

African Studies Interdepartmental Degree Program
Report by Ghislaine Lydon (Chair)
10/20/09

This report assesses the progress made by the African Studies Interdepartmental Degree Program (AS-IDP) in addressing the recommendations of the last 8th-year review. Since becoming program chair (July 1st, 2009), I have read the reports pertaining to the review and met with former chairs Katrina Thompson and Andrew Apter to gather information on the state of the program. I also have benefitted tremendously from the expertise and assistance of the AS-IDP Academic Counselor, Magda Yamamoto, who is an asset to the program. On October 13th, 2009, I held the first meeting of the AS-IDP Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) where the progress of the program was discussed, as was the planning of the One-Day Internal Review scheduled on November 5th, 2009. This report considers in turn progress made in each of the areas recommended by the Administration and the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils.

1. A. Recommendation of the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils:

i). Since the 2005 review, the “critical problem in African Language instruction” has been partially resolved with the permanent hiring by the Department of Applied Linguistics of Katrina Thompson (July 2008). Thanks to Thompson’s remarkable efforts in her capacity as African Language Coordinator, diversity in the offerings of African language courses has been maintained. She received external funding from the U.S. Department of Education (Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Languages Program) and the Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants Program to hire part-time instructors and develop courses in African languages and cultures for a two-year period (2007-2009). With this external funding, the language program offered two levels of Swahili and three levels of Yoruba, and developed two courses on African languages and cultures (one focused on South Africa and the other on Nigeria). A remainder of the funding is currently being used to finance a Yoruba language instructor for the current academic year. But after this year, measures will need to be taken to ensure continued diversity in course offerings in several African languages besides Swahili, currently covered by Thompson.

In addition to these endeavors, Thompson administered the transfer of the African Languages program to the Department of Applied Linguistics (July 2009). All of these efforts, it is hoped, will enable the James S. Coleman African Studies Center (AS-ORU) to successfully compete for Title VI FLAS funding this coming year. It must be noted that the AS-IDP has no capacity to change the diversity in language course offerings. It can only promote the minor in African Studies that contributes to increasing enrollment in African language courses.

ii). The review recommended the Administration increase the compensation for the position of chair of the AS-IDP. Under the previous chair, the compensation was increased to a full summer-ninth (up from one-half a summer-ninth), in addition to a \$1000 administrative stipend.

iii). Funding for international students in the MA in African Studies program (MAAS) remains a problem. This past year, the program apparently was unable to raise sufficient funds to allow a Ugandan student admitted to the program to attend UCLA (see also 1. B. ii).

1. B. Recommendation of the Graduate Council

i). The question of providing our MA students with a much-needed space to meet may be close to being resolved. At our FAC meeting, Gaby Solomon, Director of Student Affairs at the International Institute (II), suggested the possibility of using a room on the 11th floor of Bunche Hall that remains currently vacant. She is in the process of securing permission for the use of this space where MAAS students and students from all of the II graduate programs can develop community.

ii). As for the need to raise funding opportunities to recruit international students, I am currently in conversation with the director of the AS-ORU to approach foundations for African graduate student support. Thankfully, the quality of the program continues to be considerably enhanced by recruiting national students of African descent, including several from the pool of those graduating from UCLA with an African Studies undergraduate minor. In the past few years, several Ethiopians, Somali and Nigerian students, as well as one Liberian, two Ghanaians and one Algerian have graduated, or are about to graduate, from the MAAS program. I would like to add that for the past several years the program has been able to provide regular fellowships for recruiting a number of national students and small stipends for second-year students thanks to the generous support of the Vice Chancellor of Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate Division, Claudia Mitchell-Kernan.

2. A. Recommendation to the Administration and the IDP

i). The program has succeeded in improving the communication between the AS-IDP and AS-ORU. First, several faculty members attend both advisory committees and are able to speak to the interests of both units. Second, this fall the AS-IDP and the AS-ORU selected a common graduate student representative (Michelle Oberman) to attend meetings and communicate with the larger student body. Moreover, an undergraduate student enrolled in the AS Minor (Johanan Beleke), currently working as a student assistant in the AS-ORU, was invited to briefly participate in the FAC meeting, along with the graduate student representative. Their contributions to the meeting were extremely valuable, and will contribute to enhancing the program by strengthening student involvement and the links between the program and the center, as well as by providing ideas and student-based information to the committee.

