alumni Affairs in order to advance collaborative efforts to track graduating students and seek their input on their York experience.