Recommended Course of Study for an Informal Emphasis in Black Studies Under the MALS Program

Program Objectives: The discipline of Black studies holistically examines the experiences, contributions, and condition of African-descent peoples in relation to the formation, evolution and current status of American society and culture. It involves the study of social forces affecting the cultural and institutional development of this group and the study of their creative and expressive forms. Where relevant to these objectives, the focus extends to an examination of the active role of Africa and the African Diaspora in global society and human culture.

Program Description: To develop an informal emphasis in Black studies students should complete the three core courses listed below. Optionally, BLKS 5503 can serve as the introductory course for the MALS program, and BLKS 5508 can serve as the capstone course for the MALS program. Students who may have taken undergraduate versions of the core courses must complete them at the graduate level. The three core courses are:

- **BLKS 5502 Conceptual and Theoretical Foundations in African American Studies** (3hrs). This course provides an in-depth examination of the theoretical and conceptual parameters of African American studies.

- **BLKS 5503 Writing for African American Studies** (3hrs). This course instructs students in how to produce advanced knowledge in the field of African American studies through the construction of high quality research papers, and it exposes students to a wide array of scholarly journals, databases, and authoritative resources in African American studies. Students develop their research papers around a specific topic defined by the instructor.

- **BLKS 5508 Research Seminar** (3hrs). This course introduces the logic, theory, and techniques of empirical research and applies them to African American studies. Students engage in projects involving oral history and ethnography. They learn the parameters and theory behind qualitative and quantitative research and connect empirical research with critical theoretical issues in African American studies.

We recommend that students work with an advisor in Black studies to complete an additional 27 hours of course work that is relevant to the field of Black studies. Recommended courses include all graduate-level courses with a Black studies prefix and other courses approved by the Director of the Black Studies Program.

Examples of elective graduate courses in Black studies are:

- BLKS 5520, Critical Health Issues in Black Communities
- BLKS 5521, The Black Family and Male-Female Relationships
- BLKS 5535, Stages Toward Freedom: African American Dramatic Traditions
Recommended Course of Study in Black Studies, MALS Program, Page 2.

- BLKS 5537, The Civil Rights Movement in African American Literature
- BLKS 5525, African American Business Development
- BLKS 5534, From Field Shout to Hip Hop: African American Poetic Traditions

Electives may also be special topics courses, **BLKS 5580**, or directed study, **BLKS 5590**. Students are encouraged to take elective courses in both the humanities and the social sciences.