3. A. Recommendation to the IDP

i). The three-quarter language requirement for the African Studies undergraduate minor has been maintained until now. But it was discussed at our most recent FAC meeting. Based on several factors (including student feedback, reduced offerings in African languages, and the small window of opportunity for transfer students to meet the requirement), I will be asking the FAC at

our next meeting to reconsider the recommendation to eliminate this requirement in order to boost student enrollment in the minor. The FAC will take a close look at how such a recommendation will affect enrollment in the African Languages program.

ii). One of my priorities as chair is to increase undergraduate enrolled in the African Studies Minor. Currently there are 10 undergraduate students enrolled in the program. The following steps are being taken to achieve this goal:

1. The FAC has been encouraged to advise students to enroll in the program.
2. The program was promoted at the “Major Blast” held at the campus dormitories on October 14th, 2009.
3. A “Tea Party” to provide program information and develop community will be held with the undergraduate students currently enrolled in the minor (on Tuesday October 27th, 2009).
4. Together with Sandra Valdivieso, an Academic Counselor at the II, the program will schedule class visits to advertise the minor in several Africa-related courses across the disciplines, and in other relevant courses.

3. B. Recommendation of the Graduate Council

i). The graduate seminar “Africa and the Disciplines” (AFRS 201A) remains a required course for MAAS students. I am teaching this course for the first time this fall and enjoying the experience. When taught by the program chair, the weekly meeting provides an excellent opportunity to develop community among the MAAS students and with graduate students in other programs (there are currently 18 students enrolled, including MA students from Islamic Studies, one student in Islamic Studies and Public Health, and graduate students from the departments of Art History, Fine Arts and Political Science). The large enrollment in this course speaks to the campus-wide need for graduate-level seminars in African studies.

In addition, the 201B “Africa and the Professions” was innovated by former AS-IDP Chair Apter, partly in response to the need for a general course geared toward those MA students (roughly 50% of each cohort) interested in professional rather than academic careers. This now very popular seminar, which is an elective course, is offered on a yearly basis by Fred Byaruhanga, a UCLA lecturer. As for the question of a 2-quarter core course, it will be taken up at a future FAC meeting.

This fall quarter, a MAAS student in Geography (Erin Streff) approached Thompson for the creation of a one-credit course designed as a colloquium in African Studies. Currently 6 students are enrolled for credit, with about 12 others are sitting in. This course was discussed at the FAC meeting with the view of making it a permanent African Studies course offering.

ii). The need to standardize the MA comprehensive exam was briefly discussed at the last FAC meeting, and a proposal will be drawn for the consideration of the FAC.

iii). The MAAS/MPH with the school of Public Health remains our only “articulated” degree program. In response to the recommendations of the 8th-year review, this program was successfully re-designed. Together with Charlotte Neumann (Community Health Sciences),

former AS-IDP Chair Thompson managed to clarify the requirements for the degree which is now classified as a “concurrent” (and no longer as an articulated) degree program. This was realized by making two Africa-related Community Health courses count towards the requirements of both MA degrees. The question of developing additional concurrent degree programs with other departments is one that I will seriously consider as chair.

iv). According to the II student councilors, the MAAS students are one of the most friendly and active groups. The students run the African Activist Association (one of the oldest such organizations in North America, founded by Sondra Hale, a UCLA faculty). This association continues to organize regularly graduate student conferences, which have been held in the spring quarter for the past three-consecutive years. MAAS students also serve on the editorial board of the African studies journal *UFAHAMU*. The collegiality of MAAS students will be greatly enhanced with the creation of a space where all graduate students can congregate. Moreover, as program chair I will continue to organize group outings and social meetings with the students.

v). The “poorly defined minor within the MA” was eliminated. This affords students greater flexibility in designing, with the chair’s approval, their disciplinary or interdisciplinary “area of concentration.”

vi.) We have succeeded in recruiting high quality students, despite our reduced capacity to offer fellowships and the absence of FLAS fellowships for our graduate students. However, the program still needs to secure funding sources for international students.

