

Evergreen Valley College

AFFIRM Program Review

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Summary of the Program

AFFIRM (Academic Force For Inspiration, Retention and Matriculation) originated with five African American faculty members in the early 1980's in an attempt to address the widespread educational crisis, specifically pertaining to African American students and their low college success rates. After much discussion, they decided that an academic program, with a strong student support component, would be the kind of comprehensive educational vehicle needed to provide the services required for the African American student population at Evergreen Valley College. The program's philosophy is that the classroom experience must be rewarding to students and that they should be exposed to and/or involved in a variety of specialized learning strategies and supportive learning environments. The foundation of AFFIRM rests on the hypothesis that students' perceptions of themselves profoundly influence their performance in any academic situation. Thus, students with positive feelings about themselves, both personal and academic, are more likely to succeed, even though they may possess requisite skills. Therefore, the major focus of AFFIRM is to assist African American students in developing positive self-images as successful college students while providing them with the opportunity to acquire a solid foundation of basic skills in a supportive environment.

Part A: Overview of Program

1. Identify your program/department's Commitments to Action (CTA's) for this year.

AFFIRM Program Commitments to Action 2010-2011:

- A. Student Centered
 - 1. Provide Personal Statement and Scholarship Workshops
 - 2. Re-launch AFFIRM Mentorship Program
- B. Community Engagement
 - 1. Make visits to community organizations and local high schools to promote AFFIRM and EVC
 - 2. Bring community leaders and organizations to the EVC community
- C. Organizational Transformation
 - 1. Serve on college standing committees
- D. Faculty Development
 - 1. Host a retreat for AFFIRM faculty and staff to share resources and ideas on student achievement, motivation, and retention.

AFFIRM Program Commitments to Action 2009-2010:

- A. Student Centered
 - 1. Host and participate in Umoja Community Conference
- B. Community Engagement
 - 1. Make visits to community organizations and local high schools to promote AFFIRM and EVC
- C. Organizational Transformation
 - 1. Serve on college standing committees
- D. Faculty Development
 - 1. Provide new faculty with mentors drawn from existing AFFIRM administration, faculty, and staff.

2. Please explain how your program's CTA's are aligned with the goals of the College. How does your program help the College fulfill its Mission, Strategic initiatives, and Commitments to Action (CTA's)?

Evergreen Valley College Mission

With student learning as our primary focus, Evergreen Valley College's mission is to empower students to expand their human potential and to succeed in a global, multicultural society. We prepare students of all ages and backgrounds for balanced and productive lives, so they can ultimately improve the workforce and quality of life in our communities.

AFFIRM Mission

The mission of the AFFIRM Program is to successfully address the educational needs of African American students by providing academic and support services that will significantly increase their graduation and transfer rates.

3. Please state at least three recent accomplishments for your program which show how it contributes to the College's success.

Black History Month Events:

What is the purpose of Black History Month Events?

The purpose of Black History Month Events is to celebrate the African American community and its many contributions to American culture, tradition, and history.

Upon completion of February 2011, participating students, staff, and faculty learned the following according to each event:

1. *A Wake Up Call: Black Health Care Fair*
 - a. Raise awareness of specific genetic influences associated with the African American community in terms of its increased risk for diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, cancer, and stroke.
 - b. Address our ongoing interest in the health and well being of African Americans and in the health disparities that affect specific populations.
2. BHM Movie Panel Discussion
 - a. Increase knowledge of gender relations in the African American community.
 - b. Endorse the community empowerment of African American women.
 - c. Encourage critical thinking while assessing the media's representation of African Americans.
3. You and the SJPD—Word up from the IPA
 - a. Increase awareness through accountability and forge a stronger relationship between the San Jose Police Department and the community it serves.
 - b. Offer independent oversight of and instill confidence in the complaint process through objective review of police misconduct investigations.
4. BHM Trivia Competition
 - a. Demonstrate an understanding of African American history, culture, and traditions
 - b. Increase the knowledge of SJECCD African American students about their history
5. An Evening of Inspiration
 - a. To provide the Evergreen African American campus community opportunities to interact with the Greater San Jose African American community
 - b. To share cultural practices and display talents of the Evergreen African American campus community with the San Jose community.
6. BHM Essay Contest
 - a. Demonstrate an understanding of African American history and the impact certain figures of history have on students' lives.
 - b. To encourage and reward writing excellence.

African American Males Rites of Passage:

What is the purpose of African American Males Rites of Passage?

The purpose of African American Males Rites of Passage is to introduce the basic principles of leadership, accountability, awareness and critical thinking. These meetings are designed to develop a higher level of scholarly ideals and student driven involvement. AFFIRM faculty members provide instruction in group dynamics, problem analysis, strategic planning, finance management and guidelines to effective leadership. Students participating in this program will also:

1. Gain practice and improve leadership skills in a variety of situations, structured and unstructured, planned and unplanned.
2. Develop analytical and critical perspectives regarding the responsibilities, choices and limitations of effective leadership.
3. Increase awareness and understanding of factors critical to various leadership styles and the communication process, specifically as it applies to students on a multi-cultural campus.

AFFIRM Mentorship Program:

The main focus of the AFFIRM Mentoring Program is to promote retention, motivation and success of African-American students towards their overall educational and career goals. In addition, the mentoring experience will:

1. Provide opportunities for interaction with positive role-models and introduce opportunities for understanding the prerequisites for educational and professional fields.
2. Nurture a sense of community service and commitment among students through their interaction with professional role-models.
3. Aid in the students' academic, personal and social development.

4. State the goals and focus of this department/program and explain how the program contributes to the mission, comprehensive academic offerings, and priorities of the College and District.

AFFIRM Program Focus

The AFFIRM Program is based on the need for and value of African-American role models as key components of the teaching and learning process for our students. In order to increase students' cultural awareness, academic proficiency, and self-efficacy it is important to have African American faculty and staff serve as the guiding force in mentoring and providing direction in our students' academic journey. We also believe that an African American focused curriculum is crucial to the overall success of our program. Therefore, by empowering our students both academically and culturally, AFFIRM helps them maximize their human potential and prepares them for the future.

AFFIRM Program Goals

1. To successfully matriculate and retain African American students
2. To enable African American students to successfully complete the AFFIRM English, Math, Chemistry, Political Science, and Guidance courses
3. To increase the number of African American students who graduate with an Associate of Arts or Associate of Sciences degree
4. To increase the number of African American students who transfer to four-year universities

5. Identify current student demographics. If there are recent changes in student demographics, explain how the program is addressing these changes.

AFFIRM Data for Fall 2011

1. Total number of students: 334
2. Total number of African American students: 214
3. Percentage of African American students: 64%

4. Number of African American males: 83
5. Percentage of African American males: 25%
6. Number of African American females: 131
7. Percentage of African American females: 39%

Students Served

AFFIRM serves approximately 54% of the African American students at Evergreen Valley College through its counseling, courses, mentoring, and extracurricular activities. For example, for Fall 2011:

- Students enrolled in AFFIRM classes: 193
- Students served by the AFFIRM Counselor: 291
- Students served by the in-class AFFIRM Math Tutor: 9
- Students who met with AFFIRM mentors: 35
- Students participating in AFFIRM Student Organizations: African American Males Rites of Passage and Black Student Union: 25
- Students attending AFFIRM workshops on essay writing for college admission and scholarships, financial literacy, career preparation, and major exploration: 50

6. Identify enrollment patterns of the department/program in the last 6 years and provide an analysis of any notable trends or patterns.

1. AFFIRM typically offers courses in the Spring, Summer, and Fall. However, AFFIRM did not offer any courses during Summer 2011 due to lack of funding. During the regular semester, AFFIRM offers:

English 341, Sentence/Paragraph Development (Summer Only)

English 330, Improvement of Writing

English 104, Fundamentals of Composition

English 1A, English Composition

Math 11A, Elementary Algebra (Fall Only)

Math 13, Intermediate Algebra (Spring Only)

Guidance 85, Blueprint for Success (Fall Only)

Chemistry 15, Fundamentals of Chemistry

Political Science 1, Politics and Government in America

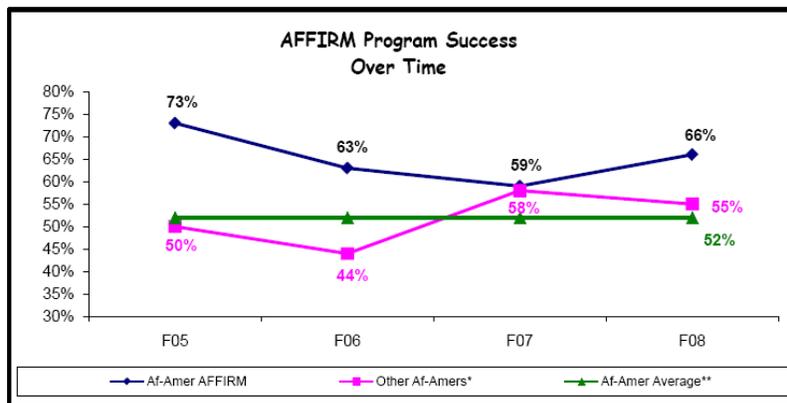
2. The percentage of African American students enrolled in AFFIRM courses has remained constant from 24% to 36%.

3. The ratio of African American female students, ranging from 49%-58%, to African American male students ranging from 42%-51%, has constant.

7. Identify department/program productivity (WSCH/FTEF).

8. Identify student success rate and patterns within the department/program paying particular attention to our college's target groups.

According to the District Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness (RIE), African American students enrolled in AFFIRM courses have demonstrated higher success rates than African American students enrolled in non-AFFIRM courses. This is clearly depicted in the graph below which highlights the overall success of AFFIRM from Fall 2005 to Fall 2008.



9. If the program utilizes advisory boards and/or professional organizations, describe their roles.

The AFFIRM Advisory Committee (AAC) strives meet the needs of all African American students, faculty, and staff members as well as support the surrounding African American community. The AAC is composed of administrators, faculty, and staff who, with the help of various community based organizations and leaders, work towards increasing the enrollment, academic performance, and retention of African American students at Evergreen Valley College.

PART B: Curriculum

AFFIRM serves approximately 46% of the African American students enrolled in AFFIRM English, math, science, political science, and guidance courses. Each AFFIRM course is designed to engage and enrich the academic experience of African American students by infusing culturally specific pedagogy into the course material. This is accomplished by the dedicated AFFIRM faculty who strive to foster excellence within their African American students.

