

AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES FIVE YEAR ACADEMIC PLAN 2004-2009

HISTORY

The American Indian Studies Department at UNC Pembroke originated in the 1970s (1972 to be exact) when a number of campuses across the country were dealing with the issues of multicultural representation in their curricula. However, unlike many other ethnic studies programs that became casualties of changing curricular trends, the AIS department at UNCP not only survived this fate but evolved into a degree granting program (1984), graduating its first student with a BA in American Indian Studies in 1986. In addition to the BA, the department also offers a minor and academic concentration in American Indian Studies.

Course listings in the 2003-2004 UNCP catalog include 24 different AIS courses, nine of which are cross listed with other departments and at least nine special topics courses which are offered on an ad hoc basis. AIS faculty consists of two full time positions, seven faculty from other departments and two adjunct. An average of nine courses (a few with multiple sections) are offered each semester.

There are several reasons why the American Indian Studies program at UNCP is unique. First, it is one of two programs east of the Mississippi which offer a degree in the field. Secondly, the multi-disciplinary approach taken by the curriculum is broad based. In order to obtain a degree in American Indian Studies, a student must take courses ranging from American Indian history, art, literature, archaeology and religion to contemporary issues. Additionally, rather than having a specific tribal focus, AIS courses allow students to study the history and culture of many tribal communities. Another major strength of the program is UNCP's location in the Lumbee community which provides students and faculty direct access to tribal resources that otherwise would not be available.

For the last six years, AIS courses have been offered over the information highway to other UNC campuses. Realizing the paucity of courses relating to Indian studies in the UNC system, AIS provided access to part of its curriculum through the distance learning process. AIS courses have been received by UNC-CH, NC State, UNCC, UNCW, and NC Central. Additionally, an AIS class (American Indian Women) for the third semester is team taught by an AIS professor and a UNCC professor over the information highway with classes on each campus.

PROCESS

Planning for the Department's original five year plan began in the Spring 2001 semester. Faculty input was solicited at the regular department meeting and a special meeting held for the specific purpose of discussing ideas for the growth and development of the AIS program. Those who could not attend were invited to submit ideas or comments to the chair for discussion or inclusion in the plan. In addition, previous departmental self study documents were reviewed. The final draft of the first plan and the updated plan (2004-2009) was prepared by the chair.

ASSUMPTIONS

The American Indian Studies Department's five year academic plan is based upon the following assumptions:

1. The UNCP administration will continue to support the American Indian Studies program.
2. The UNCP student body will continue to be ethnically diverse.
3. Part of the UNCP recruitment emphasis will be on a more diverse Native American student population.
4. With the increase in student enrollment, the UNCP growth budget will also increase. AIS will be considered part of the growth and development as a result of the University's overall expansion.
5. Given some budget limitations, more collaborative efforts will be necessary for development of new initiatives as well as the expansion of current programs both on and off campus.
6. There will be a growing emphasis on technology for sharing learning opportunities for students who are not physically on the UNCP campus. AIS will continue to be a part of this effort.
7. UNCP will continue to value high academic standards for its students.
8. UNCP will continue to value high professional standards for its faculty.
9. UNCP will continue to value a caring and supportive learning environment for all its constituency.

10. The Department will continue to play a significant role in the University's mission to instill in our students an appreciation for different cultures and world views.

VISION AND MISSION

Through the American Indian Studies Department, a program is offered to educate students about the rich diversity of American Indian histories and cultures, to promote research and scholarship concerning American Indian issues and to prepare students for professional and scholarly careers. The AIS department provides a comprehensive program with both an academic and public orientation focusing on the history and cultures of American Indian tribal groups.

PROPOSED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES, ACTION AND ASSESSMENT

These goals and objectives were developed as part of the 2002-2007 long range plan. In an effort to up date the plan (2004-2009), the accomplishments of the department in meeting the objectives in 2004 is reported at the end of the objective. The updated plan is a continuation of the original goals and objectives.

GOAL 1: The American Indian Studies Department will provide a comprehensive academic curriculum designed to educate students about the rich diversity of American Indian tribal histories and cultures.

Objective 1: The AIS department will offer a core academic program encompassing major course requirements as well as standard electives and special topic classes.

Action: The AIS curriculum will be reviewed annually by the department for addition, deletion and revision of courses based upon the interests and demands of the students.

Assessment: The department on an annual basis will analyze the number of subjects taught and the number of students enrolled in each in order to determine new curriculum needs or to modify current offerings.

Status (2004): Implemented and ongoing.

Objective 2: Over the next five years the department will expand the AIS curriculum to increase the number of courses in the areas of folklore (oral tradition) and museums studies.

Action: AIS will seek to add at least one full time position in the field of folklore and oral tradition and one adjunct or part time position in the area of museum studies.

Action: Upon hiring of faculty, AIS will develop and implement courses in folklore and museum studies.

Assessment: Upon approval of the administration, AIS will have advertised and hired a faculty for folklore no later than Fall 2002 and an adjunct in museum studies no later than Spring 2003.

Assessment: The effectiveness of these new course offerings will be assessed by numbers of students enrolled, faculty evaluation and student evaluations.

Status (2004): A new permanent full time faculty position was added to AIS in 2002-2003. The faculty member hired has expertise in oral tradition.

Objective 3: During the next five years AIS will expand its curriculum to include at least three graduate classes.

Action: AIS chair will work with the dean of graduate school and department chairs to determine the most feasible area for expanding the graduate curriculum to include AIS courses.

Action: Appropriate procedure will be followed to implement courses for graduate credit.

