DUKE UNIVERSITY

THE BELLWETHER:
The History of African and African American Studies and Its Promise for Conversations
About Diversity in Higher Education

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY

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Introduction - Eruditio et Religio

Duke’s motto, Eruditio et Religio reflects the university’s fundamental faith in the union of knowledge and faith, the advancement of learning, the defense of scholarship, the love of freedom and truth, a spirit of tolerance, and rendering of service to the individual, the state, the nation, and the church. Duke University has encouraged generations of students to understand and appreciate the world they live in, their opportunities, and their responsibilities.¹

-Duke University Bulletin of Undergraduate Instruction, 2007-2008

Universities have a responsibility to produce knowledge about all aspects of society. In the United States, political activists consistently hold the university accountable to this role through activism within the university system. Notable among these activists are the students, faculty, and lay- men and women who demanded the institutionalization of a Black Studies curriculum in universities nationwide in the early 1960s and 1970s. These men and women challenged society at the source of its knowledge-production, arguing that a society that does not have full knowledge of itself is dangerously exclusive and ignorant in the most damaging ways. By forcing the university system to take responsibility for the knowledge that it produced, they set a precedent for social reform that implicated the very foundation of society.

The modern relationship between the university and the nation-state traces its origins to the German research institution of the mid-1800s. Initially, universities partnered with national governments in order to provide research on industries key to the nation’s economic power. Economic power was the primary way in which nations could provide services and protection for

¹ Duke University Bulletin of Undergraduate Instruction, 2007-2008
its populations guaranteeing a healthy and robust society. Over time, governments set new research agendas mobilizing both scientific and humanist disciplines towards the betterment of society and over time, the nation.

Research across the disciplines enriched society by increasing awareness of the intricacies of human thought and action, with an eye to the past, present, and potential of human progress. Although this research sought to explore the different dimensions contributing to economic, political, and social productivity in the United States, there were glaring omissions in the resulting scholarship. Blacks were not treated as subjects in early American scholarship despite their major role in the political, economic, political, and social development of the country. Instead, blacks were treated as objects controlled by the mostly white, wealthy, and male subjects of such scholarship. No thought was given to independent black thought, independent black action, nor was thought given to the past, present, and potential of the progress of black people. The continuous and systematic exclusion of blacks from scholarship limited the knowledge-produced about blacks as independent subjects and blatantly ignored the vibrancy of black life in the United States. The presence of black institutions both during and after slavery speak to a black experience rich in culture and potential despite the lack of economic and political resources available to black people. As universities and national governments strengthened their relationships, blacks continued to be marginalized in scholarship in the main academic thoroughfares of the country. Since this academic scholarship informed government action, blacks continued to be marginalized in policies outlining and guiding government services and protection, and were denied access to the major political and economic institutions in the country.

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2 Rosenberg, Charles. No Other Gods: On Science and American Thought
The situation was grave. Blacks were producing some scholarship about themselves, but they did not have access to the major academic institutions informing government decisions. Blacks’ inability to access the major academic institutions prevented them from producing scholarship about themselves within those institutions. This seemingly impossible constraint was challenged by the 1954 decision in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. The Brown v. Board decision altered the racial make-up of public schools, but it took additional Supreme Court decisions to alter the entire face of education, including private and public schools at the elementary, secondary, undergraduate, and graduate levels. Brown v. Board of Education “struck down” the separate-but equal ideology that governed race relations in the country and brought the issue of racial inclusion into the mainstream.

As black people as an independent body moved into the political consciousness of the country, black students were given the opportunity to move into the knowledge-sites of academia. This movement came at a cost. Desegregation was violent and did not happen overnight. Many schools saw blood shed and lives lost for the cause of racial integration. The violence highlighted the deeply ingrained prejudices and tension that surrounded black-white relations in the United States. Desegregation of secondary and primary institutions brought about the necessity of desegregating university bodies.; Desegregating university bodies brought about the necessity of desegregating university faculties. At all of these levels, the issue of blacks as arbiters of their own destiny necessitated conversations about documenting black thought and action.

In high schools and universities, black students, parents, faculty, and community members saw a need for reinforcement and continuation of black culture. Prior to desegregation, black institutions such as churches, historically-black colleges and universities, as well as the
separate black industries that developed out of necessity had served as guardians of black
culture. Desegregation promised increased general societal access for blacks, but threatened the
circulation of black culture by assimilating blacks into a predominately white education system
constructed on the premise of black inferiority. Such assimilation threatened the production of
specific elements of black culture previously protected by the relative isolation of blacks as a
group.

Although high schools and universities took great pains to preserve separate spaces for
black students, these spaces were predicated on an assumption that blacks were intellectually
inferior and/or socially maladjusted and unfit for a white education system. Interestingly, the
logic which led elementary schools, secondary schools, and universities to institutionalize
separate spaces for black students did not lead these same institutions to institutionalize a
separate curricula for black students that focused on blacks as a subject as opposed to the white
subjects traditionally found in American scholarship. Instead, the fight to institutionalize separate
black-centered curricula was taken up by the student movements of the civil rights era and later,
major institutions such as the Ford Foundation. ²The goal of these groups was not to create a
curricula for black students separate and apart from mainstream academia, but rather to facilitate
discussions about the lack of representation of black people and the black experience in existing
disciplines despite black people’s major contributions to the various fields. The documentation
of this experience, termed Black Studies, Afro-American studies, Ethnic studies, and a host of
other names, served as a permanent guardian of the black presence in the United States.

In writing this thesis, I have chosen to focus my research on the fight to institutionalize
Black Studies at a specific university--Duke University. The idea for a black studies program at
Duke was first proposed in 1969, and was not realized until 2005, when the department of
African and African-American Studies was established at Duke. The 36 year struggle to institutionalize Black Studies at Duke has strong parallels with the 44 year history of black students and faculty at Duke University. Duke integrated later than most of its peer institutions, waiting almost 10 years after Brown v. Board to make the leap, which they did in 1963. Legend has it that the difference between Duke integrating in 1961 and 1962 can be attributed to the death of a Board of Trustees member who died in 1962, shifting the desegregation vote in favor of allowing blacks to enter the institution. The administration took great pains to assess the university’s readiness for black students. They surveyed faculty, students, and staff to determine where black students would live paying special attention to which existing campus facilities accommodated racially-mixed crowds. In their quest to make the campus amenable to black students, administrators forgot to consider whether or not the curriculum was amenable to black students.

In 1969, the administrators were reminded of their faux pas when sixty students took over the Allen Administrative building on February 13, 1969 and included a Black Studies department as one of their thirteen demands. In the process of uncovering the history of Black studies, I inadvertently, but quite naturally, uncovered the history of “the Firsts”. Duke’s first black students --Wilhelmina Reuben-Cooke, Mary Mitchell Harris, Gene Kendall, Cassandra Smith Rush, and Nathaniel White, Jr.--, the first black professor-- Samuel DuBois Cook in political science --, and the first black administrator--Leonard C. Beckum-- are all inextricably linked with the fight to bring knowledge-production about the black experience into the university. These firsts were in a very unique position. Their presence in the university laid the groundwork

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3 Legacy, 1963-1993 (Durham: Duke University, Office of the University Vice President & Vice Provost, 1995)
for Black Studies to become a reality and simultaneously, was in and of itself an important moment in the black experience that would ultimately become a part of the curriculum.

In this thesis, I will explore the relationship between the institutionalization of Black Studies and the process of desegregation at Duke University. My most important argument is that these two events occurred in parallel borrowing very heavily from one another as they progressed. My goal in writing is not to comment conclusively on either event. Black Studies as a movement, I believe, is really just gaining national momentum. About one-third, thirteen of thirty-seven colleges and universities now grant Ph. Ds through a department of African and African American Studies. In addition to undergraduate and graduate black studies curricula, black studies has paved the way for other ethnic studies scholarship and departments including Latino, Asian-American, and Native-American studies. Black studies has also contributed heavily to Women’s Studies, Masculinity Studies, Queer Studies, and a host of other niche academic programs that can be traced to this pivotal moment in education.

The first chapter will discuss the legitimacy and need for adopting diverse curricula, like black studies, in institutions. The second chapter will discuss the politics of institutionalizing black studies. The third chapter will discuss the first black students, faculty and administrators at Duke and look at the evolution of desegregation at Duke in comparison to the Black studies program. The last chapter will look at the present status of black studies, black students, and black faculty at Duke in an attempt to tie the history of the process of documenting the black experience, the black experience of past Duke university students, and the current status of the black experience and black studies together.
Black Studies highlighted the ineffectiveness of the university at handling diverse structures and allowed for other groups namely women, and ethnic minorities to learn from the mistakes of black studies.

In the past twenty years alone, there has been a growing national conversation about the intersection of education and the constantly evolving exterior of the country. Cases such as Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1 (2006)\(^4\), Crystal Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education et al (2006), \(^5\)Grutter v. Bollinger et al (2003)\(^6\), Gratz et al v. Bollinger et al(2003)\(^7\), and new academic disciplines such as Ethnic Studies, Gender Studies, and Labor Studies prove that the changing face of society is and will be of growing importance to the American educational system in coming years. Black Studies serves as a case study of the importance of integrating the history and present-day experiences of different social groups into academic curricula at all levels of education. Universities must be the entry-point for discussions and action about society change and education because universities provide the research that eventually becomes a part of high-school, middle-school, and

\(^4\) *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1* (2006); In this case, parents in Seattle District schools protested district rules which used a “tiebreaker” system to manage the percentages of white and nonwhite students in the city’s high-schools. The full text of this decision is available at: http://www.supremecourtus.gov/oral_arguments/argument_transcripts/05-908.pdf

\(^5\) *Crystal Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education et al* (2006); In this case, a Louisville, KY parent protested district rules which used affirmative action to manage the percents of white and nonwhite students in the district. The full text of this decision is available at: http://www.supremecourtus.gov/oral_arguments/argument_transcripts/05-915.pdf

\(^6\) *Grutter v. Bollinger et. al.* (2003); In this case, the Supreme Court decided that undergraduate schools could not use a point system based in part on race for admissions. The full text of this decision is available at: http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=US&vol=000&invol=02-241

\(^7\) *Gratz et. al. v. Bollinger et. al.* (2003); In this case, the Supreme Court decided that affirmative action in university admissions should not be upheld. The full text of this decision is available at: http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=US&vol=000&invol=02-516
elementary school curricula. Similarly, governments use university research to inform and guide national policies governing citizen life.

In many ways, Duke is the perfect entry-point into the national conversation about the importance of teaching about different social experiences in academia. The national attention garnered by the now infamous Duke Lacrosse Case raised university community members’ and unaffected others’ awareness of the problems plaguing the nation with regards to race, class, gender, and sexuality.\(^8\) Many members of the academic community at Duke and beyond have written articles, papers, and books about race and the Duke Lacrosse Case which proves that there is an academic space for discussions relating to the experience of diverse groups of people in the United States.\(^9\) In recent years the University has undertaken several projects to examine the different ways in which students experience life on and off campus. Three examples of such projects are The Campus Culture Initiative (CCI), The Campus Life and Learning Project (CLLP), and the Faculty Diversity Initiative.\(^10\) The CCI and the CLLP address issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality as they affect academics, social life, and residential life for students at Duke while the Faculty Diversity Initiative addresses diversity as it relates to faculty hiring and retention. These three projects are only a small part of the larger picture of academic

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research on society and education. They speak to the broader societal task of pinpointing the role that universities and education in general play in molding viable citizens in this country.

It is clear that Duke is concerned with the question of citizenship. It is also clear that Duke’s leadership in producing both citizens and research is integral to the nation. Duke-sponsored initiatives such as the Duke University Strategic Plan and Duke Engage serve as reminders that Duke is a civic-minded institution with a sense of how American society and its citizens must change to meet the future. The Duke Strategic Plan states:

While Duke will continue to embrace the essential aspects of specialized research, teaching and learning, the university will build on its special strengths in collaboration and connection of knowledge to real-world problems. More than ever, we will prepare students to approach issues with creativity, flexibility and a curious mind. Engagement across lines of race, ethnicity, religion and national culture will become more important as training for an increasingly interconnected world.11

Duke’s situation in the nation and in the world empowers the university to take bold steps such as the strategic plan in order to affect change at all levels of society. Duke is ranked 7th among public and private research universities and colleges and 3rd among private colleges. These rankings are based on criterion such as “Total Research [dollars], Federal Research [dollars], Endowment Assets, Annual Giving, National Academy Members, Faculty Awards, Doctorates Granted, Postdoctoral Appointees, and SAT/ACT range”. 12 The report also notes that Duke receives more than two-thirds (66.79%) of its total research dollars from federal grants, a fact that speaks to the strong relationship between universities and national governments.

11 Duke University Strategic Plan; Available Online at: http://stratplan.duke.edu/
12 Top American Research Universities-2006 Annual Report. Center for Measuring University Performance
The departmentalization of the Black Studies Department in the Fall of 2006 shows that Duke is indeed supporting “engagement across lines of race, ethnicity, religion and national culture” and the university’s receipt of federal funds speak to an institution ripe with the potential to affect change at the national level. Lasting change will begin with the university departmentalization of diverse academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In order to understand Black Studies and the potential of this and similar academic programs to affect significant and lasting change in society, it is first necessary to understand the national context for the inception of black studies. I begin my story with the story of Duke and desegregation.
Chapter One- Rise of a Bellwether

Despite its name, Black Studies is an inherently diverse discipline in academia with roots in a period of intense transformation in society and in higher education. It literally embodies the movement to make higher education reflect society’s diverse racial, ethnic, gender, sex-based, and socio-economic demographics. It also embodies the movement to make education “relevant” to students’ future professional and personal lives. These intrinsic components fuel Black Studies’ status as a bellwether in conversations about diversity in higher education.

The face and purpose of American higher education changed after World War II due to increased access to and affordability of education. Legislation -- such as the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act (1944) and the Higher Education Act of 1965-- , as well as Supreme Court rulings in the cases of McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents (1950), Sweatt v. Painter (1950), and Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas (1954), powered this change.\footnote{There have been many Supreme Court rulings that deal with the issue of racial discrimination in education. McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Sweatt v. Painter, and Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas are most topical for this chapter, as it considers racial discrimination in higher education in the fifties and sixties. Prior to these rulings, the Supreme Court ruling in Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) was the law of the land. Plessy held that separate but equal accommodations for blacks and whites in the public sphere were constitutional. The case of McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education was argued April 3-4, 1950 and decided on June 5, 1950. The Supreme Court Case was the result of an appeal from the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma. The “appellant, a Negro citizen of Oklahoma possessing a master’s degree, was admitted to the Graduate School of the state-supported University of Oklahoma as a candidate for a doctorate in education.” He was permitted to use the same classroom, library and cafeteria as white students.” Under Plessy v. Ferguson, these conditions would have been acceptable if the appellant was able to perform commiserate with his peers. The court ruled that, “the conditions under which appellant is required to receive his education deprive him of his personal and present right to the equal protection of the laws; and the Fourteenth Amendment precludes such differences in treatment by the State based upon race.” The case of Sweatt v. Painter was argued on April 4, 1950 and decided on June 5, 1950. “The petitioner was denied admission to the state-supported University of Texas Law School, solely because he is a Negro and state law forbids the admission of Negroes to that Law School.” The State of Texas had recently created a Law School for African-Americans, however the school lacked essential resources such as faculty, books, and financial...}
Servicemen’s Readjustment Act and the Higher Education Act of 1965 significantly lowered financial and political barriers to entry for America’s elite educational institutions. The three Supreme Court rulings prohibited educational institutions at all levels from discriminating against potential students on the basis of race, creed or national origin.

Fundamental shifts in the demographics entering American higher education provoked public discussion on the right to an education and prompted questions of what topics should be included in university curricula. Students, more than ever before, demanded a say in their education using both violent and non-violent methods. The story of Black Studies at Duke University is framed by this larger, national story of unprecedented college enrollment, changing demographics in higher education, and black and non-black student protest movements.