AFFIRM ENGLISH

English 341 is a developmental course three levels below the transfer level English 1A class; it is a credit/no credit course and has no departmental final requirement. At this level of the English/Reading sequence at EVC, English

341 meets students' needs by reviewing basic and fundamental reading and writing concepts at the sentence and paragraph level. This class is designed to help students develop competence in writing standard English sentences and paragraphs. In this class students explore the writing process through stages (pre-writing, writing, re-writing & editing); they review the mechanics of the English language by studying grammar and punctuation; lastly, they also improve their lexicons with college level readings and vocabulary exercises. Students practice writing through regular in-class reading responses, current events article summary-response assignments, and less structured journal free-writes. Students submit a portfolio of their best-written work on the last day of summer session.

The AFFIRM English 341 class stays current in the discipline by continuous reassessment and revising of course material and content. Current events, contemporary themes and relevant social issues are also integrated into the class through lectures, films, course reading material, discussion topics and writing assignments. Pertinence and relevancy are also maintained in this course with the use of multimedia technology to not only instruct, but to engage students. AFFIRM staff and faculty often meet formally and informally to strategize together on ways of maintaining relevant and transformative pedagogies for our courses.

In lieu of the traditional English departmental final, AFFIRM English 341 students submit portfolios. The portfolio includes eight of their favorite and strongest paragraph narratives as well as a student profile modeled after actual student profiles in the textbook for the course. Portfolios positively impact AFFIRM 341 student learning and success because it assesses student progress and student learning objectives comprehensively; the portfolio also allows students to connect their own college experience to a larger academic community of students—those students featured in the textbook for the class.

Plans for future curricular development of the AFFIRM English 341 may include having more collaboration with other AFFIRM classes; collaborative activities would be centered on increasing the academic success of students through community building, social networking and mentorship. Another possible enhancement of the course would include inviting important campus wide EVC speakers to the class to provide brief, but vital information about college resources (i.e. counselors from the writing center, financial aid, admissions and records and representatives from student organizations).

AFFIRM English 330 (Improvement of Writing) is a basic skills course, designed to assist the developing writer with the rudimentary fundamentals of composition: sentence structure, paragraph development, and lastly, essay composition. The AFFIRM course meets the needs of the beginning college writer in several ways. Placing emphasis on the writing process as the central most important element of composition, demonstrates for the beginning writer that writing is indeed a process, and requires a willingness to invest in the process as a means to achieve college-level composition, which is necessary for a positive outcome. To utilize this process, students must read, comprehend, and then respond to essays and other forms of writing.

The incorporation of literature and other material that highlight the African-American experience serves to underscore the importance of cultural awareness and history. The award winning documentary "Eyes on the Prize," a film series that chronicles the civil rights movement in America, offers AFFIRM 330 students the opportunity to view actual footage from one of the most important periods in black history. We then use this as a basis for discussion, group exercises, and ultimately, writing assignments that require analytical abilities either individually or collectively. When AFFIRM students learn about the Little Rock Nine, or SNCC (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee), and realize that youths (many of them teenagers like our students) can play an important role in securing civil rights, they can begin to put things in the proper context. This also enables them to respond in writing with honesty, and a sincere appreciation for "real people"—not just names in a book.

At two levels below transfer-level composition (1A), 330 encourages and assists students with becoming comfortable with the writing process, and also with developing confidence in attempting the various tasks that are part of the course curriculum. Because the ultimate goal is to cultivate success in 104, and then 1A respectively, 330 addresses the needs of the discipline of composition in that it lays the foundation on which writing proficiency can be built. Over the course of the semester, students will write three out-of-class essays, employing the multiple-draft method that is stressed in class. Students submit rough drafts, and are then given peer and/or instructor feedback during lecture/lab before completing the final draft. It is this revision process that reinforces a student's desire to produce the "best essay possible."

In terms of class structure, AFFIRM English 330 consists of lecture and lab with both components taught by one AFFIRM instructor. This format is extremely effective as it promotes a sense of stability and consistency for both the student and the instructor. During lecture we cover writing theory, emphasizing the writing process. Various readings from the required text and/or other sources allow us to explore style, format, substance, and meaning. The lab component then allows students to complete additional hands-on work, as well as the opportunity to work on grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc., to improve their writing. Practice. Lab is also an ideal opportunity for team exercises that give students a chance to collaborate on figuring out a solution to a problem (i.e. argument readings). To supplement the instruction received in 330, students also have the option to enroll in a second lab that is operated by the EVC Writing Center, and taught by various EVC English instructors. The AFFIRM 330 lab often uses assignments that are aligned with those of the Writing Center lab so that students who elect to take the additional lab can have some assurance of consistency.

There are areas where the AFFIRM English 330 course differs from non-AFFIRM 330:

- 1) There is a bonding process that can occur when students spend lecture AND lab together consistently with the same instructor. As a result, a sense of "team" is cultivated among the students.
- 2) Because I am reading their compositions regularly, and observing their work habits, I am able to identify challenge areas, and provide feedback that is appropriate to the nature of the issue.
- 3) Teaching to a class of mostly students of color affords me the opportunity to introduce a curriculum that lets them see themselves more than they likely would in a non-AFFIRM 330 course. Aside from the African-American students that AFFIRM 330 seeks to serve, Latino and Asian students often make up a sizeable presence in AFFIRM courses. It is worth noting that the number of South Asian students in AFFIRM courses has also risen steadily. And so I feel it is important to use a curriculum that reflects the student population of my classes.

AFFIRM English 330 strives to remain current through continued evaluation of course content (including materials used), and assessment of outcomes. The AFFIRM Program regularly collects data each semester to evaluate outcomes as they relate to AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM students in our courses. Information pertaining to department examination scores, final course grades, and how these break down across the spectrum of students enrolled (AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM, African-American students and non-African-American students, etc.) are some areas that the AFFIRM program assesses on a continual basis for efficacy.

For my part as an AFFIRM instructor, remaining current might employ some or all of the following:

- 1) Observation of varying learning styles so that I can tailor the curriculum—and my teaching style—accordingly.
- 2) Interaction with my peers and fellow instructors to remain connected to current models of teaching and methodology. Also, feedback from peers is helpful.
- 3) Regular review of outcomes to ensure that my teaching is correctly aligned with varying student levels of ability.
- 4) Regular survey of texts and other materials to determine timeliness and appropriateness for course.

Other methods that I employ to remain current in AFFIRM 330 include the use of current events and human interest stories, as well as taking cues from students to determine what is important to them and if it can be incorporated into the curriculum—and usually it can. Often, our discussions relate to issues of social

justice/injustice, and there are usually a number of events in the news that provide sufficient material for discussion and writing in class.

To date, some innovative assignments and/or strategies used (and being used) in AFFIRM English 330 include:

- a) Research of themes identified in reading/discussion material, as well as historical reference relative to African-American history. Because, invariably, a good portion of our reading touches on the black experience, themes are often identified. These themes might include injustice, racism, gender-bias, depression, classism, invisibility, etc. Having students conduct very basic research, and then report on these themes has proven very effective in developing and improving critical thinking skills, and depth in writing.
- b) Tour of the EVC J.E.W.E.L. Center, the purpose of which is to reinforce historical background, and encourage cultural pride as well as respect for the contributions of African-Americans. Each semester, Lessie James, the Center's director, gives AFFIRM 330 students a tour, as well as an oral presentation on the significance of the many treasured items that the Center has on display. Students are then given an assignment (treasure hunt, etc.) that gives them the opportunity to explore the Center.
- c) "The Blackest Name" assignment: Students read a newspaper article published earlier this year that discusses historically African-American surnames (Washington, Jefferson, Johnson, etc.), and the impact that this has had—and continues to have—on blacks in America with "black-sounding names." Stereotyping, discrimination, loss of culture, and restitution are discussed. Students then compose argument/opinion essays in which they argue whether or not blacks in America with "black-sounding" last names should be entitled to compensation consisting of government-subsidized official name changes, to eliminate any problems that go with having these names.
- d) Solo/Team exercises: "Responding to Arguments." Students are given an argument essay to read and summarize. They must then figure out a solution to the problem that is presented in the reading. Next, they form groups where each member then tries to convince the other members that his/her solution is best. Ultimately, the group must reach consensus on a single solution. After deliberating, the class reconvenes as a whole, and each group presents its findings, explaining the rationale involved. Problem-solving, critical thinking, social interaction, and respect for differing views are just some of the benefits realized as a result of these exercises.

English 104 is a remedial English course one level below college entry-level English (English 1A). The major purpose of 104 is to develop college-level writing, reading and critical thinking skills that will allow students to organize and to express their ideas in a logical and articulate manner. The coursework is designed to help them compose written analysis of college-level fiction and non-fiction prose. "English 104 continues the development of students' literacy at the college level, with the use of oral language to support and reinforce the development of reading and writing. Emphasizing the connection between reading and writing, the course will include naturally sequenced, culturally relevant reading selections and writing assignments that allow students to examine their own experience and knowledge of topics and issues presented in the course. Recognizing the connection between oral and written language, English 104 will include peer discussion of reading assignments and essay drafts. Issues of the structure of English, at both the sentence and text (paragraph and essay) levels will be examined. Overall, English 104 will help students develop their communicative competence in an academic setting by actively engaging them in speaking, listening, reading, and writing activities... [By the end of the course], students will have written around 8-12 short essays, as well as rewrites, totaling at least 8,000 words in addition to the departmental final and class midterm essays. Compositions in English 104 must be expository or argumentative in nature rather than creative" (EVC, English 104 Course Outline).

In all English 104 classes, students must read, understand, and respond to short essays and other writings. Their extensive amount of college level reading must have included model writings for academic, general, or special audiences and relate in some way to composition assignments. These readings, our general 104 Course Outline dictates, should demonstrate the students' ability to read and comprehend beginning college level reading

materials and to use them as a springboard to their own writing.

In AFFIRM English 104 students will indicate comprehension of work that utilizes depth analysis, rhetoric and argumentation, thesis statements, topical discussion, evidence, research, figurative language and extended metaphor. These goals will be achieved through reading and writing about Junot Diaz' short story collection, *Drown*, viewing and writing analytically about the documentary *Black in Latin America*, as well as reading and writing about music and entertainment. Students will then be required to compose short take-home essays related to the readings and viewed material in order to develop specific essay composition skills. (For example, in Essay 2 students may read Diaz's story "Aguantando" and write a short essay where the main goal of the assignment is to write the best thesis possible).

In its basic format at EVC, English 104 is a class composed of a Lecture section that is taught by the class's primary instructor and a separate Lab section. It is required that students taking this class have either been placed into the class through Multiple Measures testing, or have successfully completed English 330 with CR and English 322 or 335 based on assessment. The co-requisite for this class is English 104L. The Lab section of the course is conducted through the campus Writing Center and led by Writing Center tutors and EVC instructors. As a whole, the purpose of these courses is to prepare students for college-level English classes that will be transferable to the CSU and UC universities, as well as 4-year colleges and universities generally.

