



Fall

Report

AFEE

2016



ACADEMIC FACULTY ENHANCEMENT AND ENRICHMENT (AFEE) REPORT

Dr. Msia Kibona Clark (African Studies)
Dr. Lila Ammons (Afro American Studies)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This proposal sought to enhance the engagement of Howard University students with the use of social media in social and political change in Africa. We did this by inviting Kealeboga Ramaru, an activist/organizer from the #RhodesMustFall & #FeesMustFall movement in Cape Town, to campus to engage with HU students.

The project was a partnership between the Departments of African Studies and Afro American Studies, and was generously funded by the Center for African Studies at Howard University.

The project was also done in partnership with the Africa World Now Project and faculty at the Department of History and Political Science at Montgomery College. The project included the following activities with Ms. Ramaru

- Three workshops with students in AFST 107
- Two guest lectures in AFRO 101
- A guest lecture in the Department of History and Political Science at Montgomery College
- An interview with Africa World Now (WPFW)
- A panel discussion with Melina Abdullah of #BlackLivesMatter and Nana Brantao on Black activism in South Africa and the U.S.

This report will next discuss the various activities undertaken with this project (pages 2-6), the project's accomplishments (page 7), student benefits (pages 8-10), and suggestion for further implementing this project (page 11).

WORKSHOPS

Seven students in the African Studies course, Social Media and Political Change in Africa (AFST 107), participated in three workshops with Ms. Ramaru. They first learned about the history of #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall. Ms. Ramaru discussed the planning and physical and emotional challenges that went into organizing these movements at the University of Cape Town. Students learned about the history of the racial and economic dynamics of South African culture that gave birth to these movements. They also worked with Ms. Ramaru in planning their own social justice campaigns, which was their semester project. They went through the steps of their campaigns, including articulating clear long term and short term goals, and coming up with effective campaign tactics that



Student projects:

- * Police brutality in the U.S.
- * Youth unemployment
- * The mining industry in South Africa



Student projects:

- * Police brutality in South Africa
- * Female genital cutting



Guest Lectures & Appearances

Ms. Ramaru conducted three lectures during her visit. Two were given to students in two different Afro American Studies courses at Howard University. Ms. Ramaru also delivered a guest lecture in an African History course taught by Dr, Gnaka Lagoke at Montgomery College in Rockville, MD. Ms. Ramaru also visited the Zulu language course at Howard University. Ms. Ramaru was also the guest on the Africa Now radio program hosted by Mwiza Munthali on WPFW, a project of the Africa World Now Project



November 29, 2016 Panel Discussion



The panel discussion on Black activism in South Africa and the United States was held on November 29 on Howard University's campus, in the Browsing Room inside Founder Library. The event was attended by over sixty Howard University students, faculty, and community members. Students in AFST 107 helped to plan and organize the event. The students:

- Designed and distributed the flyers for the program
- Designed and printed the program for the panel discussion
- Distributed the spring 2017 African Studies & Afro American Studies course listings to the audience
- Designed and printed certificates of appreciation for the three panel participants
- Chose and packaged gifts for the three panel participants
- Helped usher the event
- Wrote an article in the Hilltop covering the event





PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The initial goal of this grant was to allow the AFST 107 course to become an opportunity for students to engage with student activists on the ground. We hoped to develop a model in which the course would include engagements with student activists in Africa.

We succeeded in doing this, and modified the goal to include a cross-listed course between the Departments of African Studies and Afro American Studies that would include, as part of the curriculum, engagement with activists on the ground.

The project also was successful in engaging the community. Not only did the Africa World Now project come on board to co-sponsor the final event, students groups and community organizations were involved. The student group Gentlemen of Drew co-sponsored the final event and members of the DMV chapter of Black Lives Matter were in attendance at the final event.

The project also benefitted students in the attending the guest lectures Ms. Ramaru conducted at both Howard University and Montgomery College. Students and faculty of the African History course at Montgomery College attended the final event and indicated their excitement over learning about the activities of student activists in South Africa.

STUDENT BENEFITS

Students really responded well to the workshops, guest lecture, and the final program. Students were engaged in the lectures by asking questions and following up with Ms. Ramau. For many students, it was their first exposure to the student movements happening in South Africa, for others it was their only opportunity to hear first hand from someone who was involved in the student protests in South Africa from their inception. Students were able to see the clear connections between the student protests in South Africa, and movements for Black lives here in the United States.