I. Rise and Demographic Shifts in American College Enrollment

In the period immediately following World War II, there was considerable “transformation” and “growth” in the American university system. “Between 1955 and 1965, the number of students (undergraduate and graduate) enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities more than doubled.” To further illustrate this point, note “the total of three million students enrolled [in universities and colleges] during” this decade was greater than “the total number of students resources. Citing the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, the petitioner successfully argued that “the legal education offered [him at the school for African-Americans was] not substantially equal to that which he would receive if admitted to the University of Texas Law School.” McLaurin and Sweatt influenced the decision in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. Thurgood Marshall, the Chief Counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, argued the Sweatt and Brown cases. He also helped to prepare the brief for the McLaurin case and in 1967, became the first Black Supreme Court Justice. In Brown v. Board argued on December 9, 1952, reargued December 8, 1953, and decided May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that “the ‘separate but equal doctrine’ …has no place in the field of public education.”

enrolled during the previous three centuries.” This increase in the number of people entering American higher education was “propelled by” an influx of American servicemen into higher education. The Servicemen’s Readjustment Act, commonly known as “the G.I. Bill,” obligated the federal government to “provide aid” for the education of World War II veterans.3

Some veterans sought out Duke University in Durham, NC. Duke was one of many schools “approved by the Veterans’ Administration.” As early as 1945, the Duke Bulletin contained an insert entitled, “Educational Opportunities for Veterans.” Veterans attending Duke received special considerations in admissions and due to the G.I. Bill, attended Duke at no cost. In the Summer Session of 1945, 1,078 out of a total 3,906 students were veterans.4 In White Money: Black Power: The Surprising History of African American Studies and the Crisis of Race in Higher Education, author Noliwe Rooks writes that these G.I.s “were a massive population of diverse social classes who before the enactment of the G.I. Bill, would only have been able to obtain a college education through night schools or city colleges.5 With the support of the G.I. bill, America’s elite institutions of learning were finally accessible to previously excluded


4 In the Summer Session of 1945, more than 25% of the 3,906 students were veterans. Duke had a strong connection with World War II. A list in the archives entitled, “Duke University in the War,” also in the archives lists the ways in which Duke answered its “call to serve” in the war. Personnel from Duke Hospital and School of Medicine served in the 65th Army General Hospital, beginning in 1942. The Army Finance School “was transferred to the Duke campus and enlarged for the purpose of training finance officers for the United States Army” in 1942. 300 faculty and employees served in war agencies and the armed forces; Scientists contributed to the Manhattan District for atom fission research and “war training courses” were offered in Chemistry of Explosives, Engineering Drawing, Hydrographic Drawing, Labor Regulation and Problems in War Industries. Duke kept detailed statistics regarding how many veterans were enrolled at Duke University during each semester, in each college and each academic program. The school also responded to “questionnaire[s] to secure information for report of steering committee on veterans education.” Educational Opportunities for Veterans, Business Division records, University Archives, Duke University.

Correspondence from May of 1950 indicates that Duke University did not extend admission to applicants who were African-American veterans, although the school did admit some non-black female veterans to the Woman’s College. In the North Carolina triangle area and neighboring communities, these “discriminatory practices” did not go unnoticed.

Given the United States’ history of slavery and societal exclusion of blacks, some 47%, or about 61,000 African-American college students enrolled in white colleges outside of the South during this time. The increased national presence of African-Americans, other non-whites, and poor students in schools had the effect of “democratizing” social ideas about higher education. For the first time, many saw a connection between the “chronic social inequities” of social classes, such as blacks, and the “systematic exclusion” of those classes “from most

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6 Nathan Huggins, *Afro-American Studies: A Report to the Ford Foundation* (New York: Ford Foundation, 1985), 13. Huggins writes, “When, in the late sixties, black students challenged the curriculum, their main target was the parochial character of the humanities as taught. They saw the humanities as exclusive rather than universal. They saw humanists as arrogant white men in self-congratulatory identification with a grand European culture. To those students, such arrogance justified the charge of ‘racism.’’ Historically, the American university has provided a space for academic discussion of wealthy, Anglo-Saxon, men -- their professions, their thoughts, their actions, and their relationship with society. Due to the agency of these men in creating the modern university, academic scholarship and discussions placed these men at the center of society and arranged other social subjects, including the poor, non-Anglo-Saxons, women, children, and property, around the needs, desires and wants of these men. The dominance and influence of these men in architecting the United States governance structure, also encouraged governmental research agendas to focus on the needs, desires and wants of their demographic. Although the United States has changed in physical boundaries, ethnic composition, and power distribution over the past two centuries, American scholarship has only recently tried to keep pace with these changes.


American colleges, universities, and professional schools.”

Excluded classes faced both economic and legal barriers in their pursuit of higher education. Prior to the rulings in *McLaurin, Sweatt, and Brown*, African-Americans were legally barred from obtaining the same public education available to whites.

A “separate but equal” school system existed for African-Americans within the larger system of public education. This included designated black-only elementary, middle, and secondary schools as well as black colleges and universities. In North Carolina, there were five state colleges and six private colleges relegated to African-Americans. These “black schools” often suffered from a lack of financial and physical resources, such as facilities, textbooks, and financial support for faculty and extra-curricular activities. What these schools lacked in financial resources, they more than made up for with the intangible resource of the African-American community. African-American children received instruction from African-American teachers; they learned math, science, and other core classes with African-American peers, and most importantly, they were able to see themselves as part of a larger legacy of the black experience in the United States since this black experience was the only experience legally available to them. While this era of heinous discrimination and injustice should not be

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10 The ruling ideology held that blacks and whites received the same education, just in separate spheres. However, the resources afforded to blacks were often less than those afforded to whites, significantly decreasing the quality of education available to blacks.


12 In the case of *Sweatt v. Painter*, the University of Texas Law School had 16 full-time professors, 3 part-time professors, 850 students, 65,000 volume library, an established law review, moot court facilities, scholarship funds, and many alumni. The law school designated for African-Americans had 5 full-time professors, 23 students, a 16,500 volume library, one practice courtroom, one legal aid association, and only one Texas Bar certified alumni. Situations like this were not uncommon.
romanticized, the strength of the African-American community due to their exclusion from mainstream America is laudable. In many ways, the students who took part in the student protest movements that led to the development of Black Studies were looking to re-establish this sense of community and affirmation.

The palpable anger and frustration of protesting black students stemmed from feelings of frustration and rejection from their university communities and from society. In the insular environment of the black school system, African-Americans received moral and psychological support from faces that reflected and validated their heritage. Once these students arrived on predominantly white campuses, they were stripped of this support, often receiving “little deference.” On campuses with small populations of black students, a phenomenon common before the 1960s, black students “were likely to feel themselves alternately exemplars of their race and altogether ignored.”13 These students were not “specially recruited” and had made “conscious, deliberate choices” to attend predominantly white institutions. Unlike their successors, black students in the fifties were “unwilling to call attention to themselves by complaining even about real grievances.” It was expected that these early black student pioneers “overcome obstacles,” an albatross that also served as a source of pride. The mitigation of economic and legal barriers increased black enrollment and led to a critical mass of black students on predominantly white campuses. These “larger numbers” allowed black students “to consider being black on a white campus a collective condition;” their “[p]rivate hurts” turned to “public grievances” almost as rapidly as their numbers increased on college campuses.14

14 Ibid, 9.
Black college enrollment rose steadily throughout the sixties and seventies. The fifties had seen “modest [financial] support for black students.” Popular funding sources in this decade include the National Scholarship Service, the Fund for Negro Students, and the National Defense Student Loan Program. This funding pool increased in the sixties, growing to entail such sources as the National Achievement Program, a branch of the National Merit Scholarship Program, and the Higher Education Act of 1965, which provided Work Study, Educational Opportunity Grants, and Guaranteed Student Loan Programs. In his 1985 *Report to the Ford Foundation on African-American Studies*, Nathan Huggins notes that “more black students attend[ed] predominantly white institutions in the mid-sixties” and “those who did were a different social slice of the black population than those who had attended those schools in the fifties and before.”

More funding meant more educational opportunities for African-Americans and others who lacked the financial resources to pay for college on their own. In fact, these students were often specially recruited. Many “[a]dministrators deliberately set out to recruit poor youngsters from the inner city (so-called ghetto youth), imagining that the university might rectify failures in the secondary-school system and redeem these students so they might enter mainstream life.”  

Although this sentiment is endearing, it in no way served the best interests of the universities; nor did it always serve the best interests of the newly admitted black students.

Remember that the black students admitted in the fifties had received “no special admissions consideration” and “following conventional black wisdom” strove to outperform their white peers. Special admissions programs “implied a changing (or at least rethinking) of standards for admission” as well as “the establishment of remedial programs.” In the mid-sixties, “proportionately fewer” black students had the appropriate “educational background or the study

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habits to do well in these colleges.” Additionally, the lowering of admission standards assumed that mostly non-black “student bodies” would be “genuinely sympathetic both to the means and the ends” of the program while also assuming that “inner-city black students would be grateful for the opportunity” given to them. Huggins writes, “these assumptions were only partly to be realized, contributing to the general malaise of black students in the mid-sixties and leading to much of the black contribution to student unrest in those years.”

Huggins was correct. Feelings of a growing void in the black community, as well as rising tensions among black students, were only part of the tinderbox that erupted during the tumultuous student protest movements of the 1960s and 1970s.

Indeed, the 1960s and 1970s witnessed a nation riddled with conflicts from within and from without. The anti-Vietnam War campaign, which began in the 1960s, was popular among many Americans in these decades, especially college students, who saw the war as pointless.

Within the United States, the nation was grappling with the dynamism of the Civil Rights movement, which also expanded in the 1960s and had a strong contingency on college campuses. Changing ideas about the university’s role in society compounded the anti-war and pro-civil rights movements. The “traditional conception” of higher education held that “the college graduate was not supposed to be able, on the basis of his education, to do anything; his education

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16 Ibid, 8.
was, rather, supposed to do something to him.” This idea came under attack constantly in the post World-War II era, as students and society demanded “relevant” and “useful” curricula. ¹⁹

Higher education, it seems, had changed “not only in size and purpose but in substance.” The “explosion of new knowledge,” especially in science and technology, forced administrators and faculty to rethink undergraduate curricula. Colleges and universities were “becoming, more than ever, the port of entry into professions,” “training the engineers, technicians, and scientists who would put [new] knowledge to practical use in industry and government,” and through the social sciences, “train[ing] young people to serve the expanding bureaucracies of government and industry.” The new perception of the university as a site of new knowledge-creation mitigated the role that humanities had played historically in the liberal arts curriculum. This forced “social scientists and even humanists” to “mimic the physical and natural sciences, focusing ever more on methodologies and narrowing themselves into smaller and smaller specialties.” ²⁰ Black Studies came on the cusp of this movement to systematize knowledge-creation and give students knowledge that they could put into use in their daily lives.

Nathan Huggins writes that “to the embattled humanists, black students arguing for courses ‘relevant to our blackness’ sounded much like engineering students demanding that they be exempted from courses not ‘relevant to their professional training.” Black Studies was merely “the latest in a series of frontal assaults” against the liberal arts core of the university. ²¹ Duke University responded to attacks on its curricula in the 1968 “Varieties of Learning Experience.” Produced by a committee led by Dean Robert Krueger, the document contains proposals for “a
diverse and well-prepared student body” as well as suggestions for how “student[s] might exercise [their] freedom of choice in subject-matter and in the degree of depth to which [that student] pursues [his or her] study.” Unlike other students, black students, argued that the current curricula was irrelevant, inflexible and inherently racist. These black students “challenge[d] the ‘objectivity’ of mainstream social science” which normalized the white-middle class and “discussed blacks… in pathological terms.” Through the black student protest movement, “black students and their allies” fought for “the introduction of nonwhite subject matter into the curriculum and for the shift of normative perspective.” The struggles and triumphs of these students are forever captured by Black Studies programs and explain why Black Studies remains the bellwether in conversations about diversity in higher education.

II. Student Protest Movements

Black and non-black student protest movements highlighted the tension of their time; the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War played heavily on the minds of Americans. Burgeoning critical masses of students on college campuses took these causes to heart, arguing that higher education was complicit in the government and corporate structures that produced racism, dehumanization of foreigners, and social disparities such as poverty. These student protests are an integral component of the Black Studies story. Although these students did not always rally for the same cause, their synergy ultimately brought about significant changes on

22 Varieties of Learning Experience: A Report Submitted to the Undergraduate Faculty Council Duke University by The Sub Committee on Curriculum, Undergraduate Faculty Council Records, University Archives, Duke University. The report was prepared by a committee led by Dean Robert “Bob” Krueger, Director of Curriculum Review. The report was passed by the University Faculty Council on May 17, 1968.
college campuses. Students fought for validation of their unique perspectives and a complete overhaul of both society and higher education.

The first such student protest took place at San Francisco State College on November 5, 1968. Although November 5 marked the starting point of the protest, conflicts had been brewing at the college for years. San Francisco State College served a socio-economically and racially diverse student body with diverse racial demographics. “In 1968, 80 percent of the students worked to pay their way through school and came from predominantly lower, middle-class, poor, and working-class communities.” Ethnic minorities at the school, such as black students who made up 12% of the student body, felt that the college needed to address the racial disparities in attrition and course content in the university. In response to these concerns, the Black Students created the nation’s first black student governing organization, the Black Student Union (BSU) in March 1966. The BSU was the successor of SFSC’s Negro Student Association. The Negro Student Association changed its name to the Black Student Union in 1966 in response to black students’ growing political consciousness. The term “Black Power” was coined by Civil Rights activist Kwame Toure, “aka Stokely Carmichael” in the summer of 1966. The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense was also created in 1966. It was established by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale in nearby Oakland, CA. 25

A key event on the trajectory of conflict was the suspension of George Mason Murray, a SFSC student and Black Panther Party Minister of Education, on November 1, 1968. 26 Murray was “a member of the BSU’s central committee.”

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San Francisco State College President Robert R. Smith suspended Murray for a racially-motivated attack on the editor of the college paper, a white student. State College Chancellor Glenn S. Dumke and the SFSC board of trustees forced Smith’s decision. Murray had also “inflam[ed] California political leadership” when he referred to the American flag as toilet paper and encouraged Black Students to arm themselves as protection against racist administrators. On the morning of November 5, Black students from the BSU and Asian, Latino, and Native-American students from the Third World Liberation Front launched a student strike and issued fifteen non-negotiable demands to the SFSC administration. Students first demanded a department of Ethnic Studies and Black Studies. Students wanted to control the department with the help of faculty and community groups affiliated with the protest movement. The department was to employ 70 full time faculty members. They also demanded the acceptance of all black and nonwhite applicants to SFSC in the Fall of 1969, regardless of their academic qualifications, and amnesty for student protesters. Faculty joined the strike a few weeks later. The strike went on until March 1969. For almost 6 months, SFSC was “occupied by police on a continuous basis.” The damage toll soared with 700 arrests, 32 policemen injured, over 80 students injured. “Hundreds more were beaten with police batons, dragged, punched, and slapped, but not arrested.” Over the course of the strike, 8 dynamite bombs were detonated, and 2 firebombs were thrown into the house of the Assistant to the President who was known to be vocal against the strike. When the strike was over, SFSC had a new President and a new School of Ethnic Studies with full funding for Black Studies.27

Between 1968-1971, hundreds of college campuses across the nation witnessed the activism that began at San Francisco State College. Other notable student anti-war protests and

black student protests took place at Cornell University (1969), the University of Michigan (1965), Harvard (1969), Kent State (1970), the University of California at Berkeley (1969), and at Historically Black Colleges and Universities such as Howard University (1968). On February 13, 1969, the activism arrived at Duke University when Black students of Duke University’s Afro-American Society (AAS) and white students of the Students for a Democratic Society took over the Allen Administration Building.\(^{28}\) The Duke students followed a failsafe strategy, vetted previously by their peers at other colleges and universities around the nation. This national strategy included three objectives: take over key administration or other campus buildings, issue a list of non-negotiable demands, and incite a campus to action. Although Black Studies was consistently listed as a demand of the black student movement, non-black students’ participation in both the black student protest movement and the anti-war movement significantly aided the effort to institutionalize Black Studies.

Several student groups were formed around the issues of war and civil rights for African-Americans during this time. Popular groups include Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), Young Americans for Freedom, the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE), the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and the Berkeley Free Speech Movement.\(^{29}\) These groups boasted strong connections,

\(^{28}\) *Legacy, 1963-1993* (Durham: Duke University, Office of the University Vice President & Vice Provost, 1995), 41-45.