English 104 AFFIRM is very different in that Lab and Lecture sections are combined within the class and thus the AFFIRM instructor is the course's sole instructor. The class takes on a more holistic character due to this alternative format.

- Unlike in the basic 104 course, in 104 AFFIRM, I (the instructor) hold extensive one-on-one meetings with students to review each essay they've turned in and for which they've received a grade.
- I do much more work on remedial exercises, especially grammar exercises that reinforce proper essay structure, syntax, subject-verb agreement, etc.
- I spend more time introducing, contextualizing and explaining class assignments. For example, during my introduction of Diaz's *Drown* I show my AFFIRM course the Dominican Republic/Haiti episode in *Black in Latin America* to contextualize the political situation, economic realities, racial tensions, immigration issues and narrative setting that the characters in the book (a Dominican-American family) are initially placed in.
- I teach more fiction by and about blacks and Latinos, the majority student-populations in my AFFIRM courses. In particular, I teach Diaz's work, the Jess B. Simple stories of Langston Hughes, and essays from theroot.com and *Chicken Bones Literary Journal: for Literary & Artistic African-American Themes*.

English 104 AFFIRM remains current through the continual reassessment of outcomes and re-vamping of course content. AFFIRM collects data on final class grades and Final Exam grades for AFFIRM students in AFFIRM courses, African-American students in AFFIRM courses and non-AFFIRM students in AFFIRM courses. Through analysis of this data, we continually assess the success of our classes and the validity of our pedagogy and AFFIRM's student placement and tutoring. I do not know what overall figures for all classes in all disciplines show, however I have noted that in my AFFIRM courses AFFIRM students have tended to get higher grades and higher Final Exam grades than non-AFFIRM students. Because AFFIRM serves both AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM students, such data analysis is perfect for assessing the impact not only of the AFFIRM course versus the basic course, but also for the assessment of the performance of AFFIRM students in AFFIRM courses (and, by extension, the helpfulness of the extra tutoring and mentorship that AFFIRM offers its student-members) versus the performance of non-AFFIRM students in the same courses.

I have also made sure to teach contemporary literature such as Diaz's *Drown* stories and the stories and essays of Victor LaValle, Jason Whitlock and other contemporary minority authors. The class is multi-media and utilizes a great deal of visual material, from documentary films on critical racial and social issues, to youtube and other internet clips on apt topics, to art objects such as Kara Walker's widely acclaimed silhouettes.

I also make sure to incorporate current news and events by reference to and use of articles from mainstream and alternative news sources, as well as African-American and popular-culture-themed blogs and websites, such as

theroot.com, popmatters.com, *Chicken Bones* and *Booker Rising*. Essay assignments and daily writing assignments that are not organized around teaching of the main text and its themes are organized around a general theme designed to be accessible to AFFIRM students and other 104 students. Some themes include "Entertainment", "Health" and "Employment".

Here are some examples of innovative assignments designed to inspire and teach both our AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM students taking English 104 AFFIRM:

- **ESSAY ASSIGNMENT:** The Cuba episode in Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s documentary *Black in Latin America* tells us of the history and current-day social reality of Cuba. Gates promotes the concept of "Cubanidad", the idea that Cubans see themselves as citizens of their nation more than members of a racial or ethnic group. "Cubanidad" is the concept of a colorblind society. On the other hand, Gates also exposes some of the racial inequalities in Cuba and shows how the Cubanidad concept makes it difficult to speak about or change these injustices. In a 1-2 page essay, please explain whether you think a colorblind America would lead to better or worse social relations than we have now. To support their arguments students should 1) Use personal opinion based on experience, and 2) Reference the last 25 minutes of the Cuba documentary (i.e., the parts about Cubanidad, racial discrimination, and Cuban hip-hop).
- **PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENT:** There will be a presentation assigned during the second half of the term. This project can be completed individually or in groups of 2-3 persons. The projects will use one or more specific essay composition skills in order to teach the class about an issue related to a "Music", "Visual Art", "Politics", "Environment", "Sports", "Fashion", or "Real-Life Decisions" theme. Students will basically teach the class about a composition concept and one of these themes for 5-10 minutes.
- **INTRODUCING THE BOOK:** Students should view the following short documentary film on the Washington Heights neighborhood in New York City to better understand the American setting of Junot Diaz's *Drown*. See link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYFTxYze12A&feature=related>
- **READING THE BOOK:** Please listen to the author of *Drown* read his short story "How to Date...". See link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cxqB7X1v77A>. What are the differences between simply reading the story to oneself and hearing it read by the author? Write about these differences.
- **LAYERED WRITING ASSIGNMENT:** Students should: 1) View the first image and do their best to describe what they see. Students should: 2) View the second image and classify and group the different features of the image. Students should: 3) View the third image and contextualize the image by writing about the political or cultural or historical things that the image makes them think of. Students should: 4) Write a thesis with three main points, describing, classifying and contextualizing any one of the three images.



Example of image:

In terms of class content, I plan to continue to update English 104 AFFIRM curriculum. In the near future, I will change the main text from Diaz's *Drown* to another, more contemporary text. (*Drown* was published in 1996). I plan to incorporate graphic novels into the readings for this class. I will also keep myself abreast of contemporary documentary films on critical race-theory and important social issues such as mass incarceration and the Occupy movement. I plan to use Byron Hurt's documentary *Hip-Hop Beyond Beats and Rhymes* as a major part of future 104 AFFIRM courses and to organize class assignments and essay work around the prevailing themes of that film, hip-hop, masculine identity, misogyny, and corporate influence on popular culture. The basic systems of assessment (daily writing assignments, take-home and in-class essays, a presentation project on essay composition

skills, and a Final Exam) will remain the same. I will continue to re-evaluate the class based on my experience as the instructor, on student evaluation of the class, and on AFFIRM grade records for AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM students.

AFFIRM has developed an across-the-board AFFIRM Attendance Policy for its classes. This policy has worked well and remains in effect in my AFFIRM courses. Similarly, my communication (as the instructor) with AFFIRM Counselor Caritha Anderson and AFFIRM Coordinator Flora Payne about specific student concerns and about students experiencing deficits in preparation and/or performance is very helpful in maintaining student discipline and strong student performance (especially where extra tutoring is required).

I plan to collaborate more with other AFFIRM instructors, the JEWEL program, and Ethnic Studies and African-American Culture and History instructors. The main method for this collaboration will be classroom visits where we can promote each other's classes and teach students in the AFFIRM classes in an interdisciplinary fashion about historical contexts, concepts and ideas that connect all the AFFIRM course material and African-Americanist classes in general.

I also plan to make AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM students in my English 104 AFFIRM course and other AFFIRM courses aware of AFFIRM's tutoring and mentorship programs and encourage their participation in these beneficial extra-curricular activities. AFFIRM not only offers students tutoring, which is helpful for AFFIRM students who are struggling, but also facilitates opportunities for AFFIRM student-members who perform well in their classes to peer tutor other students and to tutor and mentor students at public high schools and junior high schools in the East San Jose area through the Urban Champions and AVID programs.

English 104 AFFIRM is a remedial course. Students either test into the course through Multiple Measures placement, or matriculate into the course via successful completion of English 330 with CR and English 322 or 335 based on assessment. It carries no credits transferable to the CSU and UC systems.

English 1A is a college-level English course with credits transferable to CSU and UC universities and 4-year universities and colleges nationally. The major purpose of this course is to develop reading, writing and thinking skills that will allow students to think and to express their ideas in a logical manner. The course-work is designed to help students understand and analyze college-level expository prose. Students will read and indicate comprehension of work that utilizes figurative language, extended metaphor and symbolism, rhetoric and argumentation, thesis statements, topical discussion, evidence, research, etc. These goals will be achieved through the reading and viewing of literary and non-literary materials, the writing of multiple essays, including a research essay and an essay on a novel, homework and classwork assignments.

"English 1A is an essay-oriented course; therefore instructors regularly assign a variety of essay types, including argumentative essays, based on class instruction and reading. Students will practice writing processes (generate ideas, plan, organize, develop, draft, collaborate, globally revise, and edit content) to produce college level essays. In the course, the instructor will assign at least eight essays in the forms of both in-class (timed) essays and out of class (take home) essays to total eight-to-ten thousand words of finished writing, exclusive of drafts and revisions. Complex readings, consisting of at least twenty selections, depending on the length of the text, which emphasize expository and argument content, will be introduced for analysis, for use as examples of essay form, and as textual sources which may be included in student writing. The readings selected will be clearly divergent perspectives. The readings also will include useful examples of writings for general and special audiences.

"Every instructor will assign a research/documented essay (six page minimum) for all 1A students. This assignment, taught in stages with classroom support, requires effective use of paraphrase, quotation, summary, and synthesis; practice of library and research techniques, including use of the on-line and computing resources of the campus, also form a component of the research unit. This paper and all other student essays will be free of plagiarism. Techniques of college level writing at the whole essay, paragraph, and sentence levels are included in English 1A" (EVC, English 1A Course Outline).

Students have the option (but not the mandate, as opposed to the requirement in remedial English courses) to enroll in a lab section for English 1A, as well as 1B and 1C classes. This includes college-transfer-level English AFFIRM courses. English 1L is conducted concurrently with English 1A, 1B, or 1C. The goal of English 1L is to

support students by offering help with grammar, mechanics, style, research skills, and all steps of the composition process including prewriting, drafting, and revising.

English 1A AFFIRM is different from EVC's basic English 1A course not in terms of requirements or class format and schedule, but in terms of content.

- African-American literary texts and African diaspora literary texts are emphasized. Thus, in my AFFIRM 1A course we read and write essays about Haitian-American author Edwidge Danticat's short story "Children of the Sea". We read the essays of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Professor and culture critic Dr. John McWhorter. And we read *Waiting for the Barbarians* by South African novelist J.M. Coetzee. Students learn the historical contexts of these works, particularly the history of Haiti's slave revolution, founding and exploitation, and South Africa's similarly revolutionary history.
- The mandatory research essay takes on an issue specific to the urban, minority experience: Gentrification of blighted urban spaces. The work of a range of journalists, academics, researchers, community activists, homeowners, renters, homeless and displaced persons is used to teach the students about the omnipresence of this issue in urban environments and the major debates that surround it.

English 1A AFFIRM remains current through the continual reassessment of outcomes and re-vamping of course content. AFFIRM collects data on final class grades and Final Exam grades for AFFIRM students in AFFIRM courses, African-American students in AFFIRM courses and non-AFFIRM students in AFFIRM courses. Through analysis of this data, we continually assess the success of our classes and the validity of our pedagogy and AFFIRM's student placement and tutoring. I do not know what overall figures for all classes in all disciplines show, however I have noted that in my AFFIRM courses AFFIRM students have tended to get higher grades and higher Final Exam grades than non-AFFIRM students. Because AFFIRM serves both AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM students, such data analysis is perfect for assessing the impact not only of the AFFIRM course versus the basic course, but also for the assessment of the performance of AFFIRM students in AFFIRM courses (and, by extension, the helpfulness of the extra tutoring and mentorship that AFFIRM offers its student-members) versus the performance of non-AFFIRM students in the same courses.

