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2008

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# Journal of Black Studies

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*Journal of Black Studies* 2008; 38; 731

DOI: 10.1177/0021934707310293

The online version of this article can be found at:  
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# Excavating for Economics in Africana Studies

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For 30 years, Africana Studies has developed as an interdisciplinary field. Although much attention has been paid within the field to the humanities and arts, much less has been paid to the social sciences, particularly economics. This analysis documents the presence of economists and economics course content among Africana Studies programs. The authors also discuss the presence of economists and economic content among leading general interest journals in Africana Studies and of economics content in several influential Africana Studies texts. Only 1.72% of the faculty members in leading Africana Studies departments are economists, and economics course content among Africana Studies programs is anemic. Also, there is little economics content in Africana journals, particularly peer-reviewed journals. Recommendations include incorporating accessible economics texts into course reading lists; encouraging African American students to take economics, calculus, and statistics; teaching statistics and economic theory in the context of course content; and adding economists to the editorial boards of Black Studies journals.

**Keywords:** *Black political economy; African American economists; Africana Studies; African American Studies; Black Studies; African American intellectual history*

The great strength of the mainstream social science practiced in the U.S. today is the collection of empirical data and in the operationalization and measurement of concepts and relationships. It is out of this tradition that Black Studies should gain insights and models modifying them before taking them on as such—for empirical data analysis (collection and measurement).

—McWhorter and Bailey (2001, p. 620)

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**Authors' Note:** We would like to thank Anita Okoh for her research assistance.

The social movement that gave birth to Africana Studies focused on issues of civil, political, and economic justice. Very early in the development of Africana Studies as an academic discipline, economics and social development was considered to be one of its premier subfields (Banks, 2001; Little, Leonard, & Crosby, 2001). By *economics*, Africana Studies scholars meant the study of the operation of markets, institutions, and processes associated with a capitalist economy, such as that of the United States, as well as the study of alternative economic arrangements. It was hoped that this study would yield a transformative economic analysis, that is, a set of policies and actions that transformed the economic status of people of African descent from disproportionately impoverished to globally affluent and in so doing bring about fundamental structural transformation of capitalist economies. Yet today, both economics and economists are not strongly visible in Africana Studies. Clearly, however, economic issues, and ergo quantitative analysis, are at the forefront of concern among African American scholars, civic leaders and policy analysts, and laypersons. Accordingly, we sought to quantitatively document the presence of economists and economic content among Africana Studies programs and to explore the reasons for their relative absence within Africana Studies. We further wish to highlight the role that African American economic thought can play in the development of Africana Studies.

Our analysis began by documenting the presence of economists and economics course content among Africana Studies programs. In the following section, we discuss the presence of economists and economic content among the leading general interest journals in Africana Studies. In the third section, we take a look at economics content in several influential texts used in Africana Studies. The fourth section reports the results of our survey of program and departmental chairs. We conclude with several recommendations.

## **Economics Faculty and Economics Course Requirements**

We should begin by clarifying our nomenclature. *Africana Studies* in this article is not limited to programs and departments with that explicit name but also refers to programs and departments that are sometimes labeled “African American Studies,” “African and African American Studies,” “Black Studies,” “African New World Studies,” “African Diaspora Studies,” and so forth. However, we exclude from consideration programs and departments that are exclusively concerned with the African continent or

persons of African descent in the Caribbean, South American, Europe, and other locations outside of the United States. In this article, we are thus concerned with academic units and professional journals that include a significant research agenda and course content that focuses on African Americans, though the academic units and professional journals may also focus on persons of African descent beyond the United States.

Table 1 documents the presence of economists among the leading Africana Studies faculty members, as documented on their Web pages.<sup>1</sup> The list of the most prominent Africana Studies programs and departments was taken from the Web page of the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS, 2004). The list of institutions in Table 1 includes all programs and departments that offer graduate degrees, as well as several other influential programs and departments. Note, however, that the College of Charleston and Syracuse University are not listed in Table 1; Syracuse added an MA program, and the College of Charleston added African American concentrations in their MA programs in English and history as this article was being written. Neither of these programs has any economic faculty members or courses, so our tables slightly overestimate the presence of economics faculty members and courses in percentage terms.

Table 1 shows that there are 629 core and affiliated faculty members among the leading Africana Studies programs. Only 11 economists (1.75% of the total) are represented among these faculty members.<sup>2</sup> Development economics is the major professional specialty among both core and affiliated faculty members: the University of Maryland (political economy with a focus on race, gender, alternative institutions, and wealth accumulation); New York University (both scholars focus on African economic development); Yale University (economic history); the University at Albany of the State University of New York (African economic development); the University of California, Los Angeles (urban economics); and Harvard University (African economic development). Traditionally, development economics has focused on the economics of less industrialized countries. In most instances, development economists in Africana Studies programs do research on Africa and/or the Caribbean. If we were to consider only economists whose work concentrates on African Americans (our primary concern in this article), the percentages would go down drastically.

On the basis of a survey of program Web pages, we also examined the number of economic courses required or taught in Africana Studies programs. Economics course content among Africana Studies programs is anemic, representing just over 1% of all undergraduate course offerings (Table 2). Statistics also represents just over 1% of course offerings.