\(^{29}\) Young Americans for Freedom is a conservative political organization. Duke’s chapter of Young Americans for Freedom hosted a forum to counteract the activism of the AAS and other students. A Vietnam War Moratorium was held at Duke on October 15, 1969 by the Duke Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam. The day long moratorium featured speeches, collaborations with Duke Divinity School and local churches in Durham as well as a candlelit march and chapel meditation time. These are just two of many examples of Duke’s students participation in the activism of the sixties and seventies. “Scenario for Campus Revolt,” and “October 15, Schedule Vietnam Moratorium,” Allen Building Takeover Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
often sharing leaders, members, and ideas at the national, regional, and local levels.\textsuperscript{30} For example, the black student protest group, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) founded in Raleigh, NC in 1960, influenced the mission of the SDS.\textsuperscript{31} Originally, “Students for a Democratic Society was established in 1959 as a radical student group for the children of members of both the Communist and Socialist Parties.”\textsuperscript{32} “The Southern civil rights movement not only influenced the formation of SDS, it also influenced another highly politicized campus disruption, the Berkeley Free Speech Movement,” formed at the University of California at Berkeley in 1964.\textsuperscript{33} “The campus activism heralded by SNCC, SDS, and the Berkeley Free Speech Movement soon spread to colleges and universities all over the United States.”\textsuperscript{34} These movements were inherently diverse both in make-up and causes, a fact that is not lost on historians of Black Studies. Duke students participated in these groups as well as other regional and local groups such as the Southern Student Organizing Committee (SSOC). Student protests at Duke and other schools attracted the national spotlight and reminded the public that issues of race and foreign policy would not be alleviated through new legislation or policy change alone. These students demanded nothing less than revolution predicated on a restructuring of the national culture.

Rulings such as the Supreme Court decision in the 1954 \textit{Brown} served as a first rung in the movement to restructure society. This decision and other higher court rulings compelled

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid, 40. Interestingly, the SNCC was founded at Shaw University located in nearby Raleigh, North Carolina.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid, 41.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, 42.
Duke and other schools nationally to desegregate “with all deliberate speed.”35 For public schools such as the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH), Duke’s neighbor of less than eleven miles, formal desegregation began in 1955. UNC-CH admitted three students in 1954, seven in 1955, and two in 1956. North Carolina State College- Raleigh also saw small numbers of blacks, with two students enrolled in 1955, four students enrolled in 1956, and fifteen enrolled in 1957. Other local colleges such as the Woman’s College at Greensboro, Warren Wilson College at Swannanoa, Pfeiffer College at Misenheimer, and Lenoir Rhyne College at Hickory also desegregated before 1956. Nelson Harris, Director of Teacher Education at Shaw University, wrote about *Desegregation in North Carolina Institutions of Higher Learning* for the Journal of Negro Education in 1958. Harris writes of the reduced opportunities for “Negroes” in North Carolina and comments on the slow desegregation of North Carolina’s major institutions of higher learning.36

For private schools, such as Duke, desegregation took even longer to arrive. In March of 1961, the Duke University Board of Trustees voted to admit “qualified applicants” to “degree programs in [its] Graduate and professional Schools” without regard to race, creed, or national origin effective September 1961.37 Three black students, Ruben Lee Speakes, Walter Thaniel Johnson Jr., and David Robinson enrolled in the graduate schools of Divinity and Law in September of 1961.38 Some university faculty as well as students in Duke’s Divinity School had

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35 This quote is from the Court’s opinion in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas.*
38 Ibid, 13.
advocated for the admittance of “qualified Negroes” as early as 1955. 39 Undergraduate men and
women at Trinity College and Duke’s Women’s College had also participated in the movement
to admit black students to the university.40 Unfortunately, without a resolution from the Board of
Trustees, desegregation remained a cause without a champion. It is rumored that only one trustee
blocked the undergraduate desegregation vote until his death in 1962.

On June 2, 1962, the Duke University Board of Trustees voted to admit “qualified
applicants…to degree programs in the undergraduate colleges of Duke University without regard
to race, creed, or national origin.”41 In September 1963, five students, Wilhelmina Reuben-
Cooke, Mary Mitchell Harris, Gene Kendall, Cassandra Smith Rush, and Nathaniel White, Jr.
entered Duke as the first African-American undergraduates. 42 These five students experiences
ran the gauntlet of college student life: Wilhelmina Reuben-Cooke was crowned May Queen by
her peers in the Woman’s College; Gene Kendall experienced financial trouble due to academic
difficulties and was forced to withdraw; Cassandra Smith Rush became very involved with
CORE and other student activist groups, and Nathaniel White and Mary Harris focused heavily
on their academics. 43 These first black students were all from the Carolinas and they knew that

Collection, University Archives, Duke University; University Council of the University Faculty
of Duke University-Minutes of Meeting held at 4:00 P.M., January 18, 1956 in Room 201 Allen
Building, Duke Vigil Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
40 “A Hint of Immediancy,” Duke Chronicle, Friday, May 11, 1956, Duke Vigil Collection,
University Archives, Duke University.
41 Legacy, 1963-1993 (Durham: Duke University, Office of the University Vice President &
42 Ibid, 31-36.
43 Ibid, 33-34. Gene Kendall lost a full scholarship at Duke due to poor grades in his
engineering major. He dropped out due to “financial considerations.” Cassandra Smith Rush left
the school “after the first semester of her junior year” due to uncertain career goals. While at
Duke, she participated in the “Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), a national organization that
established a Duke chapter in 1963.” May Queen. According to a description of the May Queen
provided by the Duke University Archives, “Duke's May Queen was selected by her fellow

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they were specially selected to attend Duke prior to their matriculation.\footnote{Nathaniel White, interview by author, 8 October 2007, Atlanta, tape recording, Marriot Marquis Hotel} Duke made careful plans regarding these students before and after their arrival at Duke.

In October of 1963, one month after undergraduate desegregation, University Secretary Crauford D. Goodwin prepared a memorandum asking acting deans “to prepare a report of the current status of negro students.”\footnote{“White Paper on Institutional Racism at Duke: The Curriculum,” April 12, 1972, Black History at Duke Reference Collection, University Archives, Duke University.} The report included information about the students’ grades, their social life, and their general adjustment to Duke’s campus. In addition to this post-admittance assessment, the University had also taken care to examine the environment at Duke for blacks before they arrived. A report, distributed on June 1, 1962 “points out specific areas in which segregation exists, and indicates the relationship among these areas in terms of policy changes.”\footnote{Legacy, 1963-1993 (Durham: Duke University, Office of the University Vice President & Vice Provost, 1995), 26.} Sub-areas examined include segregation in Campus Activities and Facilities, Employment Practices, Housing, and Admissions. The assessment section found at the bottom of the Admissions section best summarizes the findings of the report. It states:

> It is clear that area of admissions is the keystone for policy changes in other areas...Without a change in admissions policy on the undergraduate level, only limited changes could be achieved in housing and use of facilities, particularly on East Campus, and in faculty hiring.\footnote{Ibid, 29.}

This statement argues that the desegregation of Duke’s undergraduate college would serve as a base from which the administration could enact policy changes in housing, facility use, and most importantly faculty hiring. The administration’s perception that black undergraduate students

\begin{footnotesize}women students from among the Woman's College seniors. The honor was given in recognition of accomplishments and service to the university community.” This website is available at the following address: http://library.duke.edu/uarchives/history/eh_dole.html\end{footnotesize}
must enter the institution first in order for changes to be made in facilities and faculty hiring became a self-fulfilling prophecy. In the next three decades, Black undergraduate students would consistently lobby for more black faculty, better treatment for black staff, and would voice other issues relating to black student affairs to the administration. These future black students would not know that they were inadvertently appointed to carry the burden of black faculty hiring, equal access to university facilities, and fair treatment of black staff before they even set foot on Duke’s campus.

Ironically, Brown struck down the assignment of “burdens” to blacks that governed American race relations in the period after the Civil War. In the 1896 case of Plessy v. Ferguson, the Supreme Court ruled that separate but equal facilities for blacks and whites in the public sphere were constitutional. It noted that “the assumption that the enforced separation of the two races stamps the colored race with a badge of inferiority” was false, and if it were true, “it is not by reason of anything found in [separating the races], but solely because the colored race chooses to put that construction upon it.” Lastly, the court ruled

[T]hat social prejudices [cannot] be overcome by legislation, and that equal rights cannot be secured to the negro except by an enforced commingling of the two races…if the two races are to meet upon terms of social equality, it must be the result of natural affinities, a mutual appreciation of each other’s merits, and a voluntary consent of individuals.

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48 Plessy v. Ferguson, FindLaw for Legal Professionals Online. Available at http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/printer_friendly.pl?page=us/163/537.html. Accessed 12/15/06. In the case, Mr. Plessy was ejected from a train and arrested for refusing to sit in the colored seating section. “The petitioner was a citizen of the United States and a resident of the state of Louisiana, of mixed descent, in the proportion of seven-eighths Caucasian and one-eighth African blood;” Mr. Plessy claimed “that the mixture of colored blood was not discernible in him, and that he was entitled to every recognition, right, privilege, and immunity secured to the citizens of the United States of the white race by its constitution and laws.” The case held that since Louisiana considered Mr. Plessy to be a colored man and colored people were not allowed to sit in the white-seating section, no law had been broken.
Plessy popularized the notion that, despite the presence of the thirteenth amendment, blacks could suffer discrimination in the public sphere that echoed their subjugation under slavery. Although the Court upheld the constitutionality of separate, but equal treatment of blacks and whites, the justices were aware of the discrimination in their ruling. The argument that blacks constructed their own inferiority and that only an organic meeting of the races would eliminate socially discriminatory policies proved that Supreme Court justices knew that their ruling had serious social implications. A dissenting justice, James Harlan, did note in Plessy that “the thirteenth amendment does not permit the withholding or the deprivation of any right necessarily inhering in freedom. It not only struck down the institution of slavery as previously existing in the United States, but it prevents the imposition of any burdens or disabilities that constitute badges of slavery or servitude.” Chief Justice Warren’s words in Brown echo Justice Harlan’s caution in Plessy. Warren argues that “to separate [black students] from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely to be undone.”

Desegregation at Duke was only a first-step towards the inclusiveness and affirmation suggested by Brown.

Duke’s decision was not unique. In fact, “by 1962 most Southern universities had desegregated. Of the important institutions nationally Duke was the last to desegregate.” The national context for desegregation is key to understanding the events that unfolded at Duke in this time. The five years after desegregation in 1963 were strained ones for Duke. “Martin Luther

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King, Jr. was murdered in 1968, and even in the years before his murder, race relations were highly charged. Cities around the country were engulfed in what were termed riots, uprisings and rebellions. The National Guard became an occupying force in first one city, then another. Duke’s hometown of Durham was not immune from this trend: “In the summer of 1967, racial tensions in Durham, as in urban areas all over the country, were reaching a boiling point. During several days in July, low-income African Americans…converged en masse on the Durham City Council to demand an overhaul of city housing policies. They also organized mass rallies that attracted hundreds and prompted the mayor to call out the National Guard.”

“In February of [1968], after an incident in Orangeburg, South Carolina, police and firemen again had to quell a violent march in Durham.” This “was a time characterized by generational conflict, violence, and changing ideals about the meaning of America both at home and abroad.” According to Noliwe Rooks, “there is to date no other discipline in the academy so closely aligned with social protest, student activism, and violence as Black Studies.”

Like their peers at other colleges, the Duke students issued a list of “non-negotiable” demands to administrators and the campus community. These demands were issued as the students took over the Allen Administration Building; however, they had been brought to administrators attention prior to the takeover. While mass student protests did happen at colleges and universities around the nation, the campus reaction and response varied from location to location. At Duke, the National Guard was called and riot police threw canisters of tear gas at

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53 A Crisis in Conscience, Allen Building Takeover Collection, University Archives, Duke University. This speech was presented to the Greensboro Alumni Association on April 24, 1968 by Vice-President for Institutional Advancement Frank L. Ashmore.
55 Ibid, 32.
protesting students. Duke Hospital was notified of the takeover and told to “prepare for injuries.” Some students sought refuge from the chaos in Duke’s chapel but even they eventually fell victim to police tear gas. President Douglas Knight and the Board of Trustees, as well as Duke alumni and the Duke community could never have prepared themselves for this day.

The takeover began at 7:59 A.M. and by 9:00 A.M. the following statement and eleven demands were issued:

WE SEIZED THE BUILDING BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN NEGOTIATING WITH DUKE ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY CONCERNING DIFFERENT ISSUES THAT AFFECT BLACK STUDENTS FOR 2 ½ YEARS AND WE HAVE NO MEANINGFUL RESULTS. WE HAVE EXHAUSTED THE SO-CALLED ‘PROPER’ CHANNELS.

The eleven demands in order were: (1) “The establishment of a fully accredited department of Afro-American Studies,” (2) The “right to establish a black dorm on campus,” (3) A 29% black student enrollment figure at Duke by the Fall of 1973 since the percentage of blacks in the area is 29%, (4) “reinstatement of black students who because of the stifling social and educational environment at Duke were unable to achieve the required academic standing and were forced to leave the university,” (5) “Financial reassurance for black students,” (6) “Black advisor selected only by direct consultation with black students,” (7) “Black student fees should be redirected to a black student union,” (8) Change the admissions criterion for black students to the “academic achievement in high school.” Students felt that current criteria was “oriented toward white middle class students,” (9) Give “non-academic employees… the power to determine the basis for their working conditions, rights, and other employment matters, (10) end “the tokenism of black representation in university power structures,” and (11) end “the police harassment of
black students and demand protection of all black students at Duke.” The students also asked that all students involved receive “amnesty” and that grading for black students end.56

In a personal account, Dr. Brenda Armstrong, Duke ‘70, currently an associate professor of pediatrics and cardiology at Duke Medical Center and Director of Medical Admissions, notes that the SDS camped out on the second floor of Allen Building and the National Guard was called to handle the situation. Remembering the incident, she says “Duke University now had its entire black student population, as well as the funding based on the presence of black students on trial.” Armstrong places the number of blacks involved in the takeover at “60 or 61,” which was ” more than one half of the University’s enrollment” of 100 black students.

The tension between administrators and students on February 13, 1969 was precipitated by several events in the 1967-1968 school year. On November 13, 1967, there was a black student sit-in in front of the Duke University President’s office. The sit-in was prompted by a ”student body referendum on an [Associated Students of Duke University] bill prohibiting use of off-campus segregated facilities” and “other problems…of concern to the students.” The Associated Students of Duke University was the forerunner to the modern Duke Student Government. Duke President Douglas Knight’s membership in the segregated Hope Valley Country Club was a serious point of contention among students until his withdrawal of membership in early 1969. President Knight “met with leaders of the Afro-American society on January 9, 1968 and asked that they submit to him a list of problem areas” which the students agreed to do. The students and President Knight communicated no fewer than three documented times for the rest of the 1967-1968 school year but no formal list of demands was ever submitted

57 Legacy, 1963-1993 (Durham: Duke University, Office of the University Vice President & Vice Provost, 1995), 41-45.
by the students. A report from Vice-President for Institutional Advancement Frank Ashmore indicates that the administration made multiple overtures to the students, even offering to form a committee on the matter and pay for the students to return to Duke over the summer and continue their conversation.\(^5^8\)

Although students did not communicate with the administration directly in the Spring of 1968, the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., on Thursday, April 4, 1968 prompted a three-day vigil on the main campus of the university.\(^5^9\) “In response to Dr. King’s death and to the mobilization of the black community, students at Duke University planned a march into Hope Valley to demand positive social action from the white power structure.” On Friday, April 5, “more than 3,000 Blacks and a few white supporters” demonstrated in the Raleigh-Durham community. “That night, despite heavy rain, 450 students and faculty marched on President Knight’s house with four demands.” The group demanded that President Knight (1) use his power to establish a $1.60 minimum wage for Duke employees, (2) “appoint a committee of students, faculty and workers to study and make recommendations [on] collective bargaining and union recognition,” (3) “sign an advertisement in the Durham Morning Herald calling for a day of mourning for Dr. King, and (4) resign from the segregated Hope Valley Country Club. 250 students then remained at Knight’s house for a sit-in. They were joined in their efforts Saturday, April 6, 1968 by “an additional 500 students, faculty & townspeople. Half of the group chose to stay another night at President Knight’s home.”\(^6^0\) President Knight had several health problems

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\(^5^8\) History of Afro-American Relations, Issued by Duke’s Vice President for Institutional Advancement Frank L. Ashmore, 7 March 1969, Allen Building Takeover Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
\(^6^0\) Southern Student Organizing Committee Newsletter, Duke Vigil Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
that exacerbated his ability to deal with the students. He was diagnosed with hepatitis in August of 1967 and he was also diagnosed with “a severe respiratory infection” on February 13, 1968, one year to the date before the Allen Building Takeover. Needless to say, citing illness, President Knight “never returned to his house.” 61

On Sunday, April 7, the students moved their vigil to the main quad on West Campus. After a rally attended by 1,100 people, “500 vigilers stayed on the quad” into the evening. By Monday, “the number of vigilers had grown to 850. Duke workers in Duke Local 77, a union, went on strike at midnight. In an address to the Greensboro Alumni Association on April 24, 1968, Vice-President for Institutional Advancement Frank L. Ashmore told alumni that “the general tension throughout Durham was aggravated at Duke by the activities of union organizers.” These organizers “had been waging an intensive campaign to organize non-academic employees since September, 1967.” Ashmore estimates that 30 to 40 “students and faculty members” were working actively on the behalf of the organizers since December of 1967. “Students began boycotting the dining halls on West Campus” and “remained on the Quad Monday and Tuesday.” “By Wednesday evening, approximately 1200 were participating in the Vigil -- 20% of the student body.” 62 Despite the rain, the vigil continued. By this time, the students had dropped two of their demands, now only asking that President Knight resign from the Hope Valley Country Club and sign an ad in the Durham Morning Herald calling for a day of mourning for Dr. King. Students felt that the other two demands, related to workers wages, “were not substantive in that they did not make a basic attack on the system which has

62 A Crisis in Conscience, Vigil Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
perpetuated the racism, poverty, and powerlessness we face in the “great society.” Duke students especially black students often allied with Duke’s predominantly black workers in their protests. Both groups saw Duke as complicit in the evils of larger society.