The final program on November 29th further connected the relationships between fights for racial justice and decolonizing the university space. In a 2016 article entitled “Re-viewing Studies on Africa, #Black Lives Matter, and Envisioning the Future of African Studies” by Dr. Akosua Adomako Ampofo, Dr. Ampofo argues that both #Rhodes Must Fall and #Black Lives Matter have missions that speak to global conditions under which Black bodies exist. According to Ampofo “both movements illustrate the extent to which today’s Black (and some White) students expect the university to become a decolonized space, and what they are willing to do to see this happen”. Having this dialogue occur as Howard University strengthened that argument.

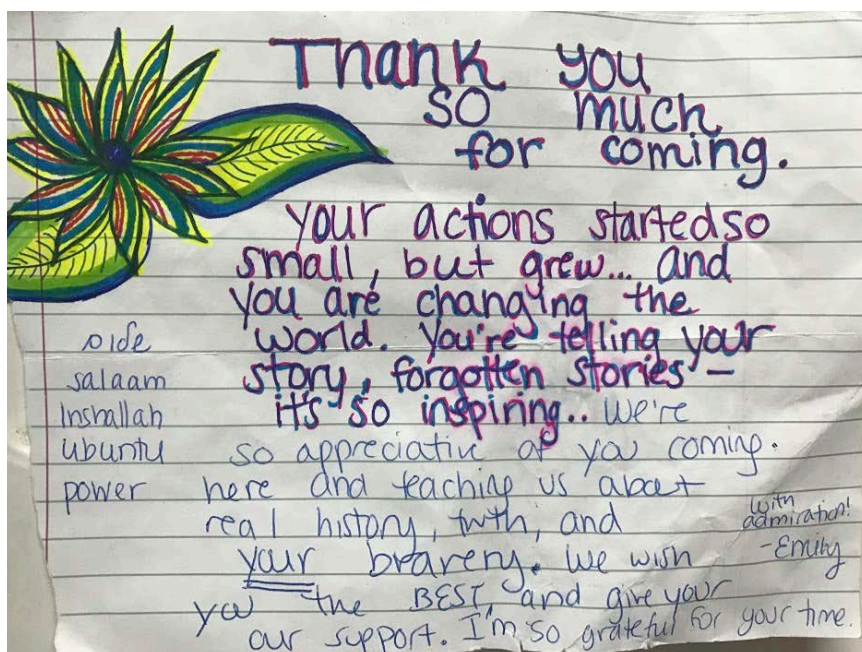
The project also contributed the curriculum in the AFST 107 course, as well as the overall undergraduate curriculum of our undergraduate program by adding an additional emphasis on activism, as well as the contemporary application of social justice theories in Africa.

Ms. Ramaru was also able to conduct an advising session with a PhD student in the Department of African Studies doing research related to queer identities in South Africa.

"I really enjoyed the different perspective that the Black Lives Matter and Fees Must Fall workshop provided because it shows how similar movements can be across continents. One of the most important things that I realized in activism is that things do not usually go as planned, but it is important to be flexible and willing to take on the work without much support from others. The most important thing that Keaboga stated was the importance of checking in with others to make sure that their well being isn't compromised. This was a well put together informative program and I would definitely attend it again."

– Claice Jackson (African Studies minor)

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



Letter to Ms. Ramaru from student at Montgomery College

PROPOSED FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION

The project was successful and allowed us to consider possibilities for its further integration into the curriculum in both the African Studies and Afro American Studies Departments.

We are proposing the creation of a cross-listed course in the Departments of African Studies and Afro American Studies. The proposal would entail changing the name of the African Studies course, Social Media and Political Change in Africa, to Social Media and Political Change in Africa and the U.S. We would cross list it with a new course being created with the same name in the Department of Afro American Studies. The course would be offered each fall.

We propose that the course include funding through the AFEE for an activist-in-residence. This would allow us to deepen our students understanding social justice and social change in Africa, and allowing them to engage with activists on the ground. Students would also learn effective organizing tools for those interested in working as activists or community organizers. The activist-in-residence would conduct 1-month workshops and work with students in the class on their campaign projects. The semester would culminate in a panel discussion on social activism in the U.S. and in Africa.



CLOSING

We would like to express appreciation for the funding and support of the Center for African Studies. We would also like to express appreciation for the support from the Department of African Studies, the Department of Afro American Studies, and the Africa World Now Project.

Thank you

Dr. Msia Clark and Dr. Lila Ammons