**Table 1**  
**Presence of Economics Faculty Members in**  
**Major Africana Studies Programs: Fall 2004**

Program	Core Faculty Members		Affiliated Faculty Members		Specialization
	Total	Economists	Total	Economists	
PhD programs					
Temple University	8	0	9	0	
University of California, Berkeley	12 <sup>a</sup>	0	5	0	
University of Massachusetts Amherst	10 <sup>b</sup>	0	4	0	
Harvard University	25	1			Development
Michigan State University	11	0			
MA programs					
University of California, Los Angeles	9	0	14	1	Urban
Clark Atlanta University	2	0			
University at Albany, State					
University of New York	10	1			Development
Yale University	33	1			History
Cornell University	17 <sup>b</sup>	0	8 <sup>c</sup>	0	
Indiana University	12 <sup>c</sup>	0	8	0	
New York University			31	2	Development
Ohio State University	28	0	26	0	
University of Iowa	5	0			
Columbia University	9	0	11	0	
Morgan State University	2	0			
Florida International University	23	0	13	1	Development
University of Maryland, College Park	6 <sup>d</sup>	1			Political economy
University of Wisconsin–Madison	13 <sup>c</sup>	0	3	0	
University of Louisville	9	0			
University of Toledo	18	0			
(responded to survey)					
Other influential programs					
University of Pennsylvania	39	0	5	0	
University of Michigan	60	2			
Purdue University	4	0	4	0	
Pennsylvania State University	10	0	25	1	
University of Virginia	5	0			
Duke University	13	0			
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	18	0			
California State University,					
Long Beach	9 <sup>c</sup>	0	7	0	
University of Illinois at Chicago	23	0			
University of Pittsburgh	7 <sup>c</sup>	0			
University of Texas	6	0			
<b>Total</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>5</b>	

Note: Table includes tenure-track faculty members only.

a. Includes three emeritus faculty members.

b. Includes one visiting faculty member.

c. Includes one emeritus faculty member.

d. Combined bachelor of arts and master's degree in public management.

Statistics and economics account for just 2 of 82 courses offered by the institutions we surveyed. No institution has a required course in mathematical modeling, game theory, or regression analysis. Furthermore, even disciplines such as public policy, which may cover some of the same areas as economics, are not well represented in Africana Studies curricula.

We note also that there is an economics course offered at an institution (California State University, Long Beach) that does have an economist affiliated with the Africana Studies program. The course description suggests that it is a course on economics topics but not necessarily an economics course.

Table 3 presents the results of our survey of professional economists. This survey was distributed over the National Economic Association's (NEA) list server. The NEA is an organization that grew out of the Caucus of Black Economists and is dedicated to the study of economic issues of interest to people of color. This group would therefore contain economists who may be interested in Africana Studies. Although the sample in our survey was small (a response rate of just over 10%), we believe that the responses are indicative of the views of economists, and this belief was subsequently confirmed during the presentation of this article at the 2005 annual meeting of the Allied Social Sciences Association.

Each economist was asked to rank the importance of alternative academic disciplines for Africana Studies. A ranking of 0 meant that the economist thought the discipline was completely useless, and a ranking of 10 meant that the economist thought the discipline had the highest conceivable level of usefulness. The value of the mean ranking was 7.17, with a median of 7.50 and a standard deviation of 1.29.

We separate the disciplines into four different groups: extremely important disciplines have mean rankings 1 standard deviation above the overall mean (i.e., 8.46 or higher), nonessential disciplines have mean rankings 1 standard deviation below the overall mean (i.e., 5.88 or lower), useful disciplines are those with rankings in the lower half of the middle ranked groups, and valuable disciplines are those in the upper half of the middle ranked groups.

According to the economists we sampled, biology, criminology, and communications are nonessential disciplines for Africana Studies. On the other hand, the economists believed that political science, economics, and history are extremely important disciplines for Africana Studies. Notably, economists also think that statistics and mathematics are valuable disciplines, while philosophy, religion, and music are seen as useful disciplines.

Ten of the 16 economists responding to our survey said that they would encourage students to take courses in Africana Studies. Only 1 of the 16 economists was familiar with the NCBS, and he was also the only member of the NCBS. Furthermore, this lone economist is now retired. None of the

**Table 2**  
**Undergraduate Core Classes in Africana Studies**

Program	AAS/ Interdisciplinary	History	Literature	Culture/ Anthropology	Political Sociology	Science	Communications	Public	Economics	Policy	Statistics	Psychology
	Classes											
PhD programs												
Temple University	6	1						1				
University of California, Berkeley	5	3		1								
University of Massachusetts Amherst	1											
Harvard University	6	2	1	1								
Michigan State University	1											
MA programs												
Syracuse University <sup>a</sup>	3	1	1	1								
University of California, Los Angeles	4	2	1	1								
Clark Atlanta University <sup>b</sup>												
University at Albany, State University of New York	4	3	1									
Yale University	3	1										
Cornell University	4	1	1		1	1						
Indiana University	5	1	2	1								
New York University	2				1							
Ohio State University	1											
University of Iowa	2			1								
Columbia University	3											
Morgan State University <sup>b</sup>												
Florida International University <sup>b</sup>												
University of Maryland, College Park	5	1		1						1		
University of Wisconsin–Madison <sup>c</sup>												
University of Louisville	4											

*(continued)*



**Table 2 (continued)**

Program	AAS/ Interdisciplinary	History	Literature	Culture/ Anthropology	Sociology	Political	Communications	Economics	Public	Statistics	Psychology
	Classes			Science		Policy					
Other influential programs											
University of Pennsylvania	8	3	1		1						
University of Michigan	1										
Purdue University	3										
Pennsylvania State University	4	4			1					1	
University of Virginia		3									
Duke University		3									
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill		4	1								
California State University, Long Beach		5				2		1			
University of Toledo		7	1	1							
University of Illinois at Chicago <sup>a</sup>											
Social science	2	1									1
Humanities	2	1	1								
University of Pittsburgh	2										
University of Texas	1										
Total	82 (100%)	47 (57.32%)	11 (13.41%)	8 (9.76%)	4 (4.88%)	3 (3.66%)	1 (1.22%)	1 (1.22%)	1 (1.22%)	1 (1.22%)	1 (1.22%)

a. Either history or literature required.

b. No undergraduate major.

c. Based on discipline of concentration.