Students around the triangle, the South, and the nation joined Duke students in implicating Duke and their respective institutions in the power structure. Activist students developed sophisticated local, regional, and national networks -- organizing themselves via conferences, conventions, and even newsletters. In a Southern Student Organizing Committee newsletter, one student writes that “Duke does not exist in a vacuum-- the institution that prepared Duke students for the “good life” is part of a broader structure of institutions which maintains our present society.” The newsletter also includes a brief history and analysis of the Duke Vigil. Information about the SSOC Second Annual Membership Convention is featured on the back page. Former SDS president Carl Ogelsby and SNCC Executive Secretary Stanley Wise are advertised as speakers at the convention, to be hosted by the University of Georgia Athens on May 3-5, 1968. Scheduled workshops listed are: ‘Summer anti-racism organizing,’ the ‘Underground Press,’ ‘Research,’ ‘community & labor organizing,’ ‘student power,’ and ‘foreign policy.’ The ad leaves no question unanswered, soliciting all interested students: “housing provided! Want a ride? Have a car? Call; SSOC (919) 489-5393. MEMBER OR NOT! Meet other Southern Activists from every state in the Confederacy! Help direct the Southern

63 Southern Student Organizing Committee Newsletter, April 1968, Duke Vigil Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
65 Students in the North Carolina Triangle Region published multiple newspapers collaboratively and at their individual schools. The Phoenix was the official newspaper of the SSOC. The Protean Radish is the “Radical Weekly of the Carolinas” and Harambee is a Duke student newspaper, largely written by black students. Harambee, Allen Building Takeover Collection, University Archives, Duke University. Protean Radish and The Phoenix, Harambee, Silent Vigil Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
Organized student activist networks provided students a strong network of allies with whom to share ideas and passion. The energy of these activists encouraged administrators to take pre-emptive action against strikes such as the Duke Vigil.

Provost R. Taylor Cole informed Duke faculty that “regulations on picketing, protests, and demonstrations” were being mailed to students at the start of the 1968-1969 school year. In a letter dated August 16, 1968, President Knight writes:

Men and Women of Duke: You have been aware that we have worked over the past several months to develop a framework within which the student body, the faculty, the non-academic employees, and the administration can together resolve, as reasonable people, the differences which may from time to time arise among us.

In response to the Vigil, President Knight established a Student-Faculty-Administration Committee, a Faculty-Student-Administration-Committee on Judicial Procedures chaired by History Professor Richard L. Watson, and a Special Faculty-Administrative Committee, chaired by Vice-Provost Barnes Woodhall. The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees approved the regulations on picketing, protests, and demonstrations on August 2, 1968. The Board of Trustees influenced decisions about student protesters often during this time period. Board of Trustee Chairman Richard Tisdale even interacted with students directly on Wednesday, April 10 during the Silent Vigil. Duke had been negligent in paying their staff the state approved minimum wage. They had the opportunity to pay their staff the minimum wage when the new law first passed, but instead chose to wait until state law would not allow them to get away with

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66 Southern Student Organizing Committee Newsletter, April 1968, Duke Vigil Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
it any longer. On April 10, Chairman Tisdale commended students for their work on behalf of others and “announced that the University would adopt a minimum wage rate of $1.60 per hour by July 1969 -- nearly two years ahead of the requirements of law.” He said the school would act before July 1, 1968.68

At the beginning of the 1968-1969 school year, Dean William Griffith requested that AAS member Charles “Chuck” Hopkins “assemble a group of black students to discuss their concerns.” During the meeting, Dean Griffith “suggested that they might form an ad hoc committee of black students, faculty members, and members of the administration for an in-depth discussion of problems related to black students.” Hopkins, by this time, “president of the Afro-American Society, read a statement which said, in part, ‘the problem is how we can together solve the problems of black students on a white campus.’” Hopkins continued with his statement, noting that “the purpose of [the Afro-American Society]” was “to aid in the progressive growth and well-being of Duke University by developing among its members a cultural consciousness and thus an opportunity to add to the university as a whole.” The AAS was Duke’s black student union, similar in function to the BSU at San Francisco State College. The AAS was formed in 1968. Hopkins felt that it was difficult to “[achieve] cultural consciousness as a black student in a white university which has simply taken black students into ‘a society which is almost totally different from their own and asked them to forget who or what they are and assume the appearance of something else.”69

In a compelling argument for the development of relevant curricula for black students, Hopkins is quoted on the record saying,

> The black student, he said, is faced either with accepting the educational structure as it is and seeking his real self outside of it; or he can rebel at the lack of himself in the educational structure with extreme expressions of militancy…; or he can attempt to have some of his own ideas and culture which are inherent in his blackness incorporated into the overall structure of the educational institution. We are here,” he concluded, ‘to discuss the latter alternative.

Hopkins and the other students present at the meeting then “identified twelve areas of concern to black students” to the faculty and administrators present. Students requested changes to curriculum, black student recruitment, on-campus housing, off-campus housing, and termination of “the president’s membership in Hope Valley Country Club.” They also requested a “summer program for entering black students” to help them prepare for life at Duke, a black barber at the campus barber shop, a black adviser for black students, meeting and storage space for the AAS, financial support and “formal endorsement” for Black Culture Week, an end to “Dixie” being played at public functions, and support for a boycott of local stores which discriminate against blacks.\(^70\)

A second meeting was called on October 15, 1968 during which the committee “divided… into sub-groups of at least one student and one faculty or administrative member” to investigate the feasibility of each of these 12 areas. On October 24, 1968, the subcommittee on curriculum met. Dean of Undergraduate Instruction Jane Philpott met with Catherine Watson, a member of the Afro-American Society, and Professors McKinney, Preiss and Crocker of the Sociology/Anthropology Departments to discuss a way in which courses related to the black

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experience could be added to these departments. The ad hoc committee “met again on November 4, 1968 to hear reports of the subcommittees…” The Curriculum committee reported that “meetings had been held with the chairmen of the departments already identified.” These “chairmen were receptive to the curriculum requests but” limited in their ability to commit due to “the lack of precise clarity in stating what was desired or by disagreement with some specifics, by the lack of funds, the lack of expertise, the lack of time which would be required to develop the courses, and the lack of authority to make an outright commitment.”

Black students disapproved of the response to their concerns, citing their lack of power to “realign financial priorities.” At the November 4 meeting, Provost Robert Taylor Cole “appointed an ad hoc committee to study the feasibility of a [graduate] program in Afro-American studies and asked them to make recommendations.” The committee also agreed “to consider the feasibility of an undergraduate interdepartmental program and the committee agreed.” Provost Cole’s ad hoc committee on Afro-American studies met “several” times to “evaluat[e] arguments for and against a Black Studies program, surv[ey] faculty and other sources available for such a program,” and determine curricula for the program. They also “studied [how Black Studies was handled at other] educational institutions, and worked out the rough outlines for a program in Black Studies.” The committee planned to coordinate a meeting with the AAS before February 13 to share their findings.


72 A cursive hand edited the Ashmore memo so that it reads, “appointed an ad hoc committee to study the feasibility of a graduate program in Afro-American studies.” In the margins of the Ashmore memo, the same hand has written, “Later the committee was asked also to consider the feasibility of an undergraduate interdepartmental program and the committee agreed.”

73 Ibid.
Black Studies was only one of many demands and ideas voiced by black students on Duke’s campus and the presence of a committee on Black Studies did little to erode the growing tensions on campus. For example, on January 31st, 1969, the Afro-American Society “sponsored a forum on West Campus to express their concern at the disproportionate attrition of black students during the first semester.” On February 3rd, the entire AAS met with Dean Griffith to hear more progress on the 12 areas. The next day, “the President issued a statement endorsing ‘The Beauty of Black’ Festival and encouraging the entire community to participate in the programs planned by the Afro-American Society. He also “announced that a summer program for black and other students needing and desiring assistance in their adjustment to Duke would begin in the summer of 1969.” He asked that “an effort be made to identify those students who might have been eligible for the summer assistance program who had already flunked out, and that they be assisted in qualifying for readmission to the University next fall, perhaps by way of the summer program to be instituted.” As a final show of “support for a campus that would not permit forced separation of the races, he also announced withdrawal from organizations which practiced racial discrimination.” These efforts of administrative goodwill did not thwart the plan to occupy the Allen Administration Building on the morning of February 13, 1969.

Three days before the sit-in, on the evening of February 10, some “75 Afro-American students paid a visit to University House to discuss their concerns with the President.” President Knight described the meeting in a statement saying, “Monday evening, a group of

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74 Like Gene Kendall & Cassandra Harris, a disproportionate number of black students at Duke suffered from loss of financial scholarships or trouble adjusting to the academic climate at Duke.


76 University House is the term used for President Knight’s house.
students described to me matters which are of deep and genuine concern to them.” Knight assured students that “some of these matters have already been given active consideration by the University, and decisions have been made about them.” Others were “appropriate questions for faculty discussion and decision; not for administrative action;” yet, others “will call for consideration by the Board of Trustees.” “Each question will have the kind of consideration which it deserves, and will be considered without any of the delays of which people are so suspicious these days.” Knight was quick to point out that “this does not mean that we have instant answers to all questions, nor that we shall have affirmative answers to all requests, but it does mean that every question raised will be considered seriously by those responsible for acting upon it.”

Like San Francisco State College, Duke was closely governed by its’ Board of Trustees. Although President Knight ultimately communicated the administrative opinion to students, the Board of Trustees played an important role behind the scenes. It is clear that the administration tried to respond to the activism confronting them, but their public speeches and litany of administrative sub-committee meetings were too little and too late to appease a campus eager to take part in the national trend of protest and takeover. Ironically, in the days just before the takeover, the administrators contacted the students to set up a “working session” to discuss a Black Studies Dorm. In a letter to Chuck Hopkins, Dean Wilson writes “We have been exploring this project and hope to move ahead on this matter as quickly as possible.” By this time, the Black Studies discussion had reached the faculty governing organization, the Academic Council. “It was felt by [the Academic Council] that a more comprehensive approach to the problems of

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black students was necessary, and they requested approval of the president for appointment of a committee which would be related to student concerns generally and specifically to the concerns of black students.” This committee was appointed on February 12, 1969. 78

Duke joined its peers in protest the next day. Provost Marcus Hobbs “advised [the students] to peaceably disperse from the building within an hour.”79 One student who participated writes, “and so the ultimatum. Get out or be busted. Enter white student support at this point.”80 “Outside, nearly 1,000 students had gathered in curiosity and support. These students subsequently clashed with riot police. A three day student boycott of classes ensued, and the faculty initiated a study on University governance.”81 “Enter the absurd. Police, acting as the robot lackeys of the power structure attack an empty building. Students, incensed by an injury to one of their number, gather around the cops - taunting the robots, but peacefully.” Although there were no casualties, there were “5 arrests, over 30 students injured” and “500 national guardsman called into Durham.”82 President Knight resigned from his position “six weeks after the occupation citing disapproval from conservative trustees and alumni over his ‘permissive actions.’”83

III. Fruits of a Movement

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79 Ibid.
80 “Reflections on a Night at the Theater of the Absurd,” Allen Building Takeover Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
81 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
82 “Reflections on a Night at the Theater of the Absurd,” Allen Building Takeover Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
83 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
The day after the Allen-Building sit-in, the Afro-American society “presented its proposal for a Black Studies Program. A major part of the proposal concerned the control of such a Black Studies Program by a committee of both black students and faculty. “The proposal was rejected by the faculty and the administration for uncited reasons.” On February 16, 1969, “a supervisory committee of Black Studies was created, chaired by Louis Budd of the English Department.” The student to faculty ratio on the committee was 3 to 5, the original composition was contested by students. The next important event happened in May of that same year, when “the Black Studies Committee submitted a proposal for the program to the Undergraduate Faculty Council of the Arts and Sciences (UFCAS).” Committee Chairman Budd noted that “This proposal was…geared more to future development than to the immediate present.” The UFCAS curriculum committee approved the courses and recognized them “as merely a ‘tangible beginning toward the construction of a relevant, meaningful, and academically sound program.’”

With this administrative blessing, “the Black Studies program was born.” The creation of the Black Studies Committee and the approval of future courses by the UFCAS curriculum committee would turn out to be the first of many bureaucratic hurdles that Black Studies proponents needed to overcome in order to gain departmental status and university acceptance. With President Douglas Knight’s resignation finalized, Black Studies would have to convince a new administration of its relevance. The Board of Trustees, always lurking in the shadows, would also present an ever-present, however ghostly, obstacle to the young program. Additionally, the potential of increased numbers of black students meant that Black Studies would always have advocates, but not necessarily an audience for its future faculty to teach. In

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84 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
85 Ibid.
addition to confronting academic bureaucracy, Black Studies would also have to navigate the ever-changing politics of race, and find a way to stay relevant despite the changing role of the university in society. These negative projections aside, black students and their allies eagerly embraced the promise of curricula that would be meaningful to all students. The diversity of voices that advocated for Black Studies would continue to support the cause in the challenging years to come.
Chapter Two - After Conversation, Action

Integral to Black Studies’ story is the process of turning conversations about racial difference into institutionalized action around diversity. As the first major diversity-based initiative in higher education, Black Studies provides insight into the complicated structure of diversity-based initiatives in higher education. These initiatives encompass many needs, including the need for representation of diverse perspectives in curricula as well as the needs of diverse faculty and students taking part in the university system. Early Black Studies Programs faced many obstacles in developing this pioneering field. Issues such as navigating university bureaucracy, acting as champion for issues affecting Black faculty and students, and creating a program structure were all paramount to Black Studies’ success. Black Studies provides a model for intersecting the needs of diverse people in higher education with the related need of representing diverse perspectives in curricula.

For constituencies on majority-black and white campuses, Black Studies held different meanings. For administrators, Black Studies was often a concession, an attempt to move beyond the activism that characterized the sixties and seventies. For faculty, especially black scholars, Black Studies was a first step towards the equal inclusion of the black perspective in academic research and knowledge-production. For students, Black Studies was proof that societal change could be made through activism in the university system. Although administrators, faculty, and students saw value in Black Studies Programs, they often clashed on the logistics of how Black Studies Programs should be implemented. The machinations set in place for Black Studies Programs in the sixties and seventies churned very slowly. Many programs were started in these decades, but few were departmentalized. Duke’s Black Studies Program, was only granted
departmental status in 2006. Although Black Studies was often entangled in bureaucracy, the difficulties facing the program, as made public by its student proponents, strengthened the resolve of black students and faculty. The traditional posture of the academic bureaucracy had the unintended consequence of increasing support for them among white students and faculty. These allies, noting the opaque nature of the bureaucracy, matured in their ability to organize and navigate the bureaucratic structure. Against the strain, they threw their support behind Black Studies Programs.

Due to the advocacy of student protestors and their allies, Black Studies Programs grew in number “from one department in 1968 to over 500 in 1972.” The student protest at San Francisco State, which inspired similar protests nationwide, also led to the development of the first Black Studies Program at that school. The militancy of the student protest movement prompted some to question how Black Studies would function “if not properly guided” away from the anger and separatism that bred it. Predominantly white philanthropic foundations such as the Ford Foundation and governmental agencies such as the Department of Education tackled this question. These two entities provided funding and administrative oversight for Black Studies Programs, greatly influencing the structure of the discipline.