I have also made sure to teach contemporary literature such as Danticat's "Children of the Sea" and John McWhorter's essay "The Cosmopolitan Tongue". Moreover, visual texts such as Tahrir Square activist Asmaa Mahfouz's famous vlog post, Majora Carter's 2006 TED talk "Greening the Ghetto" and the East Austin, Texas documentary film on gentrification made by the PODER group add necessary moral clarity, youthful vitality, minority perspective and freshness to the course. The class is very multi-media, fully incorporates Moodle in all its aspects, and utilizes a great deal of interview audio, art and other visual texts, documentary films and youtube and other internet clips.

I also make sure to incorporate current news and events by reference to and use of articles from mainstream and alternative news sources, as well as African-American and popular-culture-themed blogs and websites, such as theroot.com, popmatters.com, *Chicken Bones* and *Booker Rising*.

Here are some examples of innovative assignments designed to inspire and teach both our AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM students taking English 1A AFFIRM:

- **RESEARCH ESSAY ASSIGNMENT (GENTRIFICATION):** This essay will test your ability as a rhetorician and understanding of rhetoric as a tool for social justice, injustice, mass political persuasion and intellectual exploration. Please read the entirety of this document. The instructions are as follows: Imagine that you are a voter. (I trust that this will not take much imagination.) Before you, on the local election ballot is Proposition 555: For increased funding to gentrify the run-down, unsafe, under-developed downtown area through the conversion of old housing stock to high-rent loft space, a commercial district and green space for parks, murals, arts and recreation. This process of gentrification would require the demolition and "conversion" of foreclosed-on houses, structurally damaged and dilapidated homes, Section 8 housing and rent-controlled apartments for low-income residents. In a dialectic essay, explain why you would vote Yes or vote No for the ballot measure and what parts of the ballot measure you find most helpful and which you find most disadvantageous. As a synthesis you might explain in what ways you think this hypothetical urban area could be improved that would be fair to the people living there. As this

is a research essay, I have included in the body of this document essays and other materials in favor of gentrification/urban renewal, as well as much information that protests this process, which is a very real issue in the Bay Area and beyond. Please use this information that I've provided you, as well as four sources that you find on your own, to help you write your essay. Note that MLA citation procedures must be followed for all referenced sources...

- **UPDATING AN IDEA (NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE):** Students should view the following vlog post by one of the activists that began the 2011 "Arab Spring" revolt against the Egyptian government. How is Asmaa Mahfouz's non-violent resistance similar to or different than that described by Dr. King in the essay "Three Ways of Meeting Oppression"? How is it similar to or different than Kompe's response to the Haitian government in "Children of the Sea"? See link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgJlgMdsEuk>
- **MAKING AN IDEA ACCESSIBLE (SOCIAL INJUSTICE):** Whatever your issues with the American government, if you live in the U.S. currently you do not live under anything approaching the political tyranny of the truly oppressed people of this world. There is no police state here: For our first assignment today free write to me about a real-life, current-day issue and why it is not being addressed in popular culture. Tell me why an allegorical movie or novel or play would or would not improve that current-day problem.

In terms of class content, I plan to continue to update English 1A AFFIRM curriculum. In the near future, I will change the main texts in this course from Danticat's story and Coetzee's novel to other representative texts from contemporary African-American and African diaspora literature. I will also keep myself abreast of contemporary political and social issues and incorporate some of these issues, such as mass incarceration, budget cuts to education and the global Occupy protest movement, into the class work I assign. The basic systems of assessment (daily writing assignments, classroom discussion and debate, take-home and in-class essays, the research essay and Final Exam) will remain the same. I will continue to re-evaluate the class based on my experience as the instructor, on student evaluation of the class, and on AFFIRM grade records for AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM students.

AFFIRM has developed an across-the-board AFFIRM Attendance Policy for its classes. This policy has worked well and remains in effect in my AFFIRM courses. Similarly, my communication (as the instructor) with AFFIRM Counselor Caritha Anderson and AFFIRM Coordinator Flora Payne about specific student concerns and about students experiencing deficits in preparation and/or performance is very helpful in maintaining student discipline and strong student performance (especially where extra tutoring is required).

I plan to utilize my experience teaching on-line and hybrid courses and designing curriculum for such courses to eventually design an AFFIRM English 1A and/or 1B course. Such courses are popular and would enhance the notoriety and status of the AFFIRM program and our classes with the EVC student body. This increase in demand will allow AFFIRM staff and faculty to hold AFFIRM students to higher standards of attendance, punctuality and performance.

I plan to increase my collaboration with other AFFIRM instructors, the JEWEL program, and Ethnic Studies and African-American Culture and History instructors. The main method for this collaboration will be classroom visits where we can promote each other's classes and teach students in the AFFIRM classes in an interdisciplinary fashion about historical contexts, concepts and ideas that connect all the AFFIRM course material and African-Americanist classes in general.

I also plan to make AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM students in my English 1A AFFIRM course and other AFFIRM courses aware of AFFIRM's tutoring and mentorship programs and encourage their participation in these beneficial extra-curricular activities. AFFIRM not only offers students tutoring, which is helpful for AFFIRM students who are struggling, but also facilitates opportunities for AFFIRM student-members who perform well in their classes to peer tutor other students and to tutor and mentor students at public high schools and junior high schools in the East San Jose area through the Urban Champions and AVID programs.

English 1A AFFIRM is a college-level transferable course. This course is applicable to A.A. and A.S. degrees and is transferable to the CSU and UC universities, as well as 4-year colleges and universities nationally. Students either test into the course through Multiple Measures placement, or matriculate into the course via successful completion of English 104 and Reading 102.

English 1B is a second semester college composition course which emphasizes expository and argumentative writing directed toward analysis of ideas and concepts from a wide variety of literature. English 1B includes discussion of fiction, drama, poetry, the essay, and other expository prose--stressing critical reading in these genres. All English 1B students will take a Department Final which will be holistically scored by at least two faculty members and will represent 20% of their course grade. English 1B students must read 5 works of literature (poetry, drama, fiction) in addition to the essay. The extensive amount of college level reading must include example of writings for a variety of audiences. Students are expected to write 8-10 essays including re-writes totaling at least 8,000 words in addition to the departmental final and midterm essays.

The AFFIRM sponsored English 1B class engages diverse literary and expository texts which highlight themes of gender/race/sexuality oppression, social justice, multiculturalism, globalization, and education. Considerable course work is self-reflexive in that it encourages students to think critically about their own identity, education and acquisition of knowledge and information through interaction with peer groups, family institutions and academic institutions; this class meets the needs of students by allowing them to fulfill the 2nd semester composition G.E. requirement. It particularly meets the needs of AFFIRM students by engaging in topics and themes that directly relate to their socio-economic and cultural experiences and realities.

The AFFIRM sponsored English 1B class stays current in the discipline by continuous reassessment and revising of course material and content. Current events, contemporary themes and relevant social issues are also integrated into the class through lectures, films, course reading material, discussion topics and writing assignments. Pertinence and relevancy are also maintained in this course with the use of multimedia technology to not only instruct, but to engage students. AFFIRM staff and faculty often meet formally and informally to strategize together on ways of maintaining relevant and transformative pedagogies for our courses.

The AFFIRM sponsored English 1B class has had the opportunity to be a part of a innovative, cutting-edge and experimental pilot program involving collaboration with San Jose State University, McKinley Elementary School, and an educational, community based nonprofit CommUniversity. An end of the semester survey of the students highlighted the positive impact this special English 1B class had on them.

Plans for future curricular development of the AFFIRM sponsored English 1B may include having more collaboration with other AFFIRM classes; collaborative activities would be centered on increasing the academic success of students through community building, social networking, and mentorship. Establishing some sort of pen pal program or writing partnership between AFFIRM 1B students and AFFIRM 330 or 104 maybe a possibility. The AFFIRM sponsored English 1B class will continue to emphasize community engagement and service learning with innovative partnerships and strategies such as Writing Partners. Another possible curricular development could include taking English 1B students on a field trip to view a live theater or poetry performance on campus or somewhere in the wider local community; we could also have thespians, poets and creative writers visit future classes.

While there is not an **AFFIRM English 1C** Critical Thinking course, as with the 1B, AFFIRM sponsors an English 1C Critical Thinking course. This AFFIRM-sponsored English 1C Critical Thinking course, like all other 1C courses offered by the college, is applicable to A.A. and A.S. degrees and is specifically designed to meet the IGETC critical thinking requirement for the CSU and UC systems presents the elements of critical reasoning and logic. Students will learn to identify the basic structure of arguments and the ways people use language to fortify or to falsify arguments. Students will analyze and demonstrate these techniques by writing and critiquing essays and using research strategies. In my syllabus for this class, I address the philosophy that underpins my teaching of Critical Thinking courses in general: "It is my belief as an instructor, writer, reader and member of my community that critical thinking skills not only enhance one's educational and professional opportunities, but lead to a more

intelligent, curious, tolerant and safer society.”

Students have the option (but not the mandate, as with the requirement in remedial English courses) to enroll in a lab section for English 1C, as well as 1B and 1A classes. This includes college-transfer-level English AFFIRM courses. English 1L is conducted concurrently with English 1A, 1B, or 1C. The goal of English 1L is to support students by offering help with grammar, mechanics, style, research skills, and all steps of the composition process including prewriting, drafting, and revising.

AFFIRM-sponsored English 1C is different from EVC's basic English 1C course not in terms of course requirements or class format and schedule, but in terms of content.

Literature by and about African-Americans is emphasized, as are course themes that confront issues of social injustice, moral and ethical decision. The main fictive text used in the AFFIRM-sponsored 1C course that I teach is Walter Mosley's short story collection *always outnumbered, always outgunned*. Mosley's book functions by posing its main character, Socrates Fortlow, with a series of moral and ethical decisions that the class then critically investigates from multiple moral, ethical and expedient perspectives. We also read selected sections from former prosecuting attorney and current George Washington University Professor of Law Paul Butler's book *Let's Get Free: A Hip-Hop Theory of Justice*. The text advocates jury nullification in cases of non-violent drug offense as a means by which the American public can end mass incarceration. Arizona University Law Professor Brent White's essay "Underwater and Not Walking Away: Shame and Fear and the Social Management of the Housing Crisis" is also engaged, as is Professor Adolph Reed's argument for free higher education, "A GI Bill For Everyone".