**Table 3**  
**Survey of National Economic Association Members ( $n = 16$ ):**  
**Member Characteristics and Average Rankings of the**  
**Importance of Various Disciplines to Africana Studies**

Characteristic	<i>n</i>
At institutions that have Africana Studies programs	6
Type	
Department	4
Program	2
Want to teach in Africana Studies (if not already teaching)	5
Status	
Core faculty member	14
Affiliated faculty member	2
Encourage students to take Africana Studies courses	10
Familiar with NCBS	1 <sup>a</sup>
NCBS member	1
From survey of chairs of Africana Studies departments	7
Knowledge of	
<i>Review of Black Political Economy</i>	6
National Economic Association	3
Discipline	Average rank
Nonessential	
Biology	4.5
Criminology	5.1
Communications	5.7
Useful	
Art	6.2
Theater	6.5
Visual arts	6.5
Psychology	6.8
Religion	7.0
Music	7.1
Philosophy	7.1
Valuable	
Statistics and mathematics	7.5
Urban studies	7.6
Anthropology	7.7
Cultural studies	7.8
Literature	7.8
Sociology	7.8
Extremely important	
Political science	8.6
Economics	9.4
History	9.5

Note: NCBS = National Council for Black Studies.

a. Retired faculty member.

5 economists currently working in Africana Studies programs had heard of the NCBS prior to responding to our survey. By contrast, six of the seven Africana Studies department chairs we surveyed were familiar with the *Review of Black Political Economy*, the NEA's professional publication, and three of these seven chairs were also familiar with the NEA.

Tables 4a to 4c report the results of our survey of chairs of Africana Studies programs. This was a survey of the leading programs in Africana Studies, listed in Table 1. Table 4a includes the chairs' rankings of the relatively important alternative disciplines for Africana Studies. There was substantial agreement with the rankings of the economists, though there were some noticeable differences. For example, the departmental chairs listed statistics among the nonessential disciplines and listed religion and sociology among the extremely important disciplines.

The chairs reported no statisticians among either the core (Table 4b) or affiliated (Table 4c) faculty members at their institutions. Faculty members with specialties in literature (21%), sociology (18%), and history (16%) represent more than half of Africana Studies core faculty members, while literature (17%), sociology (11%), history (11%), and music (11%) are the dominant fields among affiliated faculty members. Yet economics, political science, and religion are dramatically underrepresented among either core or affiliated faculty members in Africana Studies, despite the fact that department chairs viewed these disciplines as valuable and extremely important.

The near invisibility of economists among Africana Studies faculty members, despite the fact that economists, department chairs, and leading scholars of Africana Studies viewed economics as a vital discipline, warrants greater inquiry. We believe that there are multiple reasons for this seeming inconsistency. First, there may be no payoff within the discipline of economics for economists who work in or affiliate with Africana Studies programs. As we document below, there is no payoff to economics departments or individual economists who publish in Africana Studies journals.

Second, the professional attitudes of economists may be a factor limiting their involvement in Africana Studies. Economists have a strong competitive advantage in mathematical modeling, statistical analysis, and the strategic analysis of interacting agents. These areas are not well developed within Africana Studies; hence, economists may feel that there is no benefit to associating with Africana Studies faculty members. Because Africana Studies is a mostly nonquantitative discipline, economists may not view Africana Studies as an appropriate or useful employment opportunity. Moreover, it may also be the case that economists stigmatize interdisciplinary research more than do other disciplines.

**Table 4a**  
**Survey of Africana Studies Department Chairs (n = 7):**  
**Characteristics and Average Rankings of the Importance of Various**  
**Disciplines to Africana Studies**

Characteristic	n
Department	4
Program	1
Center	1
Institution	1
Degrees offered	
PhD	0
MA	3
Graduate certificate	1
BA/BS	3
Minor	5
Undergraduate certificate	1
Knowledge of	
<i>Review of Black Political Economy</i>	6
National Economic Association	3
Discipline	Average rank
Nonessential	
Biology	5.7
Criminology	6.2
Statistics	6.2
Communications	6.4
Useful	
Art	6.8
Theater	7.4
Music	7.5
Visual arts	7.5
Cultural studies	7.6
Valuable	
Philosophy	7.7
Anthropology	7.7
Literature	7.7
Psychology	7.8
Urban studies	8.5
Political science	9.2
Extremely important	
Economics	9.3
Religion	9.3
Sociology	9.3
History	9.9

**Table 4b**  
**Survey of Africana Studies Department Chairs: Core Faculty Representation**

Discipline	<i>n</i>	% of All Core Faculty Members
Africana Studies	6	16
Art	0	
Literature	8	21
Music	2	
Visual arts	0	
Cultural studies	1	3
Theater	0	
Religion	0	
History	6	16
Philosophy	0	
Psychology	3	8
Sociology	7	18
Anthropology	2	5
Criminology	0	
Political science	3	8
Urban studies	0	
Statistics	0	
Economics	0	
Biology	0	
Communications	0	
All fields	38	100

Third, although Africana Studies scholars and administrators value economics content, it may be the case that they are not comfortable with the perceived conservative methodology and implications of economic theory; hence, Africana Studies scholars may be skeptical of economists, even as they value economics.

Fourth, the heavy reliance of economics on statistics and mathematics may create a gap in the understanding of economics by most Africana Studies faculty members. Consider, for example, the chairs' view that economics is an extremely valuable discipline but that statistics is a nonessential discipline.

Fifth, we suspect (but have not established) that there is an absence of advanced economic literacy among Africana Studies faculty members. Except for sociologists, most faculty members in Africana Studies departments may never have taken advanced courses in economics.