The lack of existing diversity-based curricula complicated the issue of structure for Black Studies Programs. Institutionalizing Black Studies required societal recognition of black history, a history that many whites feared centered on themes of black exclusion from white society and the anger that accompanied this exclusion. Fear and hesitancy characterized much of the

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3 Rooks thesis in *White Money/Black Power* is that the Ford Foundation shaped Black Studies via financial support. Ibid.
university response to Black Studies. This is reflected in the university bureaucracy that did not coordinate its actions, prohibiting Black Studies from entering the university smoothly. In order to minimize societal guilt about black exclusion, many programs were created as interdisciplinary collaborations instead of receiving autonomous departmental status. Similarly, given blacks’ exclusion from higher education, few black faculty existed initially to champion the cause of Black Studies and few non-black faculty were available to act as surrogates. Compounding these issues were the lack of what many felt was legitimate black scholarship and the inability to produce a critical mass of black scholars. These failings severely limited curricula development and impeded the development of Black Studies.

Students, ever active in the movement, responded energetically to the forces against Black Studies. Although their activism changed in nature during the 70s and 80s, student issues, especially black student issues were consistently grouped with Black Studies as part of the larger problem of desegregating white college campuses. It was expected that black students should take Black Studies courses, although this did not always happen. Black students also reissued demands, periodically, always including Black Studies since it was yet to be realized. Other demands focused on black student affairs, black student groups, black residential life, and academic support. The diversity that bred Black Studies did not dissipate once the issue was immortalized as a demand. Non-black students, as evidenced by Duke’s student government and student newspaper, The Chronicle, frequently allied with their black peers to bring public awareness to black student issues.

Section I. Navigating University Bureaucracy

Black Studies Programs faced a labyrinthine process in order to be fully recognized by the University, let alone departmentalized. Remember that protesting students took their
demands to university presidents. Additionally, consider the custodial supervisory role that Board of Trustees members played in creating and delivering administrative opinions. Although it is true that the Board of Trustees and university presidents play an important role in the creation and maintenance of academic departments, they are only two nodes in the hierarchy of academia that must connect in order to usher in new knowledge projects. In order for Black Studies to function, new programs needed willing faculty to teach, willing administrators to fund and support, appropriate curricula, and students to fill the classes. Perhaps, more importantly, Black Studies Programs needed an ally at every level in the academic hierarchy in order for students’ requests to be granted. Given the historical exclusion of blacks from higher education, it was difficult to find enough black faculty and black administrators on white campuses to create a critical mass of lobbyists for Black Studies at Duke University and other schools. Duke, for example, hired its first black faculty member, Political Scientist Samuel Dubois Cook, in 1966. Although some non-black academics taught courses on the issue of race and participated in the protest movement, it was difficult to rally support for the young Black Studies Program. The complex needs of Black Studies and the complexity of the academic hierarchy posed the greatest obstacle to Black Studies’ progress.

Consider the academic hierarchy at Duke University between 1969 when the demand for Black Studies was made and 2006 when the demand was fully realized. On February 12, 1969, the day before the Allen Building Takeover, the Duke University Academic Council “requested approval of the president for appointment of a committee” to discuss black student concerns. The Academic Council selected the members of this committee, the Faculty Committee on Student

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Concerns, and President Knight would subsequently appoint them to the committee officially. On February 16, 1969 President Knight created a “supervisory committee of Black Studies” chaired by English Professor Louis Budd. This committee created a proposal for a Black Studies Program and submitted it to the University Faculty Council of the Arts and Sciences (UFCAS) on May 2, 1969. UFCAS approved the program proposal as it was “geared more to future [program] development than to the immediate present.” With the support of President Knight and the UFCAS, “the Black Studies Program was born.”

The UFCAS was only one of many echelons of the university hierarchy that needed to operate in order for Black Studies to come into being. A complex hierarchy of administrators and faculty existed then, as it does today. At the top of the hierarchy is the Board of Trustees, elected in large part by the Methodist Episcopal Church, with about one-third of its membership deriving from alumni vote. The Board of Trustees oversees the action of the University President. Students had focused their attention on the University President during the protest movements of the late sixties. In addition to the Board of Trustees and the University President, Duke University had several Vice-Presidents, Provosts, Vice-Provosts, Deans, and Assistant Deans who played a part in the departmentalization of new programs. The politics of these players and the faculty in this time comprised the logistics of how Black Studies was finally realized.

Between 1952 and 1971, official requests for new departments were made to the Undergraduate Instruction Committee of the University Faculty Council (UFC). The UFC and

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6 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
7 The Duke University’s Board of Trustees Bylaws are available at: http://www.duke.edu/web/ous/bylaws00.htm
the Academic Council that created the committee in the moments before the Allen Building Takeover are the main vehicles of faculty governance at Duke. The President, Provost, and the Chair of the Academic Council act as members ex-officio, and the other members of the council come from “the three divisions of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences and mathematics) as well as Duke’s “other professional schools.” Members from each division or professional school have elected representatives in a proportion of 8 faculty to 1 representative or “for any remaining fraction of four or more members of the faculty.”8 The Academic Council provides faculty representatives to various university councils, similar in function to a university-wide House of Representatives.

The University Faculty Council (UFC), chaired by the Dean of Trinity College, is charged with administrative tasks such as making decisions about student life and curricula. The UFC consisted of an executive committee and multiple standing and ad hoc committees. Standing committees included the Undergraduate Instruction Committee, the Study Abroad Committee, the Honors Committee, the Undergraduate Admissions Committee, the Program II Committee, the Residential Life Committee, the Faculty Advisory System Committee, and the Financial Aid Committee. Ad hoc committees included the Academic Standards Committee, the Committee on Committees, and the Committee on the Organization and Functions of the UFC. The UFC had representatives from the faculties of Trinity College, Engineering, and Nursing. Between 1968 and 1971, the UFC transitioned into the University Faculty Council of Arts and Sciences (UFCAS). The UFCAS, which existed until 1991, maintained the functionality of the

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8 The Duke University Academic Council Bylaws are available at: http://www.duke.edu/web/acouncil/
UFC; however, representatives from the Engineering and Nursing schools broke off from the council into their own governing bodies.9

Like the UFC, the UFCAS was chaired by Dean of Trinity College and consisted of multiple standing and ad hoc committees. Standing committees included the Curriculum Committee, the Courses of Instruction Committee, the Honors Committee, the Study Abroad Committee, the Program II Committee, the Academic Standards Committee, the Advising Committee, the Undergraduate Admissions/Financial Aid Committee, the Residential Life Committee, the Freshmen Year Committee, the Advanced Placement Committee, the Athletics/Recreation Committee, the Health Science Education Committee, and the Non-Western Studies Committee. The ad hoc committees included the Quality of Teaching Committee and the Student Writing Committee.10 The multitude of committees, along with the transition of the UFC to the UFCAS and the UFCAS to the Arts and Sciences Council in 1991, greatly complicated the ability of Black Studies proponents to maintain consistency in their audience. The University also transitioned between five presidents-- Douglas Knight, Terry Sanford, H. Keith H. Brodie, Nannerl Keohane and Richard Broadhead-- and ten provosts between 1965 and 2006.11 Given

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9 The history of the UFC and its successors is available online via the Duke University Archives Website: http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/rbmscl/uaufc/inv/

10 The UFCAS transitioned into the Arts and Sciences Council in 1991 and expanded its jurisdiction to include graduate studies and research initiatives. Standing committees included the Curriculum Review Committee, the Academic Affairs Committee, the Academic Standards Committee, the Financial Aid Committee, the Residential Life Committee, and the Senior Year Committee. Ad hoc committees include the Facilities Committee, the Review Study Abroad Committee, and the Teaching Korean Language Committee.

this web of governance, the supervisory committee of Black Studies faced shifting priorities and setbacks.

Chairman of the Black Studies Committee Louis Budd expressed frustration at the lack of authority given to the program. He wanted to be able to create “an autonomous department.” There were other issues to consider as well such as “the indefinite nature of the program’s structure, the lack of a “concrete budget,” and the dismal possibility of “finding a director for the program so late in the school year.” The new Black Studies Program did not form a search committee for a director of the program until February 1, 1970, the Spring of the school year after the Allen-Building Takeover. Like the process for gaining department status, the recruitment process for new Black Studies faculty and staff was very complicated. A search committee of university members had to be formed to choose the new faculty or staff member. The Black Studies search committee for a director consisted of multiple departmental chairmen due to the interdisciplinary nature of the Black Studies curriculum. “The committee looked outside the university for a black scholar since it had been agreed that the director should possess academic credentials and be black.”\textsuperscript{12} It is possible that the politics of the day mandated such strict adherence to racial codes. However, courses dealing with issues of race, and specifically black-white relations were being taught in the University prior to the enrollment of the first black students at Duke.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{12} History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.

\textsuperscript{13} The 1949-1950 Bulletin lists multiple courses taught by Edgar Allen Thomson, Professor in Sociology. “Sociology 137 - The Negro in America. - A study of the history and changing status of the Negro regarded as a symbol and protagonist of minority groups in American and elsewhere.” This course offered 1947-48 but not in 1948-49. Thompson also taught Sociology 133 Sociology of the South-“The developing regional organization of the world economy studied with especial reference to Southern life and problems. A survey of the composition and distribution of population, race factors and culture of the South. Primary emphasis is upon social
Regardless, two black scholars’ candidacies were considered in March of 1970. The Afro-American Society (AAS) was invited to interview these scholars, Joseph Washington and James Blackwell. The AAS’ connection to Black Studies bound the committee to include students in its search process. Washington was “an outstanding young scholar in Black Studies who reportedly demonstrated a strong rapport with the students.” To the students and Chairman Budd’s chagrin, “the search committee endorsed James Blackwell, an older Black Studies scholar and more experienced administrator.” Students complained “that they were being effectively shut out of the process,” and Professor Budd backed them in their complaints. Sadly, by the time the University decided to extend the offer to Joseph Washington, he had already accepted a position with the University of Virginia.14

Blackwell’s decline of the offer meant the Black Studies Committee would have to start all over again, beginning with forming a search committee. After forming a search committee, telephone and mail correspondence between Duke and potential faculty and staff could last as long as 6 months. After confirming a candidate, the committee would coordinate the logistics of the candidate’s visit to campus. When potential faculty members came to visit, they would receive an honorarium, and reimbursement for their transportation and other expenses. Candidates would tour campus, perhaps give a lecture, and present their research. The negotiation process would then begin -- candidates would communicate their desires to a member of the Black Studies Committee, who would then communicate with an administrator to see if these could be fulfilled. This was the case with at least one potential professor in the early

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14 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
years that wanted more money than Duke was willing to pay. Scope of appropriate payment was decided using the AAUP annual report of average, medium, minimum, and maximum salaries for professors in various departments.15

Although things seemed bleak, the rest of the 1969-1970 school year gave the program a renewed sense of hope. The search committee began considering the candidacy of Walter Burford, “a Professor of Religion at the Yale Divinity School whose special interest centered on the relations of philosophical theology to Black Studies.” Burford accepted “a joint appointment as Director of the Black Studies Program and Associate Professor in the Religion Department.” It was decided at that time that Burford would have “responsibility for development of courses, recruitment of faculty and administration of the Black Studies Program. Students and faculty, appointed yearly to the Black Studies Committee, were to assist him in these matters and help establish policy guidelines for the program.” Additionally, the program would receive a $100,000.00 grant from the Ford Foundation over two years, which the University supplemented with $30,000.00 for each of the two years.16

The Ford Foundation, founded in 1936 by automaker Henry Ford’s daughter Edsel Ford greatly contributed to the growth of Black Studies Programs. America’s largest philanthropic foundation, it issued grants “for scientific, educational, and charitable purposes, all for the public welfare.”17 In 1966, with President McGeorge Bundy at its helm, the foundation set out to

15 Although the names and corresponding salaries of these candidates cannot be published due to privacy laws, a number of letters exist in the Department of African and African American Studies records regarding salary disputes of one of the first professors. AAUP Report, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
16 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
17 Ford Foundation History, Ford Foundation Online, Available at: http://www.fordfound.org/about
“solv[e] America’s racial troubles.” Bundy felt that white prejudice was the major contributing factor to “the Negro problem.” Black Studies, he felt, could be used as “a tool for achieving democratic racial reform.” The Ford Foundation also saw Black Studies Programs “as a means to diversify a predominantly white curriculum and institution, promote integration, and...give the more militant version of separatism and Black Nationalism a wide berth.” 18 This credo guided Ford’s application screening process from 1968-1971. By 1969, the Foundation summarily rejected proposals “based on ‘a separated’ Black power.” Ford approved undergraduate programs looking to restructure their current curricula to include Black Studies and denied student groups asking for “autonomous and separate colleges, department, and programs.” 19 This may explain why Duke received the funding from Ford. Ford officials saw Black Studies as a catalyst for discussing race on college campuses; however, “they [also] realized that such programs would not function as safety valves, capable of relieving all of the social and racial tension building up in the country.” 20 At the time, administrators and students believed that Black Studies, or at least the promise of it, could achieve just this.

“With funding and leadership, the program appeared to be healthy. By the Fall of 1971, enrollment in Black Studies courses had increased by almost 100 percent, the number of course offerings had increased and other courses were in the planning stage.” Unfortunately, the Ford grant was only guaranteed for June 1, 1970-August 31, 1972. “Anticipating the expiration of the Ford Foundation grant, Burford sent a budget request to the administration in December of 1971.” As of April 1972, his request was still unanswered and “the planning for the following year seemed to be in jeopardy.” Three problems plagued the program at this time. The program

lacked funding and despite assurances from administrators that “the program’s allocation would be ‘more than enough to make up for the loss of the Ford Foundation grant,’” it did not receive the necessary funds for the next year. The program structure was also “somewhat faulty.” “An uncertainty concerning faculty appointments from year to year made it difficult to firmly announce courses for pre-registration.” Dean Robert Krueger “questioned Walter Burford’s administration of the program” despite the fact that Mr. Burford had attempted to secure funding and faculty in 1971. In an October 10, 1972 letter to Mr. Burford, Dean Krueger writes, “I was surprised to discover in the Official Schedule of Courses that only two of eight courses listed days, times, and places, and only four of eight listed instructors.” The third problem was the lack of faculty appointments. “Students majoring in Black Studies who had to have faculty sponsors were having problems in finding sufficient faculty members available. Burford, at this time described the ‘scarcity of black faculty’ as ‘appalling.’”21

Burford and other black faculty and staff discussed the dismal state of the Black Studies Program in the student newspaper, The Chronicle. “Harold Wallace, black advisor in Duke’s Summer Transitional Program for minority students summed up frustration with the program.” Wallace told The Chronicle reporter,

‘You can tell a lot about Duke’s commitment to a program from the budget. The Black Studies budget this year (1972-1973) is $46,000, third lowest in the University. It’s turning out that Black Studies is simply a concession. The dominant feeling is that it is not worthy of intellectual study. Black Studies professors are not seriously considered when it comes to promotions and research grants.’

The lack of funding and the joint-appointment structure of the program truly strained Black Studies’ ability to thrive. In fact, Dr. Henry Olela is documented as the program’s only full-time

21 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
professor in the Fall of 1973. In addition to Dr. Olela, “two part time professors and a part time visiting professor who commuted from Boston once every two weeks” and eight courses comprised the Black Studies Program. “All of these figures indicated far less of a program than had been expected and promised from its inception.” The Black Studies committee was only an “advisory committee” to the Undergraduate Faculty Council of the Arts and Sciences (UFCAS) and had little power to effect change over its situation within the university.22

Tension and debate arose in 1973 regarding the “status of the program within the University.” The Black Studies Committee desired autonomy as opposed to being an interdepartmental program. “In terms of status, Olela and Burford saw autonomy as giving credibility to the program as a serious and rigorous intellectual pursuit. In terms of vitality, autonomy meant the freeing of faculty to devote all of their time and energy to the development of the program.” The joint-appointment system stretched the faculty’s time and energy and prevented the program from recruiting faculty. “Because other departments essentially had to approve of faculty to be jointly appointed to Black Studies, the program’s efforts were often compromised.” The administration disagreed with this position arguing that, “strong faculty could not be depended upon to make a commitment to the Black Studies Program alone since it was not, as of yet, an established discipline. In order to attract top faculty the joint appointment needed to be offered for the job security of the prospective teacher.” 23 These words echoed Burford’s sentiment that the administration did not take Black Studies professors and Black Studies as seriously as they did other professors and disciplines.