In total, students write seven essays (of varying lengths) and perform two in-class panel presentations. The essays and panel presentations test students' comprehension and execution of a number of argumentative strategies: Basic Argument, Socratic Questioning, Socratic Negation, and Dialectic Argument. Such vital issues as "Ethics in Economics", "The Age of Mass Incarceration", "Drug Prohibition Debate" and "Education Reform" are engaged in these critical thinking assignments.

AFFIRM-sponsored English 1C remains current through the continual reassessment of outcomes and re-vamping of course content. AFFIRM collects data on final class grades and Final Exam grades for AFFIRM students and African-American students in AFFIRM courses and in AFFIRM-sponsored courses such as AFFIRM-sponsored English 1B and 1C courses. Through analysis of this data, AFFIRM staff and faculty continually assess the success of our classes and the validity of our pedagogical methods, as well as the effectiveness of AFFIRM's student placement and tutoring. I do not know what overall figures for all classes in all disciplines show, however I have noted that in my AFFIRM courses and in AFFIRM-sponsored English 1B and 1C that AFFIRM students and African-American students have tended to get higher grades and higher Final Exam grades than AFFIRM and African-American students taking the same classes in non-AFFIRM settings.

I have also made sure to teach contemporary literature such as Mosley's *always outnumbered, always outgunned* and Butler's *Let's Get Free: A Hip-Hop Theory of Justice*. Statistically current national demographic studies such as the American Human Development Project's *A Century Apart: New Measures of Well Being for U.S. Racial and Ethnic Groups* are also engaged. Moreover, visual texts such as Dr. Cornel West's explanation of the value of Socratic questioning, video of student protests against privatization of education and increased tuition in the United Kingdom, Chile and beyond, and President Ronald Reagan and First Lady Nancy Reagan's 1986 "Just Say No to Drugs" Public Service Announcement respectively articulate, contemporize and historicize the issues around which our class assignments are based. The class is multi-media and fully incorporates Moodle in all its aspects.

I also make sure to incorporate current news and events by reference to and use of articles from mainstream and alternative news sources, as well as African-American-themed blogs and websites, such as theroot.com and [Booker Rising](http://BookerRising.com).

Here are some examples of innovative assignments designed to inspire and teach both our AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM students taking AFFIRM-sponsored English 1C:

ESSAY ASSIGNMENT on BASIC ARGUMENT:

Write an essay of 2 to 4 pages in length concerning either Professor Brent White's central argument in "Underwater and Not Walking Away: Shame and Fear and the Social Management of the Housing Crisis" or the

moral and economic dilemmas faced by Socrates Fortlow in the short story "Equal Opportunity" or in the story "Midnight Meeting" (in Walter Mosley's *always outnumbered, always outgunned*).

TOPIC 1: Utilizing the statistics and rhetoric presented by Prof. White in pages 1-35 of his essay, form an argument that either supports or opposes the Law Professor's contention that 1) people who owe more on their homes than the current market-value of their homes should walk away from their debt obligations if it makes financial sense to do so and 2) that the reason that the overwhelming majority of homeowners in this situation do not do so is related to "social control agents" that dictate to them an illogical set of social and moral norms. Compose a detailed thesis that asserts your position and then in the body paragraphs support that thesis through reference to the text, to outside facts and statistics (if necessary), and to personal experience.

TOPIC 2: In the story "Equal Opportunity" (in Walter Mosley's *always outnumbered, always outgunned*) Socrates Fortlow must decide either to lie on his job application and get the job at the supermarket or to tell the truth about his criminal record and risk losing his job opportunity. In "Midnight Meeting", Socrates must decide either to participate in an act of illegal vigilante justice in order to remove the predator, Pettis, from his South Central neighborhood, or to abide by the law and allow Pettis to continue committing heinous acts.

Choose one story or the other and one dilemma or the other. With reference to Socrates' general situation and the particulars of the story in question, explain why Socrates should subvert basic morality by lying/becoming a vigilante, or why he should continue to follow the accepted norms of society.

Compose a detailed thesis that asserts your position and then in the body paragraphs support that thesis through reference to the text, to outside texts (if necessary), to social and/or legal standards, and to personal experience.

ESSAY ASSIGNMENT ON SOCRATIC ARGUMENTATION:

Please reference Professor Paul Butler's *Let's Get Free: A Hip-Hop Theory of Justice*, as well (optionally) as Gore Vidal's essay "Drugs" (available in our required text *Visions Across the Americas: Short Essays for Composition*), the relevant episodes in *always outnumbered, always outgunned* and (also optional) the pertinent materials on the Moodle class website in this 2-part essay. Essay instructions are as follows:

Essay 2, Part 1 (40 points)- Explain, in an essay utilizing the Socratic Method, whether you find it to be right or wrong and effective or ineffective for a jury, when they are asked to enforce, via a guilty verdict, an unjust law, to exercise jury nullification in order to invalidate the unjust law.

Essay 2, Part 2 (50 points)- Argue, using Socratic Method, that: A) All drug laws and penalties for possession and sale should remain as they are; or B) Marijuana should be decriminalized/legalized; or C) All currently illegal drugs should be either decriminalized or legalized.

ASSIGNMENT ON STATISTICAL CORRELATION AND CAUSATION:

Looking specifically at the American Human Development Project's *A Century Apart: New Measures of Well Being for U.S. Racial and Ethnic Groups* data for state-by-state well-being disparities within groups (page 5) and differences in life expectancy across groups (page 7), pick a statistical set and think about what statistics available in the study correlate to it and which statistical realities cause it. In other words, why, in your analysis (which will be based not on your opinions, but rather on the data you locate and reference in this study) do Asian-Americans live as long as they do? What factors are connected/ correlated to this fact? What factors cause it? The well-being of Native Americans in South Dakota is very poor compared to the well-being of Native Americans in California. What stats are correlated to this reality and which explain it? You don't have to focus on Native Americans or Asian Americans; just pick any of the data from page 5 or 7 and start there. Feel free to use information from pages 4 and 9, as well as anything else you find in the study to substantiate your claims. Now, go to our class's Moodle Forum: Go to the icon entitled "A Century Apart" and in an analytical, well-reasoned 2-3 paragraph statement with thesis and supports based on the statistics available in this study pick a statistical set and explain its correlative and causative factors. (As this is an open forum, please try not to offend and try not to be too easily offended. We want to take up the spirit of free academic inquiry and analysis here; nothing else.)

In terms of class content, I plan to continue to update AFFIRM-sponsored English 1C curriculum. I keep myself abreast of contemporary political and social issues and incorporate the most vital of these issues, such as mass incarceration, budget cuts to education and the global Occupy protest movement, into the class-work I assign. The

basic systems of assessment (take-home and in-class essays, panel presentations and the 1C Final Exam) will remain the same. I will continue to re-evaluate the class based on my experience as the instructor, on student evaluation of the class, and on AFFIRM grade records for AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM students.

Communication between AFFIRM instructors and AFFIRM staff, particularly with AFFIRM Counselor Caritha Anderson and AFFIRM Coordinator Flora Payne, about specific student concerns and about students experiencing deficits in preparation and/or performance is very helpful in maintaining student discipline and strong student performance (especially where extra tutoring is required).

I plan to utilize my experience teaching on-line and hybrid courses and designing curriculum for such courses to eventually design an AFFIRM-sponsored English 1C course. On-line courses are popular: They will enhance the notoriety and status of the AFFIRM program and AFFIRM classes with the EVC student body. This increase in demand will allow AFFIRM staff and faculty to hold AFFIRM students to higher standards of attendance, punctuality and performance.

I plan to increase my collaboration with other AFFIRM instructors, the JEWEL program, and Ethnic Studies and African-American Culture and History instructors. The main method for this collaboration will be classroom visits where we can promote each other's classes and teach students in an interdisciplinary fashion about historical contexts, concepts and ideas that connect all the AFFIRM and AFFIRM-sponsored course material.

I also plan to make AFFIRM and non-AFFIRM students in my AFFIRM and AFFIRM-sponsored courses aware of AFFIRM's tutoring and mentorship programs and encourage their participation in these beneficial extra-curricular activities. AFFIRM not only offers students tutoring, which is helpful for AFFIRM students who are struggling, but also facilitates opportunities for AFFIRM student-members who perform well in their classes to peer tutor other students and to tutor and mentor students at public high schools and junior high schools in the East San Jose area through the Urban Champions and AVID programs.

AFFIRM-sponsored English 1C is a college-level transferable course. The pre-requisite for the class is successful completion of English 1A.

AFFIRM Math

In **Math 11A** (Beginning Algebra), students cover topics including operations on real numbers and algebraic expressions, solving linear equations and inequalities, algebraic methods for solving application problems, graphing linear equations and inequalities, solving systems of linear equations, laws of exponents and operations on polynomials, factoring polynomials and solving quadratic equations by factoring, and operations on rational expressions and solving rational equations.

Math 13 (Intermediate Algebra) continues the Algebra sequence and is a prerequisite to college level math courses. It is required of students planning to transfer to CSU or UC systems. Intermediate Algebra reviews the first course in algebra and explores more deeply the real number system, properties of algebraic systems, absolute value in equations and inequalities, complex numbers, properties of rational exponents and logarithms, roots and radicals, functions, and inverse functions. Content may include determinants, Cramer's rule, matrices, simultaneous solutions of sets of equations, sequences and series, or conic sections.

Given the current statistics, African American students receive some of the lowest success and retention rates in developmental math courses. With the AFFIRM program, students are given an opportunity to remain with the same instructor and in-class tutor for Math 11A to Math 13 thus allowing them to form a community that will encourage their performance in each course. The math instructor and AFFIRM staff are constantly monitoring the progress of each AFFIRM student through progress reports. Early alert is given to each student that seems to not grasp the material. These students are required to meet with the instructor during office hours for an hour per week to receive extra one-on-one assistance. Each AFFIRM math course is also provided an in-class tutor to assist

students during the class time. This tutor is also available outside of the class time for tutoring as well. This tutor is a key part to providing the extra support to students that are falling behind or need extra help.

The program remains current in the discipline by continually matching the SLOs provided for each particular Math courses. We also continue to establish new innovations to increase the student success rate in the developmental math class. A key piece to the AFFIRM program is having a learning community with familiar students in the program and also having an in-class tutor. The learning community consist of other students that are in the AFFIRM program, so it provides a familiar face that is dealing with the similar situation of having to pass the developmental math classes. The in-class tutor is present every class day to help with questions from the lesson or group work. Having both an instructor and tutor working with students and assures student success both in and out of the classroom.

Another innovation is weekly updates of what is going on in class via email. The class is always aware of what went on during the week of class, and they are also aware of what will happen the following week. There is never a surprising moment for the students when they enter the classroom. At the end of every week, the class is aware what test or quizzes will be next week so they know what to study.