There are two other significant barriers to entry for economists who wish to participate in Africana Studies programs. At a minimum, students need two introductory courses before doing field courses in economics. Sometimes

**Table 4c**  
**Survey of Africana Studies Department Chairs: Affiliated Faculty Representation**

Discipline	<i>n</i>	% of All Affiliated Faculty Members
Africana Studies	2	4
Art	4	7
Literature	9	17
Music	6	11
Visual arts	4	7
Cultural studies	2	4
Theater	3	6
Religion	0	
History	6	11
Philosophy	0	
Psychology	3	6
Sociology	6	11
Anthropology	2	4
Criminology	0	
Political science	2	4
Urban studies	1	2
Statistics	0	
Economics	0	
Biology	1	2
Communications	2	4
Education	1	2
All fields	54	100

students need as many as five courses (two introductory and two intermediate theory courses plus a statistics course) before taking advanced field courses in economics. Much of the material on topics such as inequality, labor market discrimination, public policy, and so on, that would fit naturally in an economics course that would be of interest to an Africana Studies program or its students is traditionally taught within the advanced field courses in economics. Accordingly, an economist who works in Africana Studies or who wishes to affiliate with Africana Studies is dependent on the economics department to providing students with the necessary prerequisites and encouragement to take courses in Africana Studies. Finally, the absence of a good systematic economics text that is appropriate for use in Africana Studies means that economists who wish to participate in Africana Studies will have to devote substantial time to developing reading lists and supplementary notes.

## **The Economics Content of Introductory and Other Representative Texts**

Karenga's (2002) *Introduction to Black Studies* is the starting point for analysis of Africana Studies texts. This is a wide-ranging, general introductory text that integrates both the humanities and social science dimensions of Africana Studies. Although the section on "social organization" presents a variety of issues in which economists have made substantial contributions (e.g., education and transitions in family structure), it is notable that this volume also devotes an entire section to "economic organization." It is laudable that this text introduces students to economic issues. However, Karenga's text is noticeably deficient in presenting both economic data and any of the core quantitative skills that are common to economic analysis. This particular text is also short on economic theory. Indeed, one of the more distressing oversights for an Afrocentric text is that Karenga seems genuinely unaware of the central contributions of Black political economy.

Some of the weaknesses found in Karenga's (2002) text are partially rectified in Banks's (1996) *Black Intellectuals*. Banks's African American intellectual history does a noteworthy job of presenting ideas associated with Abram Harris. It is fitting that Banks should include Harris in his intellectual history; after all, Harris was the second African American to receive a doctorate in economics (from Columbia University in 1930) and the first African American economist to receive an appointment at a major White research university (the University of Chicago in 1946).<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, Banks was silent on nearly all modern African American economists, except the conservative economists Glenn Loury and Thomas Sowell. Arguably, neither of these conservatives is part of the mainstream of African American intellectual history. On the other hand, Banks neglected a host of African Americans whose work and lives created the tradition of Black political economy and whose work has received considerable notice among the economics profession at large. For example, Banks mentioned only in a somewhat disparaging fashion Robert Weaver, the first secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (1966 to 1969) and the first African American to hold a cabinet position.<sup>4</sup> Weaver also served as president of Baruch College (1970 to 1978) and authored several influential books. Of course, Banks did mention that W. E. B. Du Bois did graduate work at University of Berlin from 1892 to 1894, but he does not mention that Du Bois was studying economics. In fact, at Berlin Du Bois completed all economics doctoral requirements except a dissertation from Berlin and went on to publish in the *American Economic Review*. Other economic notables

unmentioned by Banks include Sir Arthur Lewis (a Nobel Prize winner), Bernard Anderson (an assistant secretary of labor), Andrew Brimmer (of the Federal Reserve), and James Stewart (a former president of the NCBS).

Two of the more important economic ideas of Black political economy include the "Williams thesis" and the "Rodney thesis." In his *Capitalism & Slavery*, Eric Williams (1944) made the case that the economic exploitation carried out under the slave trade and slave labor provided the profits necessary to finance the industrial and technological revolutions of North America and Western Europe. Walter Rodney's (1972) *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* extends Williams's thesis to show that European colonialism and neocolonialism further enriched Western Europe, while creating persistent poverty and dislocation in Africa. In his disciplinary history of Africana Studies, Hall (1999) noted the impact of both of these ideas on the history of economic development but discussed them all too briefly, in just two pages.

Azevedo (1998) provided a wealth of material on the Williams and Rodney theses. Unfortunately, this engaging Pan-Africanist and comparative text is rich in historical detail but short on economic analysis. McWhorter and Bailey (2001) and Alkalimat and Associates (2003), scholars trained in sociology and the humanities, have argued for and worked toward developing an important place for economics in Black Studies research. In their summary of research by Black scholars and in their own published research, these scholars suggest two components of a broad paradigm: historical periodization and conceptual tools. They argue for four historical economic periods, separated by political economic events that gave rise to a new economic regime: African origins, slavery, rural-agricultural society, and urban-industrial society, with the slave trade, emancipation, and migration and urbanization providing the transitions between the respective regimes. The conceptual tools include race (biology), class (economy), nationality (social institutions or organizations and culture), and consciousness. Although we might disagree with their linking race and biology, all of the conceptual tools are now areas in which economics has a great deal to say.

