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Black Education at Eastern Washington University brochure, circa 1990

Eastern Washington University. Africana Studies Program

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The Black Studies Library

The Black Education Program houses a number of books, current periodicals and newspapers related to the Black experience in Africa, the Americas, and other areas of the world. Materials in the collection are available for circulation and reference services are provided.

Student Organization

The Eastern Washington University Black Student Union supports the Black Education Department in terms of expansion and community. The BSU sponsors many social and cultural events throughout the academic year. In the past they have worked cooperatively with the Black Education Program in sponsoring Black History Month activities. These events generally consist of guest lecturers speaking on national issues and programs affecting Black citizens worldwide. In addition, the BSU sponsors Black Awareness in May. Activities for the event have included guest lecturers, film presentations, sports tournaments, religious programs, fashion shows, and award banquets honoring Black students exhibiting academic excellence.

Minor in Black Studies 20 credits

Choice of 20 credits in Black Studies of which 10 must be upper level. Courses related to the Black experience must be distributed among at least two of the following disciplines: Black studies, history, psychology, economics, humanities, literature, sociology, and regional and urban planning. Students can select courses from a related area with the approval of the director of the Black Education Program.

BLACK EDUCATION

at
Eastern Washington
University

A-223
Shirron
Black Ed

“The function of the university is not simply to teach bread-winning, or to furnish teachers for the public schools or to be a centre of polite society; it is, above all, to be the organ of the fine adjustment between real life and the growing knowledge of life, an adjustment which forms the secret of civilization.”

W.E.B. DuBois

To the Students:

Frederick Douglass once commented that it is possible to shackle a man's body but as long as his mind is free, he is a free man. Never has Douglass' observation been more important than it is today. A solid education is the key for Black people if we are to realize our full potential and help make this world a place where our children can grow and reap the rewards owed over centuries — those which our forefathers paid in blood, sweat and lives.

We can hardly afford the “luxury” of wasting the opportunities to learn and grow in ways that will benefit our immediate communities. We must fulfill an age-old mandate: prepare ourselves to deal with the on-going, greater struggles of Black people. Should we fail to realize our task, the ramifications will be tragic. We will not develop the skills, talents and leadership so very vital to our survival. Hence, we become a “lost generation.”

The challenge is clear. We must commit ourselves to the deadly serious issue of acquiring the best that education can offer us, while thinking collectively of the race at-large. Our future is at stake. As one Black writer once said to me, “I'd like to see my life as a grain of sand en route to a pyramid.” That “pyramid” begins here and now

Black Studies: The Mission

The mission of Black Studies is to invite and guide students into human experience as it has affected the lives of Blacks and to examine the variety of ways in which Blacks have responded. It begins with the lives of Black people and reaches out to all humanity.

Black Studies has an existence and legitimacy of its own. It is more than putting previously excluded information into the curriculum. It represents a different point of view from that of the “traditional” disciplines, and for that reason Black Studies has the potential to revitalize and transform higher education.

By its very nature Black Studies begins with the life and culture of Blacks who were brought to the country as slaves. Thus, the vantage point of Black Studies is qualitatively different from that of the traditional disciplines. Black Studies does not begin with the conquering of kingdoms of the decrees of monarchs. It begins in a group experience of suffering and struggle for survival.

The Program

The Black Education Program is a relatively new academic unit of Eastern Washington University Institutionalized in September, 1972, when Dr. Charles Minor was appointed director, the program has developed into a university component which now offers a minor in Black Studies. The program integrates relevant knowledge in sociology, psychology, economics, humanities and political science. It examines the deeper truths of Black life and focuses on the Black experience both as it has unfolded over time and as it is currently manifested.

All students at Eastern Washington University are encouraged to take courses in our program for undergraduate credit. The post-graduate benefit of Black Studies can be useful for those who plan careers in professions where multicultural public contact is extensive. Examples of such careers are teaching, counseling, social work, government, law enforcement, health planning and urban planning.

The faculty and staff of the Black Education Program are dedicated to providing students with the best instruction possible. Since we also believe that learning is a two-way process, and that there is no substitute for "brain power," we are dedicated to the kinds of research exploration which will be beneficial to each of you and the communities you represent. We feel that the task of bringing about needed changes in this society rests with those who are intellectually prepared. Therefore, we are committed to continue striving for academic excellence and personal survival in the 1980s and 1990s.

For additional information contact:
Eastern Washington University
Black Education Program
104 Monroe Hall
Cheney, Washington 99004

Components

The Black Education Program has four components:

Recruitment and Admissions: Students with a grade-point-average of at least 2.5 are recruited from high schools. Students transferring from community colleges and four-year institutions should have a GPA of at least 2.0. Students with lower GPAs are considered upon the recommendations of counselors and the Black Education Program's director, in conjunction with the Student Center for Academic Assistance.

Service: This component is designed to provide academic, personal and career counseling, cultural events, tutorial and other special activities for Black students. In addition, the program maintains a harmonious relationship with the Black Student Union.

Community: This component is designed to acquaint the university and external community with the Black experience through lectures, courses, workshops and seminars.

Black Studies: This is the academic arm of the program. The curriculum in Black Studies is designed to acquaint undergraduates with the Black experience through courses in Black studies, history, psychology, economics, humanities, literature, sociology, and regional and urban planning. Courses are recommended for students planning careers in teaching, social work, ethnic studies, public service, pre-law, journalism, criminal justice and other professions dealing with human problems and diverse cultural groups.

Services

Academic Advising

Our academic advising is available to freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. We maintain excellent communication in general advising, so we keep abreast of all changes in the General University Requirements. We developed expertise in this area, and all students who are advised through our offices are making normal progress toward graduation.

Personal Counseling

Our staff is available to meet with students who are experiencing personal problems which may hinder their progress at Eastern Washington University.

Educational Counseling

Students experiencing academic difficulties can seek tutorial referral through our program. We have developed a cooperative relationship with the learning skills center and math lab.

Job Placement

Through close cooperation with the Student Employment Office and off-campus contacts, we are sometimes able to help students find part-time work during the school year and summer employment.

Contacts with Outside Agencies

We maintain a relationship with several Spokane community programs. Student referrals are made as needed.

Information Distribution

Our office endeavors to keep Black students informed of school and community-related events, dates and deadlines. (Much of this information will be distributed through the Black Student Union News Calender.)

Financial Aid Information

We endeavor to keep interested students informed about scholarship, grant, loan and/or work-study programs.

Objectives

Until recently, the experiences and development of Black people in Africa, the United States and the West Indies received only peripheral treatment in the curriculum of the nation's colleges and universities. Now there is a new awareness of the history and cultural complexity of Blacks throughout the world. Courses dealing with the Black experience need to be an integral and permanent part of the curriculum of institutions of higher education. Hence, an interdisciplinary, intercollege Black Education Program has become a part of the Eastern Washington University experience.

Our program has several objectives:

1. To make all students aware of the contributions Afro-Americans have made to American culture.
2. To help all students understand the relationships between Afro-Americans, other minorities and the majority culture in America.
3. To reveal the personal and social consequences of racism and provide students with some academic training that will help destroy that aspect of American society and prepare them to deal more effectively with race relations in various professional jobs.
4. To provide Black students attending a predominantly White institution with courses that will give them specific information about their heritage.
5. To acquaint the university and external community with the Black experience through lectures, courses, workshops and seminars.