An addition innovation, the class has homework done with an online program called WebAssign. Every class period, there is homework due on lesson given in the previous class. The online program not only provides videos with examples of each question, it always keeps the instructor aware of who is completing the assignment and at what pace they are completing it.

The last innovation, the class has quizzes every class period. When they enter class, they are expected to complete a short quiz on material that was taught the previous class. This strategy keeps the class on task. They know to learn the lesson given in class before the next class, so they are not only ready for the quiz, but they are also ready to move on to the new lesson.

Future development is to provide more group activity and interactive projects to help students apply the lessons they learn. The class completes assignments called "Reality Checks", where they apply a lesson before they learn it. However, due to time given to complete the material, it is not always timely to complete as many projects or activities as we want to in the AFFIRM program. The goal is to find a way to make these activities happen more often.

AFFIRM Science

Chemistry 15 covers the fundamentals of modern inorganic chemistry with emphasis on atomic structure, chemical bonding, chemical formulas, nomenclature, equations, stoichiometry, gas laws, solutions, and related topics. Chemistry 15 is intended primarily as a preparation for the Chemistry 001A and 001B sequence. By studying Chemistry, AFFIRM students learn to solve problems (critical thinking) and develop effective study habits that will help them in their future educational and professional endeavors. Students will also gain a deep appreciation for the contributions African Americans have made in the field of science.

AFFIRM Political Science

Political Science covers the role and importance of the ideal of democracy and the evolution of the American political system. America's political institutions (executive, legislative and judicial) and political processes (voting, lobbying, attitudes) are examined against the backdrop of America's cultural diversity and political history. This course is a study of national, state and local government and politics with emphasis on the United States

Constitution and the national government. The AFFIRM Political Science course is designed to help African American students understand our National, State, and Local Government while also learning about the contributions African Americans have made to our rich political culture.

The Course answers two basic questions:

1. How does government affect citizens?
2. How can citizens influence government?

The U.S. Constitution will first be examined to establish a firm basis for better understanding the political process. Specific topics to be explored will include the function of our three branches of government. (Legislative, Executive and Judicial) Other important areas to be reviewed include political parties, citizen interest groups, presidential campaigning and elections. Additionally, this course will familiarize students with major components of our domestic and foreign policy. Finally, important contemporary issues such as individual liberties, and the rights of the accused.

AFFIRM Guidance

The focus of Guidance 85 is to ease students' transition to college by developing and providing them with skills necessary for college success. However, the course serves as an orientation to both the AFFIRM Program and Evergreen Valley College's academic policies and procedures for graduating and transferring to the four year universities. In this course, students are introduced to the certificates and degrees that EVC has to offer. Also, students are taught how to create an educational plan toward reaching their academic goals and the course integrates time management, and academic study strategies into the curriculum.

All new AFFIRM students are required to attend the AFFIRM Orientation that is held only once a semester usually during the first day of Guidance 85. In the orientation, students are introduced to the AFFIRM staff, and representatives from other EVC support services. Furthermore, they learn about the importance of program planning (Ed plans), how to follow through on their transfer plans, AFFIRM scholarships, program requirements, program workshops, program activities and events for the semester.

AFFIRM'S Guidance 85 remains current through the continual reassessment of outcomes and re-vamping of course content. On the last day of class, students are given surveys to determine what they have learned from the course. They are asked to rate the class on a scale from 1 to 5 (1=nothing, 2=very little, 3=some, 4=a lot, 5=a great deal). The information is then compiled and evaluated to further improve the course curriculum and the validity of the program's pedagogy.

Here are some examples of innovative assignments designed to assist and inspire AFFIRM students in taking Guidance 085:

Major Exploration Series

Every semester, two majors are selected for an in-depth discuss in Guidance 85. Students are made aware of the academic requirements for the major as well as the possible career opportunities that are attributed to this are of study. African American professionals working in these fields are invited to talk to the students about their educational and occupational experiences. This is a great way for students to get an inside look at majors and careers that they might not have considered prior to being introduced to working professionals.

Jeopardy Game (academic policies and procedures for graduation and transfer)

Students are taught graduation and transfer requirements, admissions and records policies and procedures for requesting academic renewal to dropping courses and much more through a game of jeopardy. Instead of giving students a test to take that includes multiple choice and true or false questions, students are divided up into teams and compete against each other for points. The game requires everyone to participate and the competition of the game provides an exciting learning environment for everyone involved.

Study Skills and Test Taking Strategies

Students learn the most effective tips for studying and strategies for passing tests. Students are also taught time management, how to develop a good attitude toward learning, the Cornell method of note taking and much more. By the end, students have learned a new set of skills and strategies for learning and passing their other EVC courses.

Although AFFIRM's Guidance 85 course has proven to be successful in many ways; it still presents a number of challenges such as being a one unit, non-transferable course. Furthermore, it is only offered during the fall semester for six weeks which severely limits the amount of workshops, presentations, and instruction that could be given to the students. In the future, AFFIRM would like to offer its students a Guidance 95 course instead of Guidance 85. Guidance 95 would solve the time constraints on instruction and would satisfy Area E of the GE pattern toward and an EVC degree and CSU transfer.

Part C: Student Outcomes

AFFIRM Student Learning Outcomes

- SLO #1: Have a greater awareness of the contributions made by the African American community and a competent understanding of the challenges that this community still faces within society.
- SLO #2: Have a clear understanding of the transfer matriculation process which will help a greater number of African American students graduate and/or transfer to a four year institution.
- SLO #3: Improve overall retention and achievement of all African American students enrolled in AFFIRM's courses, especially in math and science courses.
- SLO#4: Cultivate greater self-confidence and cultural pride while developing and improving critical thinking, reading, and writing skills needed for college and future career success.

During the spring semester, AFFIRM will be conducting a series of student focus groups which will help measure the overall effectiveness of the program. These groups will be asked to identify the aspects of the program that were particularly beneficial to their personal and academic growth as well as their knowledge of the African American experience.

After completing AFFIRM's English 341 course, students will gain proficiency in completion of the following tasks:

1. Identify the basic parts of speech.
2. Use correct verb forms and tenses.
3. Use punctuation correctly and effectively.

4. Use correct word forms, including prefixes, suffixes, superlatives, etc.
5. Write sentences demonstrating syntactical variety.
6. Increase proficiency in using academic vocabulary.
7. Follow the writing process to generate ideas for a paragraph.
8. Write an effective topic sentence for a paragraph.
9. Support a topic sentence with relevant details and examples.
10. Assessment is determined through the class's final writing portfolio project and final grammar/punctuation exam.

After completing AFFIRM's English 330 course, students will gain proficiency in completion of the following tasks:

1. Demonstrate the ability to read and comprehend beginning college level reading materials and to use them as a springboard for their own writing.
2. State a thesis and support it with evidence drawn from personal experience, observations, and readings.
3. Develop an organized essay reflecting sentence variety, syntactic complexity, and paragraph efficiency.
4. Write in clear, precise, effective English, showing mastery of basic mechanical skills and demonstrating a basic knowledge of sentence structures.
5. Analyze the logical requirements of expository writing and complete all tasks set forth by an assignment.
6. Develop paragraphs and short compositions, supporting a thesis with sufficient and appropriate evidence and examples.
7. Revise in order to achieve a more effective order of ideas, clear transitions, and stronger paragraphs; edit compositions in order to remove mechanical errors such as punctuation, spelling, and capitalization.
8. Plan, and write timed impromptu compositions.
9. Demonstrate critical thinking skills and writing skills leading to an expressive or analytical response at the beginning of college level writing.
10. Take a department final essay exam.

Assessment mechanisms used to evaluate SLOs for English 330.

1. Reading exercises; supplemented with comprehension exercises either individual or team-centered.
2. Regular writing assignments based on the writing process; successful completion of prewriting, formation of thesis, support for thesis, and essay structure.
3. Instruction of, and practice with sentence and paragraph construction. Instructor, peer, and self-review confirm success.
4. Regular review of mechanics, with homework assignments to supplement classroom instruction and practice.
5. Self-paced and team exercises to reinforce skills needed to complete ALL logical requirements of an assignment.
6. Observation of students' progress as evidenced by the multiple-draft process; gradual decrease in writing errors, and increase in proficiency confirm retention of material.
7. Comparison of final draft and pre-final drafts, for confirmation of revising/editing proficiency.

8. Observation of students' ability to complete a timed assignment, including comprehension of ALL steps required, formation of ideas, and production of a college-level essay when finished. Preparation for the department final examination: reading, summarizing, and composing a coherent response.
9. Regular journal entries that give students the opportunity to engage in reflective critical thinking that demonstrates the ability to examine an issue deeply. Solo and team reading/writing assignments are an additional method for assessing these abilities among students.
10. Assessment is conducted through examination results; students must score a minimum of 7 (of a possible 12) to pass.

After completing AFFIRM's English 104 course, students will gain proficiency in completion of the following tasks:

1. Demonstrate the ability to comprehend beginning college level reading materials and to use them as a springboard for their own writing.
2. State a thesis and support it with sufficient and appropriate evidence drawn from personal experience, observations, and readings.
3. Develop an organized essay reflecting sentence variety, syntactic complexity, and paragraph efficiency.
4. Write in clear, precise, effective English, using vocabulary appropriate to beginning college level English, showing mastery of basic mechanical skills, and demonstrating a basic knowledge of sentence structures.
5. Analyze the logical requirements of expository writing and complete all tasks set forth by an assignment.
6. Select, narrow, refine, and control a topic using multiple prewriting techniques such as clustering, brainstorming, listing, and freewriting.
7. Revise in order to achieve a more effective order of ideas, clear transitions, and stronger paragraphs.
8. Edit compositions in order to remove mechanical errors in punctuation, spelling, and capitalization.
9. Plan and write timed impromptu compositions including department final exam.
10. Demonstrate critical thinking skills and writing skills leading to an expressive or analytical response at the beginning level of college writing.

Assessment mechanisms used to evaluate SLOs for English 104.

1. Essays, Lecture and Lab Assignments, Presentation Project, and Final Exam
2. In a 100-minute timed departmental final exam: Read a 300-word passage and then write an essay in which you summarize the author's point of view and state the extent to which you agree or disagree with that view, supporting your argument with specific explanations and examples.

After completing AFFIRM's English 1A course, students will gain proficiency in completion of the following tasks:

1. Read a wide range of academic writings critically, discuss them in detail, and use them as sources to document their writing;
2. Critically analyze and evaluate writing for its rhetorical and technical merit, with consideration of principles of unity, coherence, tone, persona, purpose, methods, and the effects on a target audience;
3. Organize information (support) from reading, experience, and class discussion into an argument with a clear thesis;
4. Organize paragraphs into a logical, effective, sequence, developing the central idea of the essay to a

logical, satisfying conclusion;

5. Use a variety of rhetorical strategies, which will include textual analysis, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, causal analysis, and argument;
6. Revise and edit drafts of essays at the thesis, paragraph, and sentence levels;
7. Apply conventional mechanics (e.g. punctuation, spelling, grammar) competently, demonstrating standard English usage;
8. Find, analyze, and interpret outside sources, including online information

Assessment mechanisms used to evaluate SLOs for English 1A.