Similarly, Smith (2001) suggested a strong institutional demand for economics. After obtaining survey responses from 140 academic institutions, Smith constructed a composite curriculum covering a wide variety of academic disciplines. The suggested courses for economics include "African American money and banking," "the influence of the economic sector on the Afro-American," "economics of the Black community," and "Black economic workshop." Clearly, these are not course titles generated by a trained economist. Nevertheless, these titles do tell us something quite important:



Africana Studies programs and departments are interested in economics courses that provide applied knowledge on the problems and issues confronting the African American community. The urban curriculum suggested by Smith includes courses that are now routinely covered in topics by urban economists: “the Black ghettos and urban spatial form,” “urban dynamics,” urban and region economics,” and “urban economic problems.” We observe also that Smith’s composite curriculum includes a mathematics and statistics component, which should include such courses as “Black statistics—survey and method,” and “Black mathematics.” Taken literally, the mathematics and statistics courses suggested by Smith simply do not exist. But considered broadly, the suggested courses suggest that Africana Studies programs train students in statistics by analyzing data and issues that are at the forefront of the imaginations of students. In other words, rather than training students in very general statistical methods and then allowing the students to solve specific problems, the courses suggested by Smith would start with particular issues of concern to African Americans and then demonstrate how statistical tools might shed light on these issues. Similarly, we interpret Smith’s call for “Black mathematics” as a call to teach students game theory and mathematical modeling within the context of issues and problems that are central to the lived experiences of African Americans.

Talmadge Anderson (1993) wrote an introductory text to Africana Studies that takes an explicitly multidisciplinary approach to the subject. This work includes sections on history, sociology, psychology, arts and the humanities, political science and economics. Although the effort is to be applauded, it suffers in each of the chapters from being written by a non-specialist in the area. What is different in the economics chapter is the author’s assumption of the development of Black economic thought. Whereas in other chapters, Anderson assumes that there exists a sufficient base of disciplinary knowledge to address issues of the Black community, in the economics chapter, he begins by saying, “However economics is one of the most important areas of Black ideological leanings that still remain grossly undeveloped or unwittingly neglected.” Floyd Hayes’s (2000) edited volume *A Turbulent Voyage* is a reader used in many Africana Studies courses. This book is a collection of journal articles from a large number of different fields that examine African American life. Parts of two sections of the book contain contributions from economists or coverage of economic subjects. One of these sections is on the Black family, with the views of Glen Loury pitted against those of William A. Darity, Jr., and Samuel L. Myers, Jr. The other section covers the political economy of the African American situation, with Harold Baron, Daniel Fusfeld, and Timothy Bates

contributing. In addition, there is a paper by Melvin Oliver, James Johnson, and Walter Farrell, Jr., examining the Los Angeles social unrest of 1992 from a political economy perspective. Unlike many readers in *Africana Studies*, *A Turbulent Voyage* has substantial economic content, if one were to quantify this in terms of pages; economics or economic issues constitute roughly 18% of the book. These two books neatly capture the difficulty of producing introductory textbooks for an interdisciplinary field. When there is an attempt to produce a unified economic approach to the study of African American life, the project fails because by necessity, the material can only superficially cover economic theory. And when economic approaches are used, there is a lack of a unified theory with which to examine the economic conditions of African American life.

### Peer-Reviewed *Africana Studies* Journals

We also wished to assess the presence of economists and economics-related articles in general interest *Africana Studies* journals. Primarily, we relied on two highly used electronic search facilities to establish the appropriate list of journals. JSTOR archives complete series of academic journals, grouped by subject index. JSTOR's *Africana Studies* subject index includes eight titles (Table 5). Typically, current-year journal volumes are not available on JSTOR. The Institute for Scientific Information's Web of Science is an electronic citation index facility containing separate indices for the natural and behavioral sciences, the social sciences, and the arts and humanities. The Web of Science's social index is the electronic version of the long-established Social Science Citation Index. Additionally, we included the *Western Journal of Black Studies* and the *International Journal of Africana Studies* on our list because they are widely read general interest, refereed *Africana Studies* journals. Also, the *International Journal of Africana Studies* is the official publication of the NCBS. *Souls* and *Du Bois Review* were included because they are emerging publications. *Du Bois Review* is a Harvard publication with an impressive editorial board, but it began publishing only in 2004. *Souls* is published by Columbia University, with a founding editor, Manning Marable, who has a long list of political economic publications. We omitted from the list field-specific journals such as the *Review of Black Political Economy*.

Scholars conducting an economics-related literature search will have considerable difficulty locating articles within the most prominent *Africana Studies* journals. The *Journal of Black Studies* is the only JSTOR-indexed

**Table 5**  
**Presence of Economists and Economics Articles**  
**Among Africana Studies Journals**

Journal	JSTOR	Web of Science	Social Science Publications	Editorial Board Economists	Economics-Related Articles
<i>African American Review</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No
<i>Callaloo</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No
<i>Journal of Blacks in Higher Education</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No
<i>Journal of Negro Education</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No
<i>Journal of Negro History</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No
<i>Transition</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No
<i>Phylon</i>	Yes	No, after 1987	No	No	Unknown
<i>Journal of Black Studies</i>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<i>Western Journal of Black Studies</i>	No	No	Yes	No	Unknown
<i>International Journal of Africana Studies</i>	No	No	Yes	No	Unknown
<i>Souls</i>	No	No	Yes	No	Unknown
<i>Du Bois Review</i>	No	No	Yes	Unknown	Yes

Note: Journals were surveyed during December 2004 and January 2005.

journal that publishes social science–related articles. None of the 12 most important Africana Studies journals is currently listed on the Web of Science. Because there is at most one economist among these 12 journals, it is also highly unlikely that these distinguished publications will attract publications from economists, and it will be difficult for these economics-related publications to attract the attention of economists.

We do not wish to suggest, however, that these journals do not contain publications of interest to economists. During 2004 and 2005, the *Journal of Black Studies* devoted an entire issue to race and economics in Brazil (Volume 34, Number 6) and published articles on social security privatization and African Americans and globalization and the digital divide (Volume 35, Number 3) (Appendix A).