22 Ibid.
23 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
The Black Studies Committee ignored the administrator’s opinions and in February of 1974, “submitted a proposal to the provost that requested departmental status for the program.” The proposal was subsequently sent to the UFCAS Executive Committee. The UFCAS met with the Black Studies Committee on June 1, 1974 “to discuss the proposal” and it was not approved. “The Executive Committee said that it believed the conferral of departmental status to be unnecessary absent ‘clear evidence’ that the program necessitated such a structure.” It “also suggested that the final decision to establish a department rested with the administration.” The status of Black Studies at Duke was not addressed again until the summer of 1975. The 1975-1976 school year was a tenuous one for Black Studies. The program suffered from a loss of university support, a fact that renewed student activism around the program.24

Section II. Black Studies & Student Support

A diverse group of students continued to support Black Studies. On September 24, 1975, members of the Afro-American Society, now called the Association of African Students, “staged a demonstration in front of the Allen Building and petitioned Provost Frederick Cleaveland and President Terry Sanford to departmentalize the Black Studies Curriculum.” The Associated Students of Duke University (ASDU) also “recommended the immediate departmentalization of the Black Studies Program” on October 8, 1975. The AAS and the ASDU took action because two UFCAS meetings had passed in which a quorum was not reached and Black Studies was rejected. “Dean [of Trinity College and Vice-Provost] John [‘Jack’] Fein was quoted in a Chronicle article as saying, ‘I don’t think people are staying away because it’s Black Studies being discussed.’” Writing to Provost Cleaveland, the ASDU said that the “UFCAS had ‘abrogated its responsibility concerning the status of the Black Studies Program at Duke’” on

24 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
October 17, 1975. By this point, the Black Studies Committee lost one of its graduate student members and there was no more documented activity until 1976. Aggressive administration action prompted this lull in activity.

On June 4, 1975, Dean Fein, had reiterated his opinion that “Black Studies (had) more to gain and more to offer the University, through strengthening its relationship to collateral departments than through departmental status.” In addition to the problems of funding and program structure, Dean Fein also noted the inability of Black Studies to secure students independent of other courses. According to figures from 1972-1973, the average semester enrollment in Black Studies courses was 128 students. Black Studies courses were cross-listed and 76 students had registered for Black Studies and 52 students had registered in the cross-listed departments. Dean Fein worried that enrollments would continue to decline since the program was so interdisciplinary. He also felt that the Black Studies proposal lacked the necessary information about how tenure would work for the department. Tenure would be yet another issue compounding the administrative bureaucracy surrounding the new department. Normally, tenure is awarded to an assistant professor in year six as a sign of the university’s commitment to retaining the professor for future service. The tenure process is very rigorous and faculty move rather rigidly from assistant to associate, to full professor. Questioning the aims of the program, Fein writes: “I wonder whether your request for [departmental status] is not too closely linked to short-range objectives based on the appearance of status instead of the solid, fruitful, and

25 Ibid.
26 It is important to remember that the Black Studies Program was forced to be interdisciplinary due to the joint-faculty appointment structure.
continuing academic success that I am certain we all want.”27 Fein’s words fueled concern within the Black Studies community.

Director Walter Burford responded to Fein’s letter in order to determine whether his position was the University’s position. Dean Fein’s superior, “Provost Frederic Cleaveland responded, enigmatically, with a proposal that the matter again be referred to the Executive Committee of UFCAS.” The Black Studies Committee updated its previous “Proposal for a Black Studies Department” and submitted it to the UFCAS Executive Committee on July 16, 1975. This new proposal included “the suggestion that several ‘programs’ with similar structures had recently been departmentalized.” The Black Studies Committee felt that “the departmentalization of the Slavic Languages, Management Science, Computer Science and Public Policy Sciences were ‘ample evidence for legitimacy’ of departmentalization.” Also, it felt that “the establishment of Public Policy Sciences should lay to rest the disciplinary argument” since Public Policy Sciences was “unmistakenly a hybrid of all of the social sciences and focus[ed] upon the application of these sciences as its main concern.” As to the issue of “erratic student enrollment,” the Black Studies Committee attributed this to “hand to mouth staffing of the program.” The program’s funding was reduced from $130,000 from 1970-72 to $46,000 for the 1972-73 school year. Limited funding meant limited financial resources for securing faculty and staff. The committee felt that departmental status would give Black Studies

27 Letter from Dean Fein to Walter Burford, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
“dignity and strength.”28 “The UFCAS Executive Committee voted 4-2 with one abstention to retain program status for the Black Studies Program.”29

In response to this devastating news, the Black Studies Committee asked to meet before the UFCAS Executive Committee, but this never happened. Dean Fein informed Provost Cleaveland on July 23, 1975 that “Black Studies should remain ‘a program.’ Professor Henry Olela, the department’s only faculty member, resigned “citing the administration’s’ genuine lack of concern’ for the program less than a week later. Provost Cleaveland then announced the University status of Black Studies on July 31, 1975. These two moves further mitigated the program’s strength and trouble ensued in the 1975-1976 school year. Noting the lack of available Black Studies faculty, Dean Fein asked Black Studies Director Walter Burford to forego teaching Religion 195, “Themes in the Theology of Paul Tillich.” Instead, Dean Fein wanted Director Burford to teach “Black Studies 99- Racism,” a core Black Studies course. Burford felt that “such a ‘prospect [was] simply unsuitable’ given the ‘anticipation and expectation’ of students enrolled in” Religion 195. At this point, there were “less than three weeks before the beginning of classes.” Provost Cleaveland considered forcing Burford to teach the class per Dean Fein’s request. Before he could act, Dean Fein and Dean of Faculty Harold Lewis began “to staff Black Studies Courses for the Fall of 1975” themselves. They did this “independent [from] the Black Studies Committee.” On August 21, 1975 Dean Lewis let the Black Studies Committee know that he and Dean Fein had “‘decided] to bypass the committee given an obligation to the students…to delay no longer staffing [classes].’” This prompted Burford to resign on August 31, 1975. Dean Fein then “appointed Dean of Black Affairs, William Turner,”29 to chair the Black

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28 Developing a reputation for not having faculty could also hinder faculty’s willingness to commit to Duke’s Black Studies Program.
29 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
Studies Committee and serve as acting director of the Black Studies Program. Turner, appointed Dean of Black Affairs in 1975, graduated from Duke in 1970. Turner received his Masters in Divinity from Duke in 1974 his Ph.D. in Religion in 1984. Prior to Turner’s tenure as Dean of Black Affairs, Clarence G. Newsome, Duke Class of 1972 held the position. Both Turner and Newsome were black students who had participated in the Afro-American Society as undergraduates.30

The appointment of Newsome and Turner to administrative positions substantiated the interrelationship between black students and Black Studies. Due to the agency of Black students, Black Studies was brought to the attention of University administrators. In their hesitance to grant full departmental status to black studies, administrators often granted black students other concessions to maintain a balance of power. Black students participated in search committees for Black Studies faculty and staff; Black students participated in the supervisory committee for Black Studies, and like Newsome and Turner, some even gained power as administrators after graduation.31 The Office of Black Affairs was established in 1969 to cater to the student affairs needs of black students. It was later renamed the Office of Minority Affairs.32 The Office of Black Affairs organized Duke’s Summer Transitional Program for Minority Students, established in 1969 and other academic programs for Black Students. For example, Duke began a minority tutorial program under Dean Turner in Chemistry. Two tutors were approved exclusively for black students studying chemistry. The tutors received $10 an hour for 12 hours a

30 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
31 Students from the Associated Students of Duke University also served on the Black Studies Committee. Correspondence ASDU to Black Studies Committee, Department of African and African American Studies.
32 Legacy, 1963-1993 (Durham: Duke University, Office of the University Vice President & Vice Provost, 1995), 73,92.
week, 14 weeks of the year. This amounted to a $3,360.00 stipend for the semester. A full eighty percent of the $6,720.00 came from the Federal Work Study Program, so Duke only paid $1,344.00 for this program.\textsuperscript{33} By combining the role of Dean of the Office of Black Affairs with the Director of Black Studies through Turner’s appointment, many felt the administration severely reduced the resources available to black students.\textsuperscript{34}

Black student life developed much in the seventies, creating a need for a changing student affairs model. Students established the first chapters of Black Greek Letter Organizations at Duke in 1974. In 1976 the Association of African Students renamed itself the Black Student Alliance to embrace a more political agenda, and in 1978 Duke students elected the first Black president of the Associated Students of Duke University, Reginaldo Howard. Howard died in a car accident right before assuming office. The endowment of a scholarship in his honor became another black issue often grouped with the issue of Black Studies. Black students submitted another list of demands to the administration in 1975 due to the fallout caused by Dean Fein and Dean Lewis’ action, such as Walter Burford’s resignation and William Turner’s appointment.\textsuperscript{35}

The thirteen demands requested in 1975 were: (1) departmentalize Black Studies, (2) staff the Black Studies program, (3) increase the number of black faculty, (4) increase black undergraduate enrollment, (5) increase black student input in university decision making, (6) provide adequate financial aid to undergraduates, (7) stop discrimination in work study hiring, (8) increase the number of black staff, (9) allot space for black student activities, (10) stop campus harassment of black students by campus police, (11) increase black graduate student

\textsuperscript{33} Correspondence on Chemistry Program, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.

\textsuperscript{34} History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.

\textsuperscript{35} Issues Raised by Black Students, Black History at Duke Reference Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
enrollment, (12) increase Afro-American Studies collection in the library, and (13) end discrimination in varsity athletic selections. Five of the thirteen demands listed in 1969 were requested again in 1975.36 Black students, it seemed, moved away from their desire to help all black people in the university; Instead the students focused on developing black student affairs. This trend would strengthen over time as black students and black faculty assumed enough of a critical mass to organize for their own issues.

An October 27, 1975 progress report on “Issues Raised by Black Students” gives the following update on the thirteen demands issued by students in 1975. The report is divided into three columns: ‘Issue,’ ‘Primary Responsibility,’ and ‘Current Status.’ Each issue has a corresponding person or persons who has primary responsibility over resolving the issue, and the current status shares up to date information on how each issue is currently being handled. This organization reflects the maturity of black students and administrators in their ability to resolve black students’ conflicts. For the issue of Black Studies, the report notes that the “issue is on [the] agenda…[with] no resolution yet.” Also, that “two motions on [Black Studies were] defeated by UFCAS on October 9, [1975].” The “[m]atter [is] to be considered again at [the][ November meeting of [UFCAS].” As for staffing the program, “two faculty positions will be filled this year. Two regular faculty with cross-appointments in History & Religion are now in [the] program, along with two visiting professors.”37

Black students fared better than Black Studies in administrative priorities. The administration characterized itself as “open to continued input from students” on the issue of university decision-making. The broad issue of increasing black student input in university

36 Students asked for Black Studies, a Black Dorm, increased black enrollment, financial aid, and an end to police harassment in 1969 and 1975.
37 Issues Raised by Black Students, Black History at Duke Reference Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
decision-making provides an interesting comparison to a 1969 demand for “an immediate end to
tokenism of black representation in university power structures.” Black students wanted power and input on their own terms as opposed to acquiescence from administrators.

The bureaucracy had traditionally responded to black student demands by giving black students superficial roles on committees that had little power. The black students benefited from their power struggle with the university, learning to articulate their needs more clearly. On the issue of Financial Aid, it was reported that “full need is now met” and “a black student has been appointed to the Committee on Financial Aid.” On the issue of Work Study Hiring, it was reported that there was “no known pattern of discrimination in work-study hiring.” Black students requested space for their activities, and it is noted that they currently use the Jordan Student Center. As for harassment by campus police, administrators note that some cases “could be interpreted as harassment cases.” However, “officers must provide explanations when they stop individuals.” Lastly, students requested more Afro-American Studies materials at the library and the report vaguely says, “the Library has an extensive collection of material in Black Studies, although they are not in the physical location. New acquisitions will continue to be made.” In addition to keeping tabs on the resolution status of black student concerns, the administration also gave black students (and black faculty) an institutionalized vehicle to express their concerns to the President. A President’s Council on Black Affairs (PCOBA) was established in 1975. The last issue of discrimination in Varsity Athletic Selections was resolved

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38 Ibid.
39 Issues Raised by Black Students, Black History at Duke Reference Collection, University Archives, Duke University.
as early as 1978 when Kim Mathews became the first black female athlete on the Women’s Basketball Team.\footnote{Legacy, 1963-1993 (Durham: Duke University, Office of the University Vice President & Vice Provost, 1995), 16.}

Due to Black Studies’ financial problems, public understanding of how finances impact university decisions increased. On February 16, 1979, the BSA requested “that a commitment of $6,000.00 per year be pledged by the Administration for the next three years.”\footnote{Black Student Alliance, February 16, 1979, Black History at Duke Reference Collection, University Archives, Duke University.} The BSA also argued that “the present number of black faculty is quite disturbing. Currently there is not one black professor in the sciences; nor are there black professors in the economics and political science departments.” Public understanding of the importance of tenure, it would seem, increased as well. “The representation of black faculty in other academic areas is inadequate as is the number of tenured black professors.” As for the issue of Black Studies, “the number of Black Studies courses offered each semester continues to dwindle.” Further, “there did not exist a Black Studies Heading in the Official Duke University Schedule of Courses, Spring 1979.” In addition to the Black Student Alliance, other black student groups such as black Greek organizations, Dance Black, a dancing group, Karamu, an acting group, the Modern Black Mass Choir, and \textit{Prometheus Black}, the literary journal of the black community, also desired space for their activities. The February 1979 report asks for a shared facility for these organizations, as well as individual space when possible. Black fraternities would receive official housing in 1993 and a center for black life would be built in 1983. Although not all of the requests made by black students were granted promptly, students continued articulation of their needs allowed black students to separate their needs from the needs of Black Studies. Although black students and
Black Studies are forever tied together in history, the seventies and eighties showed a weaning of black students from black studies.

Section III. Black Studies & Black Faculty

In addition to increased independence of black students from Black Studies, black faculty also gained the ability to advocate for themselves as a separate group in the seventies and eighties. Black faculty, especially those advocating for Black Studies, were not immune to the bureaucratic and administrative character of academia. The Black Studies Program adopted the bureaucratic stance of academia as evidenced by meticulous notekeeping of the Black Studies Committee. In order to change the structure, the committee would first need to be recognized by the structure. Some administrative issues were unavoidable. For example, correspondence in 1975 indicates that certain physical needs of the Black Studies Program were still being worked out. Acting Dean of Black Affairs and Director of Black Studies William Turner submitted a laundry list of needs, including drapes, a desk, a couch, chairs, a table, a file cabinet, a closed cabinet for supplies, a bulletin board, an executive swivel chair, air conditioner, that someone paint [the] pipes the same color as [the] walls, and bookcases for the Black Studies office space in the Old Chemistry Building.42 Black Studies also needed faculty to teach and to support the program. Remember that Professor Olela, the program’s only full-time professor, had resigned and the program still had no permanent director. Additionally, the UFCAS consistently voted against departmental status for the program. Dean Turner wrote to Provost Cleaveland on November 26, 1975 saying “that either the faculty is insensitive and is not even to be consulted on matters of such a serious nature as Black Studies; or they have no regard whatsoever for Black Studies and have no desire to see it within the university.” In the Spring of the 1975-1976

42 Dean Turner to Dean Fein Correspondence on Black Studies Needs, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
school year, the Black Studies Committee (now the Afro-American Studies Committee) “made plans for professors Harry Edwards (Sociology) and John Ogbu (Anthropology) to visit the University as prospective faculty appointees.”

Despite his resignation, Walter Burford made his opinion on the state of Black Studies known in a letter to the editor of the Chronicle. “Burford described the Committee’s actions as based on a ‘peculiar, non principled, pseudo-gradualistic, something (anything) is better than nothing version of reasoning…’ Burford was subsequently denied tenure by the Religion Department. Prometheus Black covered the story. “William Poteat, Chairman of the Religion Department, was quoted on Burford’s dismissal: ‘If Walter Burford had come to us as a typical appointee, we would never have appointed him. We housed him, and in effect in doing that simply cooperated with the University in the sense of what was desirable to get the Black Studies Program going.” The student paper adequately “noted this was quite a message to send prospective faculty appointees from a University developing a program around joint appointments.” The University forced the program to adopt a joint-appointment structure that was difficult to support, politically and physically, for the professors appointed. However, without a core of professors, the program could not offer courses consistently for majors. Thus, Black Studies was trapped in a doubly-binding vice.

