

UMBC UGC Program Changes & Other Request: Africana Studies

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Specifics: Currently, AFST majors choose to pursue our Standard Major or the Major with Concentration in Community Involvement Studies. If the former, they are required to complete a 6 credit Directed Individual Study course [AFST 498] in which they complete a research paper on a topic of their choosing; if the latter, they complete a 6 credit internship [AFST 490] which they carry out through work at a community organization or institution.

To meet the changing interests of our students, we are requesting approval for a change in our major requirements such that our Standard Major students can complete either the AFST 498—Directed Individual Study or AFST 490—Community Internship Project to satisfy the 6-credit Individual Study requirement for the major.

Current AFST Major Requirements

Standard Major

AFST 498

Community Involvement Major

AFST 490

Requested Change to AFST Major Requirements

Standard Major

AFST 498 or AFST 490

Community Involvement Major

AFST 490

Rationale (see instructions):

Given today's greater emphasis on using the college education and experience for securing positions in the workplace, we have found that increasing numbers of our Standard majors have voiced a strong preference for completing the AFST 490 Internship course in satisfying the upper level 6 credit course required for the major. Their argument is that employers much prefer them having such an experience as compared to simply doing a research paper. Given the greater emphasis on writing throughout the curriculum at this point, we do not see the requested change as a detriment to our students. Instead, such a change will allow the department to meet the individual needs and interests of our students as they prepare themselves for careers beyond academia.

Current students will not be affected adversely by the requested change. And, there is no change in the required credits needed for completion of the major.