Nevertheless, even if an economist wanted to publish in an Africana Studies journal, there is little incentive to do so. Refereed journal publications and citations of faculty publications are an important element for determining the national ranking of economics departments, and they are important for determining economics faculty members' tenure, promotion,

pay, and professional distinction. The Web of Science is the usual index used to count faculty publications and citations. Regardless of the quality of research, because an economics article published in a major general interest Africana Studies journal is unlikely to be located by economists engaged in literature searches on similar topics, the published article will not contribute to the professional well-being of the individual economist who authored it or his or her academic institution.

It is revealing (and also quite discouraging) that no peer-reviewed Africana Studies journal (except the *Review of Black Political Economy*) has published a review of Thomas D. Boston's (1997) edited work *A Different Vision: Race and Public Policy*. This important and highly accessible two-volume work embraces the intellectual history of African American economists and philosophical perspectives that have influenced African American economists.<sup>5</sup> The indifference of general interest Africana Studies journals extends to other publications that focus on economic issues of vital concern to African Americans. Consider, for example, John Whitehead and Cobie Harris's (1999) *Readings in Black Political Economy*.<sup>6</sup> No Africana Studies journal published a review of this volume, even though it was explicitly concerned with developing a Black political economy perspective, and it was aimed at an audience that had not had extensive training in economics, mathematics, and statistics. Indeed, we were unable to locate a single citation to the book in any Africana Studies publications. Other works that have been ignored by general interest Africana Studies journals include Stewart's (1997) *African Americans and Post-Industrial Labor Markets*; Mason and Williams's (1997) *Race, Markets, and Social Outcomes*; Darity and Myers's (1998) *Persistent Disparity: Race and Economic Inequality in the United States Since 1945*; and Mason's (2001) *African Americans, Labor, and Society: Organizing for a New Agenda*. These authors have signaled in important ways their interest in contributing to the development of Africana Studies, especially the development of Black political economy.<sup>7</sup> In addition to detailed analyses of labor-market and other forms of racial discrimination, the edited volumes by Stewart, Mason, and Mason and Williams contain papers on the intersection of race and the economics of crime, health, housing and credit markets, entrepreneurship, worker organization, culture and identity, affirmative action, gender, and a host of other pressing social issues and public policies. Indeed, each of these publications, which have been summarily ignored in the pages of general interest Africana Studies journals, also contains specific policy suggestions and actions for constructing an "Afrocentric" political economic agenda.<sup>8</sup>

## Conclusion

Over the past 30 years, Africana Studies has developed as an interdisciplinary field. Although much attention has been paid within the field to the humanities and the arts, much less attention has been paid to the social sciences, in particular economics. This is the case despite both chairs of Africana Studies departments and economists claiming that economics should be an important part of Africana Studies.

We suggest that the following reasons partially explain the absence of economics within Africana Studies:

- The hierarchical nature of economics makes it more difficult to teach courses in other disciplines, because the students coming into these courses are required to have a substantial number of prerequisites.
- Because of the conservative nature of economics departments, coupled with the lack of incentives to publish in Black Studies journals, there is little academic payoff (in the narrow sense of professional advancement) to economists engaging in work in Africana Studies.
- Economists have a negative attitude toward nonmathematical interdisciplinary fields, particularly Africana Studies.
- There is a possible perception among Africana Studies faculty members that economists are conservative.
- There is a mathematical and statistical gap between the disciplines.
- There is a dearth of good texts that integrate both economic issues and theory with Africana Studies issues, both theoretical and material.

To address these shortcomings, we suggest as a beginning the following recommendations:

- Encourage African American students to take economics, calculus, and statistics. Teach statistics and economic theory in the context of course content.
- Include quantitative courses in graduate programs in Africana Studies: game theory, mathematical modeling, mathematical statistics, and regression analysis.
- Encourage Black Studies journals to publish special issues focusing on economic issues and theory.
- Encourage the addition of economists to the editorial boards of Black Studies journals.
- Include in the *Review of Black Political Economy* an explicitly interdisciplinary section that deals with economics and Africana Studies.
- Encourage the editorship of Africana Studies journals to make efforts to list their journals on the Web of Science.

- Incorporate accessible economics texts into the reading lists of current courses.
- Encourage collaboration between the NCBS and the NEA. This could take the form of summer workshops between economists and faculty members in Africana Studies. The purpose of the workshops would be to produce sample syllabi and texts that could be used to incorporate economics into Africana Studies.

## **Appendix A**

### **Articles of Interest to Economists in the *Journal of Black Studies***

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#### **Volume 34, Number 5 (May 2004)**

- Jike, V. T. (2004). Environmental degradation, social disequilibrium, and the dilemma of sustainable development in the Niger-Delta of Nigeria. *Journal of Black Studies, 34*, 686-701.
- Kashefi, M. (2004). Racial differences on organizational attachment? Structural explanation of attitude differences between White and African American employees. *Journal of Black Studies, 34*, 702-718.

#### **Special Issue on Race and Economics in Brazil: Volume 34, Number 6 (July 2004)**

- Nascimento, E. L. (2004). Guest editor's note. *Journal of Black Studies, 34*, 739-741.
- Paixão, M. (2004). Waiting for the sun: An account of the (precarious) social situation of the African descendant population in contemporary Brazil. *Journal of Black Studies, 34*, 743-765.
- Beato, L. B. (2004). Inequality and human rights of African descendants in Brazil. *Journal of Black Studies, 34*, 766-786.
- da Silva Martins, S., Medeiros, C. A., & Nascimento, E. L. (2004). Paving paradise: The road from "racial democracy" to affirmative action in Brazil. *Journal of Black Studies, 34*, 787-816.
- do Rosário Linhares, L. F. (2004). Kilombos of Brazil: Identity and land entitlement. *Journal of Black Studies, 34*, 817-837.
- Lopes, N. (2004). African religions in Brazil, negotiation, and resistance: A look from within. *Journal of Black Studies, 34*, 838-860.
- Nascimento, E. L. (2004). Kilombismo, virtual Whiteness, and the sorcery of color. *Journal of Black Studies, 34*, 861-880.