When Dean Turner left at the end of 1976-77 Louis Budd was appointed de-facto chair of the Afro-American Studies Committee. After the tumultuous 1975-76 and 1976-77 school years, the 1977-78 school year showed some promise for Black Studies. The Afro-American Studies Committee met regularly each month and black faculty used a mature and impressive strategy.

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43 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
44 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
There were several issues facing the committee and the university underwent a curricular reform reminiscent of the 1960s. The university considered the curricula of its peers at Harvard and Emory Universities to determine how Duke should realign.

Another issue facing the committee was leadership of the Black Studies Program and a direction for the program. English Professor Kenny Williams contributed heavily to the committee’s leadership in 1977-78. In a memorandum to the advisory committee for Afro-American Studies, Williams suggests a short-range plan and a long-range plan to revive the struggling program. The long-range plan included “develop[ing] specific programs to appeal to certain student interests as well as to employment possibilities.” Williams suggested a program with a core in Afro-American Literature Methodology, Advanced Rhetoric, Nineteenth-and Twentieth Century Afro-American History, and Nineteenth and Twentieth [Century] Afro-American Literature. The program would then offer three potential concentrations: City Planning, Museum Curatorship, or Librarianship.

The City Planning concentration would include courses in public policy, art, sociology, political science, religion and other electives. The Museum Curatorship concentration would include courses in management science, art, speech, English, an internship at North Carolina Central University’s Art Museum Staggville, and electives. “Given the fast-developing interest in preservation societies and museum curatorships” this program “would prepare a student to

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46 Interestingly, Emory showed a very flexible implementation of Black Studies in its curricula. In Emory’s distribution requirements, Black Studies 101, Dynamics of the Black Community is listed as a course that fulfills curricular requirements. “Goals of Emory College” and “Harvard’s Core Curriculum: A View From the Inside” by James Q Wilson, University Archives, Duke University
47 K.J. Williams Memorandum to The Advisory Committee for Afro-American Studies, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
work immediately in those areas upon graduation.” The librarianship concentration would take advantage of local resources such as the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s Library School. This concentration would include courses in management sciences, technical processing, and other electives and “train specialists who can deal effectively and competently with Afro-American materials.”

Another committee member, History Professor Raymond Gavins “questioned the pre-professional emphasis in Afro-American Studies. He also wanted to know the relationship between these suggestions and obtaining faculty positions outside the pre-professional areas.”

In September of 1977, Professor Gavins “strongly endorsed finding a permanent director of the program. Dr. H. O. Edwards of the divinity school, another member of the committee, echoed this sentiment at the December 13, 1977 meeting of the Afro-American Studies Committee. Professor Williams’ “response was that [the new program model] would not disturb the kind of hiring or commitment you want from people” and “would give Duke distinction aside from just literature, history, and sociology.”

Professor Williams also suggested a short-range plan for the program. She asked that the Afro-American Studies committee be changed “to include two parts: a.) one committee (to be composed of tenure-track appointees along with any lecturer or Visiting Professor who might wish to serve) [that would] deal only with curricular matters, academic issues, and faculty appointments,” and b.) a committee “composed of the Advisory Committee as it is presently constituted “ would “deal with issues not specifically stated” and “make recommendations to the” first committee. Williams also recommended that the Afro-American Studies committee

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48 Ibid.

49 Advisory Committee for the Afro-American Studies Meeting, December 13, 1977, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.

50 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
“suspend operations (course offerings which do not have departmental affiliations) and student enrollment for a year.” During this year off, the committee would focus on creating “concrete plans for the continuation of the program,” “get specific administrative commitment,” “produce a brochure for distribution,” and “attempt to create a wide student interest.” Lastly, the committee should “develop a comprehensive Summer Institute to be conducted during the summer of 1979 to test any experimental portions of the re-vamped program.”

When the committee met in January of 1978, Professor Williams “suggested that courses which are solely offered by our Program not be offered next year, while the Program [as she suggested] is being restudied.” The schedule of proposed courses for the 1978-1979 school year was due February 3, 1978. Since there was only one AAS course scheduled to be taught that semester, Afro-American Studies 99- Dimensions of Racism, “the committee reasoned that this would not be necessary.” There appeared to be “revived” interest from students in AAS 99, but no faculty members were available to teach the course. Professor Gavins offered to contact former Black Studies Dean Clarence G. Newsome and Chairman Budd agreed to contact Dean McMurray Richey of the Divinity School to make the proper arrangements if Newsome agreed. In the event that Newsome was unavailable, the committee decided that “Professor Earl E. Thorpe of [North Carolina Central University should] be contacted.” As Newsome was unavailable, Dr. Thorpe agreed to teach for the Fall of 1978.51

Problems relating to course and faculty availability were not new. At the January ’78 meeting, Chairman Budd “reported that the registrar called regarding the status of AAS 185- African Influence in Western Civilization. However in a previous meeting, it was recommended that this course be stricken in so much as there is no instructor for it.” At a meeting on October

51 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
18, 1977, “members were informed that” several courses were “dropped from course listings in the Bulletin in as much as they have not been taught for the past two years and in as much as there is no one to teach them presently: “Afro-American Studies 176-177: Marxism and Black Liberation and Afro-American Studies 113: African Philosophy. On November 1, 1977, Chairman Budd “reported that Afro-American Studies 189--Black Themes in Literature will not be given during the spring semester and that Political Science 105--The Black in American Politics (cross-listed as Afro-American Studies 105)--will be taught during the spring semester by William Strickland, visiting professor in the Department of Political Science.” The stress of a weak program frustrated Chairman Budd and the committee.

At the February 27 meeting, Chairman Budd asked, “Where are we? What can we do as a committee?” It seemed as though the committee had very little effectiveness. Only one of the fourteen courses listed as part of the AAS program for the Fall of 1979 was an AAS course. “By August of 1979, Professor Williams’ proposal had reached the administration and faculty whose collective response was unenthusiastic. In fact, the committee had more trouble coming to it. History Professor Larry Goodwin was appointed chair of the AAS Committee in 1980 despite the fact that “Goodwin himself had not known that the Committee existed when he agreed to serve.” Professor Williams “expressed ‘considerable concern’ about the fact that she did not know of the appointment of Professor Larry Goodwin as chair of the AAS Committee. In fact, she said that she did not know who Larry Goodwin might be.” Dean Fein “enlisted Goodwin to serve without consulting members of the existing committee or other Black faculty.” Goodwin did not convene the committee for the entire 1980-1981 school year. Students from the Black

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52 Advisory Committee for the Afro-American Studies Meeting, November 1, 1977, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
Student Alliance and the Black Graduate and Professional Student Caucus (BGPSC) were outraged by these moves. The BGPSC “had petitioned Chancellor [Ken] Pye and the University community to” use their power to “establish a viable AAS program.” The BSA asked that Chancellor Pye “strengthen the AAS Program” and “appoint” a full time director. These and other issues were discussed at a February 16, 1981 PCOBA meeting. “President Sanford expressed his view that the council was ‘not talking about the development of a department thus it is difficult to attract people to it.’” He said, “there are not people ‘out there’ with Ph. D. degrees in Afro-American Studies. According to Sanford this made the situation difficult.”

After Goodwin resigned in September of 1981, the strength of the Afro-American Studies Committee declined, as did the African and African American Studies Program. In 1982, “the program had only one student major, Kevin Carter.” Carter was the only major since 1976 and he attributed this fact to “difficulties in searching for an un-appointed advisor…., lack of a full time director and the loose structure of the program.” Religion Professor C. Eric Lincoln argued that the program had not existed for the past 6 years. “Dean Ernestine Friedl “insisted that the program existed and was under ‘active discussion.’ She defended the cross-listing of all AASP courses as a way to attract students to the courses.” President Sanford also seemed oblivious to the problems “stat[ing] that he was ‘strongly committed personally to the future of AASP but saw no need for a director of the program.” In the Spring of 1984, the department offered “Introduction to Jazz” and “Afro-American History” as its only courses. “Nine other courses were cross-listed as part of the program.” The Chronicle covered the dwindling program and the lack of administrative support on February 16, 1984. Dean Friedl “said that the lack of AAS majors was not an administrative problem: ‘That just indicates a lack of student interest in Afro-

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53 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
American Studies as a major.” Both Sanford and Friedl agreed that simply having courses in each discipline related to the “black experience,” was sufficient for a Black Studies Program.\textsuperscript{54}

The changing administrative commitment to Black Studies as well as the maturation of black student and black faculty group identities defines the process of turning conversation about racial difference into action. The development of Black Studies as a discipline happened in parallel with the desegregation of schools such as Duke University. Navigating the politics of the bureaucracy while trying to define itself, Black Studies opened the door for other diversity-based initiatives, notably the Women’s Studies Movement of the late seventies and eighties.\textsuperscript{55} Black and non-black student protests exposed the priorities of society and demanded a realignment of social values and action. Building on this strategy, Black Studies’ struggle exposed the priorities of the academic bureaucracy, and in doing so demanded a realignment of academic study and action. Future diversity-based initiatives would benefit from this bellwether, borrowing heavily from its dual academic and social thrusts, its ability to navigate external and internal politics, and its interconnectedness with diverse faculty and students in higher education.

\textsuperscript{54} History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.

\textsuperscript{55} The Women’s College merged with Trinity College in 1972. Women began to agitate for relevant curricula in this decade. Letter from Laurie Bengelsdorf to Professor Bruce Wardropper, October 30, 1979, Undergraduate Faculty Council of Arts and Sciences Records, University Archives, Duke University
Chapter 3: Promise Amidst Challenges

Black Studies has always struggled to separate itself from the politics which bred it and navigate the complex hierarchies of academia. Amidst these challenges, Black Studies offers the nation an opportunity to evaluate the pros and cons of diversity-based initiatives in higher education. Like other diversity-based initiatives in higher education, Black Studies cannot separate itself from its constituents, specifically black people. Diversity-based curricula therefore assumes both an academic and a social mission. This “dual mission” can be problematic, as it often recreates the very social structures that it attempts to break down. Curricula and other programs aimed at helping diverse constituents have the potential to harm constituents and others in university communities if left unstructured and unmonitored. The history of Black Studies as a movement and now a discipline provides insight into common problems that could impede other diversity-based initiatives.

Section I. The Dual Mission of Black Studies Curricula

The dual mission of Black Studies and other diversity-based disciplines poses both an opportunity and a challenge. Although the study of human thought and action has always been the goal of academia, the idea that phenotypic difference confers individuals and groups with profoundly different life experiences, all of which are worthy of study, goes in and out of vogue. The challenge to Black Studies as a discipline has always been a challenge to create an academic field of study that was more than just a replication of white society nuanced in blackness. In the same vane, Black Studies is challenged to keep pace with the constant iterations in black thought and experience.¹

In 1981, the National Council of Black Studies “defined the purpose and rationale” of Black Studies as a discipline. The core of such a curriculum should “provide skills,” give students “a standard and purposefully direct choice,” secure “liberation of the black community,” and “enhance self-awareness and esteem. This curriculum would guide students through the Black American experience, beginning with courses about Africa and ending with courses about modern day black experiences. Unfortunately, many felt that this prescription constituted a doctrine rather than a discipline. The core courses did not allow for students to develop necessary skills of science and “specific analytical skills associated with the social sciences.” Additionally, few programs had the funding or staff to create this kind of curriculum. Instead, most programs focused on black history and culture, especially the arts.²

In his 1985 Report to the Ford Foundation on Afro-American Studies, Nathan Huggins catalogues Black Studies Programs, commenting on their character, mission, and resources. “Afro-American Studies Programs remain tailored to available talent and other institutional resources.” He also writes that, they are mostly comprised of courses in history and literature “with enough additional courses to fill out an undergraduate major.” In the mid-to-late eighties, students grew increasingly interested in business, law, and public policy. All disciplines, including the young Black Studies, were forced to “emphasize the social sciences” due to this trend. Many schools had programs where Afro-American Studies was merely “ a service department.” These programs offered a major and a few Afro-American Studies course, but most

of the curriculum was derived from other departments. Some schools offered joint concentrations within other majors, which increased the popularity of the program.³

Four issues contributed to the unpopularity of Black Studies Programs. (1) Students were focusing more on careers rather than the politics of race, (2) some courses were perceived to be unfriendly to whites, (3) other courses were insubstantial lacking “academic rigor,” and (4) the student protest movement “exhausted campus communities,” leaving few faculty and administrators willing to have a conversation about Black Studies. The stability of Black Studies Programs was often a result of how the programs came into being. For example, the Black Studies Programs at Yale and Stanford Universities were relatively stable and peaceful student protests occurred at these schools. In contrast, the instability of programs at the University of California at Berkeley, Cornell, Columbia, and Harvard mirrored the violent mood of student protests at those schools. Lastly, programs struggled to define the scope of their curricula often reflected in the name of their program. Programs traditionally adopted an African thrust, a black thrust, a Pan-African thrust or some combination of the three. Program names such as Africana studies, Afro-American Studies, African and Afro-American Studies, Black Studies reflected the diversity of names and thrusts represented in the discipline.⁴

Duke’s Program in Black Studies, later changed its name to Afro-American Studies, and finally African and African-American Studies. In 1977, the Black Studies major requirements at Duke included core classes such as, Black Studies 99-Dimensions of Racism, Black Studies 100 - Philosophy of Black Liberation, Black History/Black Studies 83 - Afro-American History, and Black History/Black Studies 84 - Afro-American History. Majors were required to take three

⁴ Ibid, 58.
courses numbered above 100 (including one seminar) from the following list: Black Studies/Political Science 105 - The Black in Politics, Black Studies 105 - Economics of Poverty and the Ghetto, Black Studies/Education 120 - Racism and American Education, Black Studies 125.1/Religion 125.1 - Religion and Theology of Black America, Black Studies 151/English 151 - Literature of Black America (Classic), Black Studies/English 152 - Literature of Black America (Current), Black Studies/ English 161 - Third World Literature, Black Studies/Philosophy 150 - African Religious Philosophy and 20th Century Political Thinkers, Black Studies/ Philosophy 176 - Marxism and Black Liberation, Black Studies/Psychology 154 - The Psychology of Racism and Colonization, Black Studies/Sociology 147 - The Black in the City, Black Studies/Sociology 149 - The Sociology of Black America, Black Studies/History 180 - Historiography and the Black Experience in America, Black Studies/Religious 181 - Seminar in Religion and Black Studies, Black Studies 189 - Black Liberation, Black Studies 191,192 - An Independent Study, Option, and Black Studies 193, Black Studies 4 Afro-Music. The goal of this program was to expose students to the myriad experiences of Black America.

Maulana Karenga, former community organizer and founder of the Kwanzaa Holiday and Us political organization, created a primer for Black Studies in 1982. Karenga identified seven core areas of study for Black Studies: Black History, Black Religion, Black Sociology, Black Politics, Black Creative Production/Arts, Black Psychology, and Black Economics. Karenga also provided definitions for these core areas: Black History is “the understanding and appreciation of Black History begins with the definition of history itself and then uses that definition to define

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Black History and its relevance."  

6 Black Religion is “the desire of Blacks to be self-conscious about the meaning of their Blackness and to search for spiritual fulfillment in terms of their understanding of themselves and their experience of history.”  

7 Black Sociology is “the critical study of the structure and functioning of the Black community as a whole, as well as the various units and processes which compose and define it, and its relations with people and forces external to it.”  

8 Black Politics is the “manifestation of one dimension or extension of the universal struggle for power.”  

9 Black Economics is the “study of the politics which shape economics in both positive and negative ways.”  

10 Black Creative Production and Arts are “an expression of Black life experiences and aspirations,…the conscious and unconscious aesthetic contribution of Black people to their struggle to rescue and reconstruct their history and humanity in their own image and interest”  

11 Black Psychology is “the concerns of Black psychology revolve around the development of a discipline which not only studies the behavior of Black persons, but seeks to transform them into self-conscious agents of their own mental and political liberation.”  

(1) critique and reject the methodology, conclusions, and ideological premise of white psychology (2) use “Afro-centric models of study and therapy” (3) “self-conscious intervention in the social struggle for a more Black and human environment.”  

Karenga was one of many struggling to define the discipline in the 1980s.

