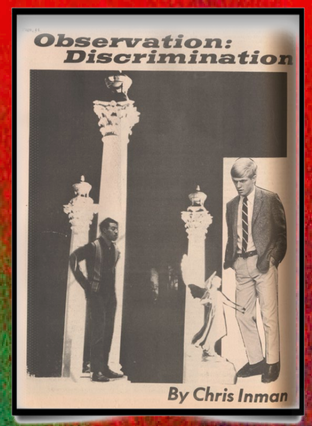
The African American Studies Program

1

Initial planning for the then titled Afro-American Studies minor started at Ball State in 1965. The establishment of a formal program was a group effort championed among the Afro-American Student Union, faculty, and administrators of the eventual Special Programs House.



Daily News Article (1968) by Chris Inman covering the walkout

2

On February 8, 1968, tensions came to a boiling point and 50 Black students coordinated a walkout during then President Emens' farewell address. Students were protesting the university's inaction and disregard of racial problems at Ball State.

Afro-American Student Union Officers (1971)

Special Programs House Associate Director Robert Coatie assisting students (1974)

Dwight Hoover (right) accepting a journalism award (1969)

3

In March 1970, the new interdepartmental minor in Afro-American Studies was approved. Professor Dwight Hoover, History, taught one of the first classes included in the minor: HIST 420: "The Negro American". By 1977, Dr. Hoover was serving as acting director of the program. He retired in 1991.

4

The program's expansion was delayed in 2010 when key faculty leading the program retired. In 2015, Dr. Simon Balto joined the History Department with a mission to bring back the minor now titled African American Studies. He later left the university in 2018.

Simon Balto (2018)

Emily Rutter (2018)

Kiesha Warren-Gordon (2023)

Angela Davis speaking at Emens Auditorium on September 22, 2017.

5

A visit from speaker, legendary activist, academic and author Dr. Angela Davis on "Institutional Racism in the Penal and Criminal Justice System" marked the relaunch of the program in 2017.

6

Dr. Kiesha Warren-Gordon, Professor of Criminal Justice and Criminology, became co-director in 2018 alongside Dr. Emily Rutter, now Associate Dean of the Honors College. In 2022, Dr. Rutter transitioned from her leadership role with the program and Dr. Warren-Gordon assumed full director status.

Included images courtesy of the Ball State University Digital Media Repository and Ball State Photoshelter

The Women's and Gender Studies Program

1

In the summer of 1971, the Ball State history department sponsored "Adam's Angry Rib: Women on the Move, a series of films and presentations. The interest and attention received from the events triggered the move towards Ball State's own women's studies program.

Dr. Althea Stoeckel and Mr. Ross Johnson, then the university archivist, examining documents, circa 1970s

3

In 1974 the Women's Studies Committee was formed and work on the development of a minor started the following year with Althea Stoeckel, History, as chair. The Women's Studies minor was approved in 1980.

Left to Right: Anne Szopa, Kim Jones-Owen, Betty Newcomb, and Sharon Seager (2002)

2

The first women's studies course, ID 210, was introduced in the spring of 1972. It was co-taught by Betty Newcomb, English, Sharon Seager, History, and Marie Vogel, Sociology.

4

Program Directors that cemented our foundation at the University starting in 1991 were Irene Goldman, Sharon Seager, and Kim Jones-Owen.

Dr. Irene Goldman presents, "The Feminist in the Classroom," (1992)

5

The Women's Studies major launched in 2004.

A scrapbook page from 2004 with pictures of the Women's Studies major celebration party. Program Director Kim Jones-Owen and Associate Director Julee Rosser are pictured in the top right.

Lisa Pellerin (2018)

6

The program was re-organized in 2009 and a new director, Dr. Lisa Pellerin, Associate Professor of Sociology, was appointed that summer.

Spring 2018 Class Poses with Dr. Pellerin after ceremony

7

Our largest graduating class so far of majors (10) and minors (29) occurred in Spring 2018.

Gloria Steinem speaking during Women's Week in the Student Center Ballroom (2019)

8

In 2019, Gloria Steinem returned to speak during Women's Week. She was also a keynote speaker in 2002. The first Women's Week programming was held in April of 1984.

Original promotional button for Women's Week (2002)

Elizabeth Agnew (2022)

9

Dr. Pellerin ended her time as program director in summer 2020. Dr. Elizabeth Agnew, Professor of Religious Studies, has served as the director since mid-2020.

Included images courtesy of the Ball State University Digital Media Repository, Ball State Photoshelter, and the WGS Archives