#### **Volume 35, Number 3 (January 2005)**

- Nwafor, F. C. (2005). Social security privatization and African Americans: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Black Studies, 35*, 248-266.
- Ngwainmbi, E. K. (2005). Globalization and Nepad's development perspective: Bridging the digital divide with good governance. *Journal of Black Studies, 35*, 284-309.
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## Appendix B

### Detailed Listing of Required Africana Studies Courses

Program	Title	Prefix	Subject	Required Classes	
PhD programs					
Temple University graduate	Proseminar in Grad Work in AAS	AAS 400	AAS	R	
	African Civilizations	AAS 401	AAS	R	
	Research Methods in AAS	AAS 402	AAS	R	
	The Afrocentric Idea	AAS 447	AAS	R	
	African or AA Literature	AAS 460 or 462	AAS	R	
	Ethnographic Methods	AAS 505	AAS	R	
	Seminar in African Aesthetics	AAS 667	AAS	R	
	Teaching AAS	AAS 750	AAS	R	
Temple University undergraduate	Introduction to AAS	AAS W051	AAS	R	
	Introduction to AA Aesthetics	AAS 0052	AAS	R	
	African Civilization	AAS 0100	AAS	R	
	Mass Media and the Black Community	AAS 0151	AAS	R	
	Introduction to Research Methods	AAS 0155	AAS	R	
	Senior Seminar	AAS W398	AAS	R	
	University of California, Berkeley	Africa: History and Culture	AAS 4A-4B	AAS	R
		Black Life and Culture	AAS 5A-5B	AAS	R
Introduction to AAS		AAS 100	AAS	R	
Interdisciplinary Research Methods		AAS 101	AAS	R	
Colonialism, Slavery, and AA Life Before 1865		AAS 116	AAS	R	
AAs in the Industrial Age, 1865-1970		AAS 117	AAS	R	
University of Massachusetts Amherst	Introduction to Black Studies	AAS 101	AAS	R	
	Harvard University	Introduction to AAS	AAS 10	R	
AA History From Slave Trade to 1900		AAS 118	AAS	R	
AA Literature to 1920s		AAS 131	AAS	R	

*(continued)*

## Appendix B (continued)

Program	Title	Prefix	Subject	Required Classes
	Jazz, Race, and Politics Since World War II	AAS 97a	AAS	R
	Topics in AA History and Society	AAS 97b	AAS	R
	Tutorial	AAS 98	AAS	R
Michigan State University	Research-Mentoring in Black American and Diasporic Studies	AL 495	Arts and Letters	R
Syracuse University	Introduction to AAS in the Social Sciences	AAS/ANT 112	AAS/ANT	R
	AA Literature to 1900	AAS 231	AAS	R
	AA Literature 20th and 21st Century: An Introduction	AAS 232	AAS	R
	AA History Before 1865	AAS/HST 332	AAS/HST	R
	AA History After 1865	AAS/HST 333	AAS/HST	R
	Research Methods in AAS	AAS 525	AAS	R
MA programs				
University of California, Los Angeles	History of Africa to 1800	HST 10A	HST	R
	Early Afro-American Literature	ENG/AAS M104A	ENG/AAS	R
	AA Literature From the Harlem Renaissance to the 1960s	ENG/AAS M104B	ENG/AAS	R
	Afro-American Literature Since the 1960s	ENG/AAS M104C	ENG/AAS	R
	Introduction to AA History	HST/AAS M158B & C	HST/AAS	R
	Afro-American Experience in the United States	ANTH/ AAS M164	ANTH/AAS	R
Clark Atlanta University	No undergraduate major in AAS; self-designed minor			
University at Albany, State University of New York	AA Literature	AAAS 142	AAAS	R
	Introduction to AA History	AAAS 219 or 219Z	AAAS	R
	African Civilizations	AAAS 286	AAAS/HIS	R

*(continued)*



## Appendix B (continued)

Program	Title	Prefix	Subject	Required Classes
Yale University	Africa in the Modern World	AAAS 287	AAAS/HIS	R
	Senior Seminar	AAAS 490	AAAS	R
	AA Freedom Movements in the 20th Century	AFAM 161b, 162a	AAS	R
	Interdisciplinary Approaches to AAS	AFAM 410b	AAS	R
	Senior Colloquium	AFAM 480a	AAS	R
Cornell University	Senior Essay	AFAM 491a or b	AAS	R
	African Civilizations and Cultures	ASRC 205	Africana Studies	R
	Black Political Thought	ASRC 231	Africana Studies	R
	Sociology of the Black Experience	ASRC 290	Africana Studies	R
	African Literature	ASRC 422	Africana Studies	R
Indiana University	Survey of the Culture of Black Americans	A150	AAS	R
	Afro-American History I and II	A355 or A356	HST	R
	Early Black American Writing	A379	AAS	R
	Contemporary Black American Writing	A380	AAS	R
	Senior Seminar in AAS	A493	AAS	R
New York University	Introduction to Pan-Africanism	V11.0010	AAS	R
	Introduction to Black Urban Studies	V11.0020	AAS	R
	Senior Seminar or Project	V11.0997, V11.0998	AAS	R
Ohio State University	Introduction to AA and African Studies	101	AAS	R
University of Iowa	Introduction to AA Society	129:060	AAS	R
	Introduction to AA Culture	129:061	AAS	R
	Introduction to AAS	C1001	AAS	R
Columbia University	Colloquium: Black Intellectuals	C3936	AAS	R
	Topics in the Black Experience	C3930	AAS	R
	No undergraduate major			
Morgan State University	No undergraduate major			
Florida International University University of Maryland, College Park	Introduction to AAS	AASP 100	AAS	R
	Public Policy and the Black Community	AASP 101	AAS	R
	Black Culture in the United States	AASP 202	AAS	R
	African Civilization	AASP 200	AAS	R
	Research Methodologies in AAS	AASP 297	AAS	R