(submitted via email from Katrina Thompson, 2007-08 and 2008-09 IDP Chair)

Progress Report on the Status of the Recommendations
in the 2004-05 Academic Senate Review Report
of the Interdepartmental Degree Program in African Studies

20 March 2008

African Languages Instruction

While the African Languages courses do not fall directly under the purview of the IDP in African Studies Center, the administration has nevertheless been working with the IDP to find a way to resolve the critical problem in African Language instruction.

Unfortunately, UCLA has suffered a number of setbacks in this regard. African language faculty members Thomas Hinnebusch and Russ Schuh have retired from language teaching (Hinnebusch retired completely in 2005; and Schuh has transferred his teaching load entirely to Linguistics as of Spring 2008). In 2006, UCLA lost Title VI funding for the James S. Coleman African Studies Center, in part because of weakening of the language program. In Fall 2007, the Department of Linguistics stopped funding a TA for Swahili, leaving the entire language program in the hands of Katrina Daly Thompson, Assistant Professor in Residence and African Languages Coordinator.

Through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Thompson has funded part-time instructors for Yoruba and Zulu for 2007-08 and 2008-09 (though a qualified Zulu instructor has not yet been identified). For 2008-09, she will bring in Fulbright Language TAs (FLTAs) to teach Yoruba, and has applied for Swahili, Hausa, and Wolof as well.

Thompson's position was recently regularized; in July 2008 she will become Asst. Professor in Applied Linguistics, a potential new home for the African Languages program. While the regularization of her position suggests that the administration is aware of the need to strengthen UCLA's African Languages program, the reduction in her language-teaching load also adds to the need for new instructors. At this time Thompson and Andrew Apter, Director of the James S. Coleman African Studies Center (JSCASC) are seeking administrative support for three new lecturers, for Swahili, Yoruba and Zulu. During a site visit from Department of Education Title VI administrators, we were advised that offering three languages at three levels each will make it possible for UCLA to regain Title VI National Resource Center funding for the JSCASC and FLAS fellowships for graduate students in the IDP and other Africanist graduate students.

Summer instruction in African languages has been used to diversify our African language offerings, with three languages offered in both Summer 2006 and 2007 and six languages scheduled to be offered in Summer 2008. However, few IDP students have taken advantage of these offerings.

The IDP recently submitted a proposal to Graduate Division to increase the language requirement for the IDP to require students to reach Intermediate-High proficiency rather than

simply take one year of coursework. The new requirement should enhance enrollments in intermediate-level language courses and also improve the JSCASC's chances of receiving Title VI funding, since the Department of Education places an emphasis on proficiency-oriented instruction.

Eliminating the 3-quarter language requirement for the undergraduate minor is not a recommendation that the IDP intends to follow, as doing so would undermine enrollments in our African Languages and negatively impact student's education about Africa.

Progress in Other Areas

Compensation for the current Chair of the IDP in African Studies has increased from 1/2 of a summer ninth to a full summer ninth. However, this compensation remains inadequate to sustain the program and insure its viability over time.

The IDP and the JSCASC are working with the International Institute to develop structural mechanisms to improve communication and increase coordination between the two units. We are considering having one individual serve in an administrative capacity in both the IDP and the ORU.

The IDP faculty advisory committee is considering a 2-quarter core course requirement, perhaps offering the second quarter course in alternate years. The instructor of the course we are considering requiring is currently preparing a detailed syllabus for consideration by the committee.

Procedures for standardizing the comprehensive exam option are under development and will be discussed at a Spring 2008 faculty meeting.

The IDP has provided students with greater sense of community and involvement through a twice-monthly graduate colloquium series and a monthly social gathering.

Areas in Need of Development

Enhanced funding to provide opportunities for foreign students to enroll in the program is still needed. The IDP remains in need of space for MA students to congregate and interact.

Additional articulated degree programs have not yet been explored, but the IDP and the MPH are in the process of changing from articulated to concurrent degree programs.

Termination of "the poorly defined minor" within the MA program has not yet been considered.

Strategies for recruiting higher number of high quality students have been thwarted by reductions in funding and loss of African languages.