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7 Ibid, 211.
8 Ibid, 269.
9 Ibid, 312.
11 Ibid, 394.
12 Ibid, 439 - 442.
Black Studies needed to clearly define a mission and curricula in order to maintain an already weakened claim of legitimacy. Like any academic program, Black Studies relied on its curricula to draw students to the department. Unlike any extant academic programs, Black Studies also needed to prove that the Black Experience was epistemologically valid to study. Even if, Black Studies proponents met this burden, they still had to determine whether or not Black Studies should be created as an autonomous discipline or an integrated knowledge-project across the arts and sciences. Interestingly, black students of Yale University’s Black Student Alliance hosted a symposium on Black Studies to discuss these concerns peacefully in the Spring of 1968, during the militant student protests at San Francisco State College and other schools.13

The Yale Conference sought to “thrash out the intellectual and political issues connected with implementing a program of Afro-American studies”.14 Two main concerns were addressed at the conference. First, educators expressed concern that “complying with public pressure for curriculum reform” erode academic excellence in curricula. Second, educators doubted the legitimacy of studying the Black Experience in America. Many important figures in the early Black Studies movement attended this conference including McGeorge Bundy of the Ford Foundation and a Yale alumni, Nathan Hare, recently installed as Director of Black Studies at San Francisco State College, and Maulana Ron Karenga, the well-known community organizer from California. The Yale Conference participants expressed the full continuum of voices on Black Studies role in the university.15

15 Ibid, xi.
Black intellectuals like Karenga who attended the conference wanted to see Black Studies institutionalized.\textsuperscript{16} Other black intellectuals and activists, not present at the conference, felt that institutionalizing Black Studies could further marginalize black people. A. Philip Randolph, who championed an end to discrimination against blacks in federal employment under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Dr. Kenneth Clark, who performed the famous “doll study” influencing the decision in Brown v. Board, and Bayard Rustin, friend and mentor to Dr. Martin Luther King all shared this belief. Although these three were not present at the conference, they made their opinions known at other times.\textsuperscript{17} Regardless the Yale Conference was considered a huge success, especially considering the violence that ensued at other schools during this time.

\textit{Section II. Models}

In addition to creating universal curricula, Black Studies Programs struggled to find a universal model. Popular models include the program model, the college model, and the department model. Duke University used the program model. This model “relie[d] on the president and dean to guarantee the program through budget allocations to the departments involved”\textsuperscript{18} This structure was interdisciplinary, relying on joint-appointments of professors, and allowing the program to “exploit” current curricula offerings in other departments. Yale University’s Black Studies Program utilized this model better than Duke University, producing well known scholars like Henry Gates and Houston Baker. Unlike Duke, Yale also offered a master’s degree in Black Studies. The “major weakness” of the program model “is its dependence for survival on the continued support and goodwill of others in the university: the

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Black Studies in the University}, (New Haven : Yale University Press, 1969), 37-41
\textsuperscript{17} Noliwe M. Rooks, \textit{White Money/Black Power} (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006), 71.
president, dean, and the heads of cooperating departments.”¹⁹ This was certainly the case at Duke, where aggressive administrators and deans thwarted the action of the nascent program.

A lack of academic standards and low enrollment in Black Studies Programs proved to be yet two more weaknesses of the program model. Students at Wesleyan University and Duke experienced problems majoring in the field. “Students found it difficult to put the necessary courses together” for the major. Another example of the program model at the University of Rhode Island, institutionalized a vocational focus in its Black Studies Program. Remember that English Professor Kenny Williams had suggested a vocational focus for Duke’s Black Studies Program. At the University of Rhode Island, special courses were designed around topics such as “free enterprise zones” and “human resources.” “Such courses [were] designed to serve students interested in working in the community or in Third World countries.” The University of Rhode Island did not offer an undergraduate degree in the major, but students often pursued the courses in conjunction with a Masters in International Development.²⁰

The violent student protest movement at San Francisco State College led to the creation of an autonomous college of Black Studies there. Deemed, the “most radical kind of program,” autonomous Black Studies colleges existed at Cornell University and also at the University of California at Berkeley. The college at Berkeley was a special case, and was integrated into the large University in 1974. “No other major university came close to acceding to this extreme demand.” Some community colleges acted as autonomous black colleges due to the high concentration of black people living in the community. For example, the student demographics at Malcom X College in Chicago, formerly Crane Junior College, were 80% Black, 8% Hispanic,

²⁰ Ibid, 47.
and 12% other. The College changed its name to Malcom X College in 1968 and had vocational thrusts in health services and computer science.\textsuperscript{21}

The department model provided a middle-ground between the college and program models. Black Studies departments offered autonomy, an annual budget, the ability to appoint and dismiss faculty, and the ability to design curriculum without “control or oversight” from the administration. The department model was also perceived to be a “more permanent structure than a program.” At Duke University and Harvard University, Black Studies proponents felt that resistance to departmentalization, increased proponents willingness to fight for it. Administrators were often against departments, because Black Studies was not a discipline. This was also the case at the University of California at Berkeley and the University of Indiana. In some cases, Black Studies Departments could not avoid joint-appointments or administrative oversight, “forc[ing them] to depend on a very limited program or rely on other departments’ offerings.” Some black faculty wouldn’t take a joint appointment for fear that they would be denied tenure by the traditional department.\textsuperscript{22} Remember that this was the case with Professor Walter Burford at Duke University who was denied tenure by Duke University’s Religion Department after making negative remarks in the student newspaper.

Faculty at other schools, like Burford, also tried to influence the tenure process. At Harvard University, Black Studies Department Chairman Ewart Guinier attempted to negotiate a deal with Harvard’s administrators regarding tenure. He felt that Black Studies junior faculty should be appointed to tenure within the Black Studies department. Harvard’s President and Dean felt that these faculty should receive tenure only if confirmed through joint-appointment. Like


Duke, Harvard University had a complicated academic hierarchy that identified and confirmed tenure candidates. It was thought that joint-appointments could help “dispe[l] suspicion about the quality of a department’s faculty”, especially necessary for a new field and lay to rest questions about standards and reputation. Ideally, joint-appointment would provide advocates for Black Studies as each Black Studies professor would be a part of a traditional department. Conversely, the joint-appoint system fostered “antagonism” and “ill will,” “rais[ing] questions [about the] service, loyalty, and commitment of faculty to Afro-American Studies.” Faculty, especially, junior faculty found the strain of serving in two departments distressing. Implementation of the program, college and department models played out differently on different college campuses.

Three other popular models include Graduate Programs in Black Studies, Undergraduate Black Life Centers, and Research Center and Institutes. The University of California at Berkeley, the University of Rhode Island, and the University of California at Los Angeles offered graduate courses in Black Studies. University of California at Los Angeles offered graduate and postdoctoral level work, but no graduate or undergraduate course. Huggins notes that this is not surprising because “graduate programs in the humanities and social sciences have been shrinking everywhere.” Rejecting the need for courses, some schools created Undergraduate Black Life Centers. Wesleyan had a Black Studies Program and a Center for Afro-American Studies. The Center served as a Black Student Union, providing counseling, career guidance and other services to black students. Huggins writes that undergraduate centers seemed to foster “weak academic program and student indifference to that weakness” at their respective schools. The

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24 Ibid, 51-52.
Ford Foundation funded the Center for Afro-American Studies and undergraduate centers at other schools.

Ford also funded research institutes in Black Studies. Columbia University established its Urban Center through the Ford Foundation in 1968. Unfortunately, the Center ran out of funds in 1977 due to mismanagement and a lack of purpose. On the other hand, Harvard University, the University of Virginia, and University of California at Los Angeles established successful research institutes. The W.E.B. DuBois Center at Harvard offered post-doctoral fellowships and hosted lectures, art exhibits, and concerts. The Carter G. Woodson Institute at the University of Virginia oversaw the Afro-American and African Studies Program, “pre- and post-doctoral fellowships in the humanities and social sciences for research and writing in Black Studies.” The Woodson Institute also sponsored lectures, art exhibits, concerts, and colloquia. Huggins refers to University of California at Los Angeles as a quasi-institute, that supported research but did not offer courses. Huggins writes that the best way to produce critical scholarship in the field is through the institute model.25

Huggins writes that it is difficult to distinguish the issues of black students from the issues that most college students face. “The college years are a difficult time of transition for young people” due to “separation from home and family, acceptance of adult responsibilities,” new friends, and discerning old from new loyalties. At “more prestigious colleges,” high achieving-college students may find they are “unremarkable, even remedial.” Still, “these problems, common as they are, have a special impact on black students” who are more likely to see them as a “black experience in a white institution”. They may “seek to interpret as a collective condition what are basically individual and personal problems.” Black students in

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Black Studies courses must determine the “academic, political, and personal significance” of the courses to their lives. Black Studies, “then and now,” presents special problems to its black student constituents due to the perception and the reality of the curricula’s connection to their lives. This problem is not unique to Black Studies and can be generalized as relevant to any diversity-based curricula.\textsuperscript{26}

In addition to the dilemmas posed to administrators and students regarding implementation, Huggins writes that Black Studies also presented special dilemmas to black faculty. The field was so young that black scholars had difficulty committing to Black Studies when given the option of committing to a more traditional discipline. Black faculty who accepted joint-appointments were often stretched too thin. Even black faculty, who remained unaffiliated with Black Studies officially, could find themselves overextended. Then as now, black students often sought out black faculty for help with issues related to black students on campus. Black faculty were often asked to sit on various committees and councils to provide input on issues effecting black people in the university.\textsuperscript{27} These serious issues continue today as higher education struggles to redefine racial difference and diversity.

\textit{Section III. Towards a Better Day}

In 1993, Duke University hosted a year long celebration of thirty years of Black Students at Duke University. In conjunction with the celebration, the University produced a commemorative book entitled, “Legacy, 1963-1993: Thirty Years of African-American Students at Duke University,” published by the Office of the University Vice President & Provost. The book contains a brief history of desegregation, a list of commemorative events held each month,

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\item[27] Ibid, 63-64.
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and profiles of alumni, faculty, and administrators with knowledge of Duke’s history with issues of black students, faculty, and staff. The last chapter “Where We Are Now” comments on the development of black life at Duke University.  

By 1993, Black Faculty had gained a Committee on Black Faculty in the Academic Council. Also the Black Faculty Hiring Initiative, begun in 1988, had yielded insubstantial, but measurable results with 10 departments hiring black faculty. Approximately “18 of 56 hiring units succeeded in adding 25 black faculty members.” The Black Faculty Hiring Initiative was very difficult to monitor, a fact that may have contributed to its ineffectiveness. Black students gained an undergraduate life center, the Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture, in 1983 and by 1993 had created and maintained a total of 22 student groups. Black Studies, relatively dormant from 1984 experienced “a rebirth” in 1991. During this year, the Afro-American Studies Committee, was officially an ad hoc committee of the Arts and Sciences Council. The committee produced a twelve page history of the program which guided much of the analysis in Chapter Two of this thesis.

It took almost 25 years for Black Studies and its proponents to get an ally at every level of the institutional hierarchy. President H. Keith H. Brodie spearheaded the Black Faculty Initiative in 1988 and his successor Nannerl Keohane also proved to be a friend to black issues. Vice President and Vice Provost Leonard Beckum, hired in 1990, was the first African-American officer of the university. He was joined by Janice Dickerson, “the first woman and first African-

28 Legacy, 1963-1993 (Durham: Duke University, Office of the University Vice President & Vice Provost, 1995).
29 Ibid, 73-74.
30 History of Afro-American Studies at Duke University, Department of African and African American Studies records, University Archives, Duke University.
American vice-president of student affairs,” in 1991.31 Black committee representation in the Academic Council and Arts and Sciences Council ensured that black issues could not be altogether ignored and the Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Life provided black students with a space all their own. These victories should not be trivialized as the results of a mere passage of time, rather, they should be considered as important steps in the development of Black Studies at Duke University. Although the department was not realized until 2006, these key institutionalizations bolstered the effort to win departmental status. From inception to institutionalization, Black Studies provides a model for other diversity-based initiatives in higher education. As issues of diversity in higher education increase in importance to society, Black Studies will continue to lead the way. Black Studies offers the challenge of any initiative based on something so intangible and variable as race, and with it the promise that change however difficult can always be achieved.

31 Legacy, 1963-1993 (Durham: Duke University, Office of the University Vice President & Vice Provost, 1995), 17.
In the next twenty years, both the administration and the students at Duke University accepted the institutionalized monolithic model of black students at Duke. Black students were given separate residential space and separate cultural groups to express their blackness.\(^1\) It should be noted that not all black students participated in the black cultural groups.\(^2\) Black students consistently took it upon themselves to advocate for increased black student enrollment, black hiring, and issues of financial aid and academic disparities that disproportionately affected black students more than their white peers.\(^3\) Additionally, for most of this period the Black Studies department continued to be a reminder of an unrealized dream of full black participation in Duke academics.\(^4\) The administration’s role in perpetuating a specific black identity for black

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\(^1\) “On Being Black at Duke”, Black History at Duke Reference Collection, University Archives, Duke University. This admissions supplement was aimed at Black students. Several quotes from the pamphlet indicate that an identity for black students was institutionalized. It says “Your life on any campus, whether Black or predominantly white will be what you make it. Sure, things will be a bit harder in a situation in which you are in the minority, but the challenge itself may be a positive and rewarding experience”. Another brochure advertised Career Opportunities, Counseling in Academic and Social Affairs (C.A.S.A). Black Faculty, a Summer Transitional Program, as well as Social and Religious Organizations geared towards black students. This encouraged black students to conform to the identity before they even arrived on campus. This echoes the report that pre-determined areas of possible segregation on campus for black students.

\(^2\) “BSA reflects black students’ identity and diversity”, by Foon Rhee, The Chronicle, Tuesday, February 14, 1984, Black History at Duke Reference Collection, University Archives, Duke University. This article notes the low participation in the Black Student Alliance by black students. A student asks, “What would it take to get all 250 black students here?” after less than 50 black students attend an observance of Black Solidarity Day. This is reminiscent of the fact that not all black students participated in the Allen-Building sit-in.

\(^3\) “Black Student Alliance”, February 16, 1979, Black History at Duke Reference Collection, University Archives, Duke University. This report, lays out thirteen demands that the Black Student Alliance (the successor of the Afro-American Society) feels are important to Black Students.

\(^4\) “Black Studies at Duke University”, 1971-1972, Black History at Duke Reference Collection, University Archives, Duke University. This pamphlet for the Black Studies department says, “We recognize oppression and the struggle for freedom as central themes of the experience and concerns of Black people. We regard both theory and practice as essential and their union and interconnection necessary to the study of Black America. It should also be noted that while admitting the relevance of other offerings, the faculty of Black Studies recognize these courses as properly comprising ‘Black Studies’”. Oppression and struggle, like militancy, became key
students at Duke has been mostly passive. Since the university will not do more to advocate on behalf of black students, black students continue to pick up this burden, often at the expense of their grades and social well-being. In May of 2006, Duke University compiled its findings on the academic and social environment for undergraduate students in *The Campus Life and Learning Project: A Report on the First Two College Years*. The report collected information on an array of topics including racial makeup of students’ high-schools and neighborhoods before coming to Duke, students’ expectations in coming to Duke, and the financial status of student’s families. These statistics were then disaggregated by race and gender. Two important statistics to note are: (1) Black students ranked their race-ethnic identity as being more important to them than other racial groups and (2) the average GPA for black students at the end of two years is 2.97, the lowest of the five racial groups sampled. The words of the justices in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* given earlier suggest one correlation between these two statistics. The justices said, “To separate [black students] from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely to be undone.” Although desegregation was a positive first-step in giving black Americans equal status in society, the process of moving components of the black identity. The Black Studies department was finally realized in the Fall of 2006.

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5 Brochure with Address from Terry Sanford, 1984-1985, Black History at Duke Reference Collection, University Archives, Duke University. President Terry Sanford encourages black students to advocate for black students. “Students must help attract students.” President Sanford also writes, “Faculty members must take the initiative in recruiting black faculty members. There are administrative incentives offered to academic departments to facilitate the recruitment of black faculty members, and the efforts are constantly monitored”. However, he declines the administrative responsibility of advocating on behalf of blacks. “It should be noted that the climate of race relations cannot be delegated to the administration. Deans and other University officers must lead, but the collective attitudes and conduct of individual students are the eventual forces that will control”. This language echoes that of the judges in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling who felt the races should reconcile their own differences without a legislative mandate.
black bodies into schools did not move black bodies into the focal point of material content. To relate this statement back to the Campus Life and Learning Project, black students may have had equal opportunity to study at the university, but their preparation for citizenship in the real-world will not include a discussion of the history of blacks or speak to their present status in society absent some curricular reform. How long must black students unjustly have “their hearts and minds” affected in this way, “unlikely to be undone”? The Department of Black Studies was departmentalized in the Fall of 2006. If this is any indication of the speed of administrative redress of the wrongs towards its black students, several more generations will pass before their burden is lifted.
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