*(continued)*

## Appendix B (continued)

Program	Title	Prefix	Subject	Required Classes
University of Wisconsin–Madison	Determined on the basis of area of concentration; no core requirements			
University of Louisville	Introduction to PAS	PAS 200	PAS	R
	Research Methods in Pan African Studies	PAS 408	PAS	R
	Cooperative research in PAS	PAS 500	PAS	R
	Field Research	PAS 586	PAS	R
Other influential programs				
University of Pennsylvania	Introduction to Africana Studies	AFRC 001	Africana Studies	R
	Africa Before 1800	AFRC 075	Africana Studies	R
	Afro-American History 1550-1876	AFRC 176	Africana Studies	R
	Afro-American History 1876-Present	AFRC 177	Africana Studies	R
	AA Literature (or similar)	AFRC 081	Africana Studies	R
	Race and Ethnic Relations (or similar)	AFRC 006	Africana Studies	R
	Africana Studies Seminar	AFRC 400	Africana Studies	R
	Independent study or service learning course or internship		Africana Studies	R
University of Michigan	Introduction to Africa and Its Diaspora	AAS 111	AAAS	R
Purdue University	Introduction to AAS	IDIS 271	AAS	R
	The AA Experience	IDIS 371	AAS	R
	Issues in AAS	IDIS 373	AAS	R
Pennsylvania State University	Evolving Status of Blacks in the Twentieth Century: Interdisciplinary Perspectives	AAA S 100 GS;US	AAAS	R
	Introduction to Contemporary Africa	AAA S 110 GS;IL	AAAS	R
	Elementary Statistics	STAT 200	STAT	R
	Research Methods in Sociology	SOC 207	SOC	R

*(continued)*

## Appendix B (continued)

Program	Title	Prefix	Subject	Required Classes
University of Virginia	Black Nationalism	AAS 101	AAS	R
	Crosscurrents in the African Diaspora 400-level seminar	AAS 102	AAS	R
Duke University	Introduction to African/AA Studies	AAAS 106	AAAS	R
	Introduction to African Studies	AAAS 107	AAAS	R
	Senior Seminar	AAAS 198S	AAAS	R
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	Introduction to African Civilization	AFRI 40	AAAS	R
	The Black Experience I	AFAM 40	AAAS	R
	The Black Experience II	AFAM 41	AAAS	R
	Seminar in Afro-American Studies	AFAM 70	AAAS	R
	African and Afro-American Linkages	AFRI-AFAM 174	AAAS	R
California State University, Long Beach	Introduction to Black Studies	B/ST 110	Black Studies	R
	Politics of the Black Community	B/ST 330	Black Studies	R
	Civil Rights and the Law	B/ST 332	Black Studies	R
	Economic Development in the Black Community	B/ST 335	Black Studies	R
	Research Methods in Black Studies	B/ST 495	Black Studies	R
University of Toledo	Introduction to Africana Studies	AFST 1100	Africana Studies	R
	The African Experience	AFST 1200	Africana Studies	R
	Foundations of Black Intellectual History	AFST 2100	Africana Studies	R
	Foundations of Culture in the African Diaspora	AFST 2200	Africana Studies	R
	Black Community Research Methods	AFST 2300	Africana Studies	R
	Social Policy and the Black Community	AFST 2400	Africana Studies	R
	Senior Seminar	AFST 4900	Africana Studies	R
University of Illinois at Chicago	No information on Web site			
University of Pittsburgh	Introduction to Africana Studies	AFRCNA 0031	Africana Studies	R
	Africana Senior Research Seminar	AFRCNA 1068	Africana Studies	R
	Internship (field placement)	AFRCNA 1900	Africana Studies	R
University of Texas	Foundations of AAAS	AFR301	AAAS	R

## Notes

1. All data in Tables 1 to 4 and in Appendix B were collected from October 2004 to January 2005.

2. We note that faculty members with specialties in mathematical modeling and statistical analysis represent an even smaller portion of Africana Studies faculty members.

3. See Darity (1987) for a detailed analysis of the life and works of Harris.

4. See Conrad and Sherer (1997) for a detailed analysis of the life and works of Weaver.

5. We used the Web of Science to do an electronic search of journals that reviewed this text. Of course, as we document in the text, most Africana Studies journals are not listed with the Web of Science, so even if those journals did review Boston's volume, we would not have located the reviews in our electronic search.

6. This volume is now out of print. A greatly revised version is now available as *African Americans in the U.S. Economy* (Conrad, Whitehead, Mason, & Stewart, 2005).

7. Stewart is a past president of the NCBS. Both Stewart and Mason are past presidents of the NEA. The late Rhonda Williams was one of the very few economists to chair an Africana Studies department (at the University of Maryland). Mason has chaired the Africana Studies program at the University of Notre Dame and currently chairs the same program at Florida State University. Samuel L. Myers Jr. is former chair, Department of African American Studies, University of Maryland.

8. See also Shapiro (2004). Although Shapiro is not an economist, this text does an outstanding job displaying the relationship between race, wealth, and intergenerational mobility.

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