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
6265 BUNCHE HALL
BOX 951473
LOS ANGELES, CA 90095-1473

PHONE: (310) 825-4601
FAX: (310) 206-9630

May 9, 2006

Ms. Luisa Crespo
Principal Policy Analyst
Graduate Council
UCLA Academic Senate

Dear Ms. Crespo,

Please find enclosed (and in the electronic version, attached) the African Studies IDP response to the eighth year self-report. The response was circulated among the committee by email, for feedback which was incorporated into the final draft, and for final approval.

Thanks very much for your flexibility and guidance through this interesting and valuable process.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Apter".

Andrew Apter
Professor
Chair, M.A. Program in African Studies

May 9, 2006

William McDonald, Chair, Graduate Council
David Rigby, Chair, Undergraduate Council

Master of Arts in African Studies Program (MAAS) Response to the May 17, 2005 8th Year Academic Senate Review.

Prepared by Andrew Apter,
Chair, African Studies IDP
Professor, Dept. of History and the International Institute

The African Studies IDP was gratified by the rigorous engagement of its associated African Studies Center, faculty, staff, graduate students in the MA program, and undergraduates in the African Studies minor during the 8th year review, on March 3-4, 2005. The internal review was conducted by Professor Joan Silk (Chair), Anthropology and the Graduate Council; Professor Thomas Rice, Anthropology and the Graduate Council; and Professor Sule Ozler, Economics and the Undergraduate Council. The external review was conducted by Henry J. Drewal, Evjue-Bascom Professor of African and African Diaspora Arts, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Jean Allman, Professor History and Director, Center for African Studies, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. The reports were very positive and encouraging, acknowledging the quality and energy of the students, the flexibility of the program, and its interdisciplinary organization within a culturally and historically defined framework. The Review Committee “unanimously agreed that the African Studies Interdepartmental Program is an important and viable academic unit.”

A number of constructive criticisms and recommendations were offered which identified important areas for improvement, to which we have responded.

1. *African Language Instruction.* The review identified a critical need for African language instruction and coordination in light of the retirement of Professor Tom Hinnebusch (Linguistics), the temporary affiliations of some of the African language instructors, and the changing needs of the students. We are pleased to report (thanks to the extraordinary efforts of Professor Allen Roberts, Director of the James S. Coleman African Studies Center, and Professor Tom Hinnebusch, together with the University Deans) that we received support for a Professor-in-Residence, housed in Linguistics, for teaching and coordinating African Languages. Dr. Katrina Thompson has been recruited for this position, last year as a Visiting Lecturer, soon-to-be converted into a Professor-in-Residence. Fluent in Swahili and Shona, she brings rigorous language pedagogy with scholarly research on Southern African Hip-Hop and cultural production.

Although we have yet to replace our Zulu instructor, we have now added Yoruba to the languages offered, which last year included Wolof, Hausa, Swahili, and Twi. We are also teaching Yoruba and Amharic in the 2006 summer languages program organized by the Center for World Languages, an expanding program with which we will increasingly cooperate to provide a greater diversity of language offerings for our students.

2. *Increased Support for IDP chairs.* Both the internal and external reviewers recommended increased support for the African Studies IDP chair, which remains one half of a summer ninth without course relief, and a \$1,000 dollar administrative stipend. The Academic Senate report describes this as “inadequate to sustain the program and insure its viability over time.” We approached Professor Ron Rogowski, the Interim Vice-Provost/Dean of the International Institute, and Ms. Sue Fan, the CFAO, with a request for a summer ninth and one quarter off per year for the IDP Chair, and understand that they forwarded this request to the University Administration. We have yet to hear back.
3. *Enhanced Funding for Foreign Students.* We submitted preliminary proposals to the Ford Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation for external support for our students, but were told that our requests did not match their funding priorities. We have leaned heavily on the Dean/Vice-Chancellor of the Graduate Division, Professor Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, for supplemental funds to support foreign students, and in 2005-6, and 2006-7, she generously made special

allocations on an individual basis for an Eritrean student and now a Jamaican student with full NRT support plus stipend. This ad hoc solution to the problem of recruiting foreign students is thus far the best we have done, and we would support a more institutionalized solution from the Administration.

