

College of Liberal Arts Resolution on Africana Studies Department

Whereas: Since 2017 the Africana Studies Department has been reduced from seven full-time, tenure track faculty, to 1.5 full-time tenure track faculty in 2022, which renders the department unable to fulfill numerous fundamental academic functions such as curriculum development and delivery, student advising, personnel reviews, class schedules, as well as minimum service responsibilities at the department, college, university, and community levels.

Whereas this situation has a direct impact on the ability of Africana Studies students to complete graduation requirements in a timely manner

Whereas: This situation exerts extraordinary pressure on junior, senior, and non-tenure-track faculty and negatively impacts their research, teaching, and service performance, further weakening their chances to succeed and advance their careers through tenure and promotion.

Whereas: In Fall 2020, the former Dean of the College of Liberal Arts championed approval of two faculty searches for the department for Fall 2021 hires.

Whereas: The Interim Dean of the College of Liberal Arts informed the Africana Studies Department that its searches were blocked by the former Provost in Spring 2021.

Whereas: In Fall 2021, the new Provost restored the two faculty searches to Africana Studies for Fall 2022 hires.

Whereas: In October 2021, the new Dean of Liberal Arts rejected the search committee already established by both the former and Interim Deans with department consultation, who created a new search committee without departmental consultation; rejected the fundamentals of shared faculty governance; and rejected the inclusion of a faculty member from the College of Education serving on the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) search committee.

Whereas: In December, 2021 the new search committee submitted the list of semi-finalist candidates from a pool of more than 50 national applicants to be screened, to create finalist candidates for campus interviews as prescribed by the Dean of Faculty Training.

Whereas: This list sat in the Provost's office without action for two months.

Whereas: The search committee followed normal procedures of all UMB searches, Zoom interviewing semi-finalists, and producing a list of finalist candidates to be considered for campus interviews.

Whereas: In March 2022, the Dean of CLA announced the cancellation of the search alleging the search committee did not transform the semi-finalist list into a finalist list and had submitted the list of candidates to be interviewed on campus using ordinal numbers (1,2,3,4) instead of (a,b,c,d).

And Whereas: The Department of Africana Studies has requested that the two searches be immediately reinstated and finalized before the next academic year to ease the extraordinary burden currently carried by resident faculty, to rebuild the academic unit, and continue its fundamental role within CLA.

Be it resolved that the Faculty Council affirms and supports the Africana Studies Department's urgent and reasonable request that the Dean of Liberal Arts and the University Provost immediately reopen the search for two tenure track lines and finalize them before the start of the academic year 2022-2023.

and,

Be it further resolved that the Faculty Council affirms the urgency that our university's governance bodies explicitly address the Africana Studies Department's longstanding demands beyond the reopening of the two faculty tenure track searches.