1. Essays, quizzes, exams, final project/or final exam, locate and incorporate research

CRITICAL THINKING EXAMPLES:

English 001A asks students to think critically about both readings and their own writing, and assess this critical thinking in various ways. Classroom discussions and summary/response papers ask students to distinguish crucial points and conclusions, and begin to evaluate them; many essays, including the final examination, teach students to construct an argument and assess their ability to do so. The research assignment involves critical thinking at several stages, including selection of relevant and substantive sources, integration of multiple sources with the student's own writing voice and ideas, and a drafting process that takes into account likely audiences, coherence of overall thesis, and adequate support for each point.

After completing English 1B, sponsored by AFFIRM, students will gain proficiency in completion of the following tasks:

1. Read and respond critically to various works of literature at the college level.
2. Write and revise critical essays and documented papers totaling at least 8,000 words; the writing will analyze various works of literature.
3. Demonstrate competent English composition skills, including prewriting techniques, organizational strategies, a clearly defined thesis and adequate support for that thesis, as well as competence in usage, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
4. Fulfill all parts of a writing prompt, both impromptu and out-of-class writing situations.
5. Make appropriate inferences about literature from diverse cultural and historical contexts.
6. Compare, contrast and evaluate various interpretations of literary works.
7. Assess the impact of literary devices such as symbolism, figurative language, irony, tone, rhythm, rhyme, etc.

After completing English 1C, sponsored by AFFIRM, students will gain proficiency in completion of the following tasks:

1. Read and analyze arguments, including evaluation of claims and authority, and identifying the stated and unstated premises and conclusions.
2. Distinguish between fact and opinion, literal and inferential meanings, warranted and unwarranted assumptions from available data.
3. Identify frames of reference, deductive/inductive arguments, and other criteria.
4. Evaluate diction and language, recognizing denotative, connotative, and rhetorical uses of

language and exploring literary devices such as irony, overstatement, and paradox.

5. Identify fallacies in reasoning and argument.
6. Use higher order questioning strategies.
7. Research a problem and propose a solution, assessing the credibility of sources and accurately documenting all sources.
8. Write correct academic prose at transfer/college level.

Assessment mechanisms used to evaluate SLOs for English 1A.

- Essay, Quizzes, Exam, Final Exam, Problem Solving, research assignments, journals, homework, oral presentations.

CRITICAL THINKING EXAMPLES:

- Given a contemporary argumentative essay, the students will write analytical essays in which they will correctly identify the conclusion of the argumentative piece, as well as the major premises used by the author to support this conclusion. The student will also assess the persuasiveness of the argument using 1C level terminology and analytical examination. These essays are scored by using a standardized guide, on a scale of 6=excellent to 1=failing; 4= considered passing (a C).

In addition to these universally-established SLOs, my syllabus for AFFIRM-sponsored English 1C states as follows:

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To demonstrate an ability to write about the issues presented.
2. To define and gain skill in the essential elements of critical thinking.
3. To read and analyze arguments, including evaluation of claims and authority, identifying the stated and unstated premises and conclusions.
4. To distinguish between fact and opinion, literal and inferential meanings, warranted and unwarranted assumptions from available data.
5. To be able to objectively analyze the information and arguments presented.
6. Identify frames of reference, deductive/inductive arguments, and other criteria.
7. Evaluate diction and language, recognizing denotative, connotative, and rhetorical uses of language and exploring literary devices such as irony, overstatement, paradox.
8. Use higher order questioning strategies.
9. Research a problem and propose a solution using multiple data sources and diverse perspectives, employing appropriate electronic databases, assessing the credibility of sources, and accurately documenting all sources.
10. Identify fallacies in reasoning and argument.
11. To understand how critical thinking can be applied to decision-making in daily life.

METHODOLOGY FOR MEETING OBJECTIVES:

1. Readings in course texts and materials in the course modules
2. Written exercises, Quizzes, Essays
3. Presentations of Selected Argument

Upon completion of AFFIRM's Math 11a course, the student will gain proficiency in completion of the following tasks:

1. Use appropriate symbols to represent real number and variable expressions.
2. Perform operations on real numbers.
3. Describe and use the properties of real numbers (commutative, associative, distributive, ...)
4. Simplify and evaluate algebraic expressions.
5. Solve linear equations and inequalities in one variable.
6. Graph linear equations in two variables by plotting points, graphing intercepts, and using slope and y-intercept.
7. Find the slopes and intercepts of linear equations in two variables, and determine whether lines are parallel or perpendicular.
8. Use the slope-intercept, point-slope, and standard forms to write linear equations.
9. Solve systems of linear equations in two variables by the graphing, substitution, and addition methods.
10. Graph the solutions to linear inequalities and express the solutions using inequalities.
11. Identify the properties of exponents and perform operations on polynomials.
12. Write a number in scientific notation and multiply/divide numbers written in scientific notation.
13. Determine the greatest common factor and factor polynomials by grouping.
14. Factor binomials and polynomials of the form $ax^2 + bx + c$.
15. Simplify and perform operations on rational expressions.
16. Solve application (word) problems involving linear, quadratic and rational equations and inequalities.

Upon completion of the AFFIRM's Math 13 course, the student gain proficiency in completion of the following tasks:

1. Write an equation of a line by using point-slope, slope-intercept and standard forms and graph such equations.
2. Demonstrate the function concept and identify the domain and range using different representations, such as algebraic symbolic, graphic, an input/output rule and numerical table.
3. Determine whether a function is or is not one-to-one and, if it is, find its inverse both algebraically and graphically.
4. Find formulas for the composition and algebraic combination of two or more functions.
5. Find real and complex solutions for quadratic equations by extracting square roots, completing the square and the quadratic formula.
6. Graph any quadratic function by finding its vertex and axis of symmetry.
7. Solve linear absolute value equations and inequalities, and graph their solutions on a number line.

- Evaluate and simplify expressions containing integer and rational exponents. Add, subtract, multiply, divide, and evaluate radical expressions.
- Solve radical equations and equations with rational exponents algebraically.
- Graph simple exponential and logarithmic functions, and solve simple exponential and logarithmic equations.
- Read, model and solve application problems using linear, quadratic, and simple exponential equations.
- Categorize and distinguish the particular and special characteristics of linear, quadratic, absolute value, exponential, and logarithmic functions.
- Answer an applied problem using a complete, grammatically correct sentence.

For Optional Topics in MATH 13:

- Solve a system of linear equations by using substitution, elimination, and graphing methods.
- Identify arithmetic and geometric sequences and series. Find the general term of a sequence and the sum of a finite series.
- Recognize equations of circles, ellipses and hyperbolas and graph them using their centers and symmetries.

Assessment mechanisms used to evaluate SLOs for Math 11A and 13.

- Online homework is provided to make sure students get accurate practice for in class quizzes and exams.
- Students are assessed with daily quizzes on the lessons learned in the previous class.
- An exam is given every 2 chapters to assess their knowledge of the material as a whole.
- At the end of the semester, a final exam is given to cover all SLOs for the course.

After completing AFFIRM's Chemistry course, students will gain proficiency in completion of the following tasks:

- Present laboratory data using the correct number of significant figures, and in scientific notation when needed, and be able to handle graphing and precision of data using simple statistics.
- Classify elements and compounds, distinguish between ionic and covalent compounds, and identify and name simple acid, ionic, and covalent compounds and write their formulas.
- Describe the internal structure of atoms using subatomic particles, and the meaning of nuclear symbols and isotopes.
- Explain the concept of chemical stoichiometry in both macroscopic and particulate level terms, apply this concept to solve chemical reaction problems from real-world information, and predict products of simple chemical reaction types.
- Predict the nature of chemical bonds and molecular polarity from the periodicity of elements, and predict physical and chemical properties of compounds.
- Explain gas behavior using macroscopic properties and microscopic molecular dynamics and solve problems of gases using the combined gas law and ideal gas law.
- Explain how liquid, solid and solution behavior can be understood using intermolecular dynamics and modified kinetic molecular theory, and solve solution concentration problems.

8. Explain acid-base interactions and electrolytic behavior, and do pH and titration calculations.

After completing AFFIRM's Political Science course, students will:

1. Develop a basic understanding of democracy and what it means to us today.
2. Have a general knowledge of the United States Constitution and of what is meant by "living" Constitution.
3. Become aware of a way to participate in government through public opinion, interest groups, political parties, and the media.
4. Understand the three cornerstones of American government (legislative, executive, judicial) and the balance of power.
5. Be familiar with their individual rights and due process of law.
6. Understand the value of multiculturalism and the contributions of women and minorities toward accomplishing political and social equality.
7. Be able to access the political process to address identified problems.
8. Enhance their oral and written communications skills.

Part D: Faculty and Staff

The AFFIRM staff consists of one full-time and two adjunct English Instructors, a Math Instructor, a Chemistry Instructor, a Political Science Instructor, a Program Coordinator, a Program Counselor, a Program Specialist, and a Math Tutor. The following EVC faculty and staff from several different disciplines constitute the AFFIRM Program:

Keenan Norris, AFFIRM Full Time English Instructor

Areas of Expertise: Urban Literature 1890-present, African-American Literature WWII-present, Creative Writing, and Literary Analysis

How My Position Contributes to Program Success?

Professor Keenan Norris has an extensive background in creative writing and literary analysis (M.A., PHD ABD) which qualifies him to teach the entire range of AFFIRM courses (English 341, 330, 104, 1A, 1B, 1C), as well as American Literature, African-American Literature and Creative Writing courses at EVC. He also has a great deal of experience tutoring and coordinating after-school educational programs that work specifically with African-American and other minority students in the Oakland and Los Angeles areas. This experience has helped him in designing courses for and working one-on-one with AFFIRM students at EVC. His specific experience developing course materials and curriculum for a number of on-line classes at EVC and other community colleges may also help in creating on-line/hybrid AFFIRM English courses in the future.