4. *Common Space.* The Review recommended that the administration re-establish a space where the MA students can congregate and interact (such a space on the 10th floor of Bunche was eliminated under Geoff Garrett's International Institute reforms). We have simply not had time to pursue this, but note that the Chair and students have been holding dinner parties at their homes. We are also holding an on-campus "social" in May.
5. *Coordination between the African Studies Center and the IDP.* The review recommends that one individual serves in an administrative capacity in both the IDP and the ORU. Improved communication between the IDP and the ORU has been established by inviting Azeb Tadesse, Assistant Director, and Sheila Breeding, Center Administrator, to our IDP advisory board meetings. This arrangement proved crucial during 2005-6, when we lost our Student Affairs Officer for eight months (before she was replaced by Ms. Melanie Levin) and had to manage recruitment and admissions with limited part-time support. Additionally, the Chair of the IDP sits on the advisory committee of the ORU, and the Director of the African Studies Center is an ex-officio member of the IDP advisory committee.
6. *Elimination of three-quarter language requirement for AS minor:* We discussed this at length, and decided to add Arabic as an approved African language. We now also allow French to be petitioned as fulfilling the African language requirement on a case-by-case basis.
7. *Increased recruitment to the minor.* Our efforts to recruit undergraduates to the minor have been enhanced by the hiring of Steve Sortijas through the ORU to assist the IDP in admissions, recruitment, and program reform. He is himself an articulated MAAS-Public Health graduate student, and brings an extraordinary commitment and energy to this work.
8. *2-Quarter Core Course Requirement.* Our plans for an expanded two-quarter course for the African studies proseminar were soundly supported by the Graduate Council, and we are pleased to report that the International Institute has just approved five years of support for a second quarter course on "Africa and the Professions" following the first quarter course on "Africa and the Disciplines" (see Appendix A for course proposal and syllabus outline). The new course is scheduled for Winter 2007.
9. *Termination of MA Minor.* The inchoate minor within the MA was terminated in committee, and no longer exists on the description of program requirements.
10. *Increase MA applicant pool.* Largely through the outreach of Azeb Tadesse, Sheila Breeding, and Steve Sortijas, the applicant pool more than doubled for 2006-7 in relation to the previous two years, presenting a more competitive group of students and effectively increasing the standard of our admissions. We are pleased to report that whereas six students entered the program each year in 2004 and 2005, fourteen students have enrolled on line for 2006-7. Part of the reason for this jump is that Steve Sortijas sustained email communication with the applicants, answering on-line application questions, funding questions, and encouraging communication with the IDP Chair.
11. *Create additional articulated degree programs.* Although no new articulated degree programs have been developed since the Review, the innovated required course (see #8) is designed to interface with different schools on campus to identify where such program development may be warranted. We are investigating a new articulated degree program with the Anderson School of Management, based largely on their CIBER program of micro-credit financing in Africa.
12. *Clarify Comprehensive Exam Option.* The Internal Review Team further recommended clarification of the comprehensive exam option as an alternative to the MA thesis. We have formalized the requirement that the student comprise a comprehensive exam committee of three faculty members, the chair of whom serves in the department of the student's area of concentration. The student generates a reading list in three areas—one with each committee member—to cover relevant examination literature. Each committee member provides two essay questions for a total of six, three of which the student must answer. The exam is closed book, held in a room in Bunche. There are two three-hour sessions, from 9-12:00, and from 1-4:00. The student can write on a laptop and save the answer to a floppy disk, which he or she then gives to the SAO. The SAO sends the answers as email attachments to the committee members, who read and evaluate each answer.

In addition to these responses to the various recommendations produced by the 8th year review, we are also clarifying and formalizing:

- 1) the on-line application process, which was confusing for applicants to the articulated MAAS-MPH degree program, and
- 2) the requirements expected of MAAS-MPH students, regarding the distribution of required courses and electives in each program. These will be published in a brochure.

Finally, we wish to underscore the importance of University support for our program, with special reference to funds for foreign students and continued African language support as recommended by the Academic Senate Review.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Apter
Professor, Department of History and the International Institute
Chair, African Studies IDP