Assessment: Data will be collected on the number of courses developed, time offered, student demand and enrollment and student evaluation of the courses.

Status (2004): At present, one AIS graduate course is offered.

Objective 4: AIS will enhance and broaden its program through collaborative initiatives with other departments.

Action: AIS will explore with the History department the possibility of a joint appointment in the area of public history with the objective of developing a minor in public history.

Action: AIS will explore the possibility of a joint appointment with the department of Political Science and Public Administration with the objective of developing a program in tribal government.

Action: AIS will explore the possibility of a joint appointment with English, Theater and Language with the objective of developing a minor in American Indian literature and folklore.

Assessment: Discussions between the various departments will be initiated as soon as possible. Based upon decisions made, appropriate steps will be taken as needed.

Status (2004): Discussions are ongoing with History, PSPA and ETL. Courses have been developed and offered in Museum Studies, Federal Indian Law and Native American Oral Traditions. However, the programs have not been fully developed.

Objective 5: Upon graduation, all American Indian Studies graduates will be academically prepared to enter a career in their field of study or a related graduate or professional program.

Action: Through the AIS curriculum, students will acquire a general knowledge of the discipline and the ability to think and write analytically and critically.

Action: Through the AIS curriculum, students will acquire adequate research and reporting skills which will allow them to conduct scholarly or professional research.

Assessment: Methods of students assessment will be developed to evaluate desired knowledge and skills of AIS majors. Efforts will be made to include students in the development of this process.

Assessment: When possible graduates will be surveyed to assess the quality of preparation for either work or graduate school.

Status (2004): Student learning outcomes have been developed for the department. An assessment of the department through student portfolios is being proposed.

GOAL 2: The American Indian Studies Department will strengthen its major program through increased enrollment in the major, minor and academic concentration programs.

Objective 1: AIS will improve the visibility of the department both within the region and outside the state.

Action: AIS will seek funding to support an outreach program where faculty and students can visit tribal communities and other venues (e.g. conferences) where a significant number of Indian students may be present.

Action: A new brochure will be developed and disseminated to promote the AIS program.

Action: A short slide presentation will be developed to promote the program and highlight department activities.

Assessment: The effectiveness of this objective will be assessed through the analysis of number of majors, minors, and academic concentrations enrolled in and graduating from the program.

Assessment: Recruitment strategies will be reviewed for effectiveness in promoting the department.

Status (2004): A new AIS brochure has been developed and is distributed through the Admissions Office and other venues. Enrollment data is reviewed at the end of each semester.

Goal 3: AIS will continue to provide the opportunity for non AIS students to learn, understand and appreciate the diverse cultures of American Indian tribal peoples.

Objective: AIS will continue effort to increase enrollment of non AIS students in AIS courses.

Action: AIS will continue to improve awareness of the AIS curriculum and departmental activities on the UNCP campus.

Action: AIS will more aggressively inform faculty of course offerings and program activities.

Action: AIS will encourage faculty advisors to suggest AIS classes as options for general education and/or elective classes.

Assessment: Data will be collected on numbers of non AIS students enrolled in courses and the subjective evaluation of the courses by these students.

Status (2004): No data collected.

Goal 4: All American Indian Studies faculty will be involved in continued professional development through scholarly and creative endeavors. (Most AIS faculty are in other departments and teach one or two AIS courses per year.)

Objective 1: AIS faculty will demonstrate competence in their specific teaching areas.

Action: Chair evaluations and classroom observations will be conducted when appropriate. Student evaluations will be done on a regular basis.

Assessment: Chair and student evaluations will be reviewed with the expectation that evaluations will be consistent with or higher than the previous year.

Status (2004): Student evaluations are conducted on most courses (each faculty is required to do this one semester per academic year). Some, but not all are reviewed by the chair.

Objective 2: AIS faculty will participate in activities that are appropriate to professional development in the discipline.

Action: Funds will be sought to increase support for research activities in AIS.

Action: Funds will be sought to support AIS faculty participation in professional conferences and organizations related to the field of American Indian Studies.

Assessment: Data will be reviewed for number of papers presented, conference/meetings attended and research activities conducted by AIS faculty.

Status (2004): No formal data has been collected on the number of professional activities of AIS faculty; however, there have been a number of professional presentations and a few articles submitted and/or published by AIS faculty.

Goal 5: The American Indian Studies Department will become involved in state and national research and scholarly efforts in specific areas of American Indian studies.

Objective 1: The AIS program will biannually organize or co-sponsor a statewide or national conference on a particular subject or issue related to American Indian Studies.

Action: AIS will establish a committee of faculty and other interested folks to plan and implement a conference held at UNCP every other year.

Assessment: The conference will attract academic and other scholars interested in American Indian studies. Data will be collected and assessed on the number of participants, evaluation by the participants and overall effectiveness of the event.

Status (2004): Discussions have been ongoing at the department level; however, no plan for implementation has been developed.

Objective 2: The American Indian Studies Department will assist with the organization and implementation of a statewide network of scholars interested in American Indian Studies.

Action: AIS will contact previous participants in the Carolinas Consortium on Indian Studies to determine interest in reviving the old organization or beginning a new one.

Action: A meeting will be set up for those interested and appropriate action will be taken to put the network in place.

Assessment: If implemented, scholars of American Indian Studies will have an ongoing communication where information, support and resources can be shared.

Status (2004): Discussions are being held concerning reviving the Carolinas Consortium on American Indian Studies. Plans are proposed for a first meeting in either Spring or Fall 2004.