Professional Development Activities:

Publications:

Professor Norris' published writings over the past six years indicate his depth of involvement, research and knowledge around issues such as racial constructs, urban spaces, literary markets, American and African-American literature. Here is a list of critical essays and other non-fiction publications related to his pedagogy and role as an AFFIRM instructor:

- 'Coal, Charcoal & Chocolate Comedy: the evolution of satire, self-examination and hopefully Harlem.' *Chicken Bones Literary Journal*. Ed. Rudolph Lewis. Baltimore, MD. 6 Nov. 2005. <http://www.nathanielturner.com/coalcharcoalandchocolatecomedy.htm>.
- 'hap & hazard highland.' *Inlandia: A Literary Journey Through California's Inland Empire*. Ed. Gayle Wattawa. Heyday Books. Berkeley, CA. 2006.
- 'Of Obama and Oakland.' *Chicken Bones Literary Journal*. Ed. Rudolph Lewis. Baltimore, MD. 22 Oct. 2007. <http://www.nathanielturner.com/obamaandoaklandkeenannorris.htm>
- '27 Days.' (With Alexandria White and Darold Ross). *Chicken Bones Literary Journal*. Ed. Rudolph Lewis. Baltimore, MD. 2010. <http://www.nathanielturner.com/obamaandoaklandkeenannorris.htm>
- 'To the Chi: Imagining, Recounting and Re-Thinking Three Chicago Migration Narratives.' Connotation Press. Ed. Ken Rubidoux. 2010.
- 'The Black Market: The Dark Role of Excess in the Literary Marketplace and the Evolution of Urban Literature.' *The Journal of Ethnic American Literature*. Guest Editor. Jerry W. Ward Jr. Editor. John Zheng. Itta Bena, MS. Issue 1, 2011.
- Accepted for Publication: 'Justice and Time: Before and After Oscar Grant.' *BOOM: A Journal of California*. Ed. Louis Warren. University of California Press. Berkeley, CA.

Conference Presentations:

These presentations range from the scholarly, to the pedagogical, to the performative. Professor Norris' talks at the PCA/ACA popular culture conference in 2008 and 2009 helped him develop his ideas and pedagogy around contemporary African-American literature and African-American book-buying and reading habits. The presentation that he, Alexandria White and Samuel White made at the 2009 UMOJA Conference on the male/female college achievement gap had a primarily pedagogical intent, as they wanted to discuss and investigate ways of enhancing the performance of young men, especially black and Latino men, in the college environment. "27 Days" is a creative piece dedicated to a Haiti earthquake survivor, Evans Monsignac, that was delivered as part of a tribute to Haiti in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake there.

- PCA/ACA "The Black Market: The Dark Role of Excess in the Literary Marketplace." San Francisco, CA. 2008.
- *Inlandia* Discussion. San Bernardino County Museum. San Bernardino, CA. 2008.
- Guest Lecture on Olaudah Equiano's Slave Narrative. Riverside Community College. Moreno Valley, CA. 2008.
- PCA/ACA "Urban Market Gardens." New Orleans, LA. 2009.

- UMOJA Conference "The Real Achievement Gap: Black Women Excel While Black Men Fail."
(With Alexandria White and Sam White). San Jose, CA. 2009.
- "27 Days." Written by Keenan Norris and Alexandria White. Performed by Alexandria White and Darold Ross. Evergreen Valley College. San Jose, CA. 2010.

Conferences Attended:

- Basic Skills Pedagogy Lecture. Oakland, CA (Laney College). 2007.
- Tech-ED Conference. Ontario, CA. 2007.
- PCA/ACA. San Francisco, CA. 2008.
- PCA/ACA. New Orleans, LA. 2009.
- UMOJA Conference. San Jose, CA. 2009.
- Critical Ethnic Studies and the Future of Genocide. Riverside, CA (UC Riverside). 2011.

Additional Professional Development:

- Helped to organize and participated in EVC Black History Month panel discussions on hip-hop and on Tyler Perry's film version of *for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuff* in February 2010 and February 2011 respectively.
- Judged Black History Month essay contests in 2010 and 2011
- Passed PHD Qualifying Exams in May 2011
- Updated Course Outline for English 82A African-American Literature and wrote Course Outline for English 1B on-line at EVC
- Mentored AFFIRM students Jason Flowers and Ugo Ogamba during the 2010-2011 school year. Mentoring Rashid Adan currently
- Participated in AFFIRM Male Rites of Passage program in 2009-2010 school year and 2010-2011 school year

Samuel White, AFFIRM Adjunct English Instructor.

Areas of Expertise: Creative Writing, American and African-American Literature, works of William Shakespeare, and Social Justice

How My Position Contributes to Program Success?

Professor Samuel White began teaching in an adjunct role at Hartnell Community College in the fall of 2007. In the following spring, he came to Evergreen Valley College and began teaching English for the AFFIRM Program. Professor White has a background in English with an emphasis in creative writing which qualifies him to instruct in the entire range of AFFIRM English courses (341, 330, 104, 1A, 1B, and 1C), as well as creative writing, African-American literature, and American literature. He also has extensive experience with instructing in FYE (First Year Experience) programs, and has developed experience with the ability to blend reading and writing to deliver a

more comprehensive learning experience to the AFFIRM students. His participation and relationships with basic skills committees, has assisted him in developing curriculum that specifically targets the developing college writer. This affiliation has enabled him to work extensively with students of color, assisting with their educational needs. His admiration for poetry and prose has been extremely helpful with introducing students to various forms of creative writing at the developmental level. He also believes that free expression is vital to de-stigmatizing the act of writing so students feel empowered and are more receptive to the process.

Professional Development Activities to Date:

Conferences:

Maximum Achievement Program Conference, Merritt College, Oakland—Spring 2011. I escorted several AFFIRM students to this conference, which focused on the achievements of MAPs students, all of whom are of color.

Umoja Conference, San Jose—November 2009. Along with AFFIRM professors Alexandria White and Keenan Norris, I helped to lead a panel discussion on the so-called achievement gap between African-American females and males.

Northern California Writing Center Association Conference, Gavilan College, Gilroy—February 2009. In addition to helping to set up for the conference, it was also my pleasure to meet educators from across Northern California who were eager to share ideas about current teaching styles and reading strategies that could be used in the classroom.

Author's Series:

Puente Program Author's Series at Gavilan College. This is an annual event that is directed primarily Gavilan's Latino student population, but is open to all who are interested.

Author's Series at Evergreen Valley College, presented by Sterling Warner, English instructor. This is a monthly event that sees notable local and not-so-local authors visit the campus and share with students, their recipes for good writing—as well as success.

Writer's Series at NDNU. This is an event held each semester on the campus of Notre Dame de Namur, and features local authors as well as aspiring authors. Participants—whether published or not—have the opportunity to read original writing to the audience,

Retreats:

AFFIRM staff retreats held each semester. The department faculty/staff have the opportunity to check in with each other, to evaluate what is working best (and what could stand improving) in the program. We also use this time to exchange ideas on curriculum, style, success stories, etc.

Gavilan College English Department retreats held each semester. This retreat allows us the opportunity to enjoy some “down time” while exchanging ideas about teaching, curriculum, successes in the classroom, etc.

Committee Participation:

AFFIRM Black History Month Planning Committee, EVC. Each year this group plans activities for the month of February to commemorate the achievements of African-Americans—past and present.

AFFIRM Males Rites of Passage Program, EVC. This is program conducted under the auspices of AFFIRM, and seeks to provide a support network for primarily African-American males at EVC. This is accomplished through various events for the men, as well as partnerships with community agencies and organizations that help to empower these young men to strive for their best.

Basic Skills Committee, Gavilan College. This group examines the curriculum used in developmental courses, and aspires to consistently deliver best practices to these courses that form the much needed foundation for composition.

First Year Experience (FYE) Leadership Committee, Gavilan College. This group oversees the FYE program, and seeks to assess the program's outcomes (successes, challenges, etc.) so that necessary adjustments can be made to provide the best experience for our students.

Supporting Activities:

AFFIRM Mentorship Program: mentorship of AFFIRM students each semester. While instructors often unknowingly serve as role models, since becoming a part of this program several semesters ago, I have "officially" mentored approximately four young males and one female. As an adjunct instructor, I can truly appreciate the benefits of mentoring, and am honored to assist my AFFIRM students in any way possible.

Auxiliary faculty advisor for Black Student Union, EVC. Caritha Anderson, AFFIRM counselor, serves as the faculty advisor for BSU. My role as auxiliary advisor is to support Caritha in her duties, and when needed, assume the role of advisor. Duties for both of us include offering assistance to BSU President Derrick Rice, and helping members organize various events, including membership campaigns, etc.

Panel Discussions/Task Force Participation:

AFFIRM instructors, Alexandria White and Keenan Norris and I helped to lead audience members in a discussion based on the movie, "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf." This was presented by the AFFIRM Program during Black History Month, February, 2011, and examined issues such as the endangered black male, social disenfranchisement, and double standards based on gender, race, etc.

Met with EVC Vice President Kuni Hay as part of task force (with professors White and Norris) to discuss methods for increasing engagement of African-American students at EVC. Based on the reception of the "For Colored Girls..." panel discussion, the dialogue was continued with VP Hay in an effort to brainstorm ways to target black students at EVC for greater inclusion in campus activities, etc.

Professional Relationships/Mentoring:

Co-teaching as part of the FYE Program at Gavilan College. Because of the friendships and relationships developed (particularly due to the service learning component of the program), teaching in the FYE Program has benefited me both professionally and personally.

Partnering with various AFFIRM (and non-AFFIRM) instructors for leadership and personal development. This is an ongoing effort, and proves to be invaluable.

Alexandria White, AFFIRM Adjunct English Instructor

Area of Expertise: Literary analysis and interpretation, new world literature, literature of the African Diaspora, African-American studies, developmental writing and composition

How My Position Contributes to Program Success?

Professor White joined the Evergreen Valley College faculty in 2009. She holds a B.A. in Creative Writing from SFSU and a M.A. in Literature from UC Santa Cruz. She also studied literature abroad for a year in the United Kingdom. She has taught four different classes in the Language Arts department at EVC (English 341, English 330, English 1B and English 1C). Professor White is also affiliated with the AFFIRM department and regularly engages in social and academic activities that help to strengthen the intellectual community at EVC as well as empower the students. For example, Professor White is part of the AFFIRM mentor/mentee program which is designed to provide extra support, through the form of mentorship, for African American students attending EVC. Professor White also participated in Haiti Awareness day at EVC where she and other faculty members performed original poetry to help raise awareness about Haiti's rich cultural history as well as highlight relevant post-quake social and political problems in the region.

Professional Development in the Past Six Years:

Professor White has attended the conference *African Americans in Celtic Nations*, hosted in Swansea, Wales (2007). She also participated in *The Umoja Conference* hosted by EVC in 2009 where she and two other faculty members presented on a panel called: "Black Male Crisis in Education: Black boys fail, while Black girls excel." Professor White also participated in the Spring 2010 CSU English Council, where she presented with two faculty members from SJSU on a panel titled: "Two Campuses, One Goal: Give Transfer Students a Compass." Professor White also attended and participated in the AAC&U conference in January 2011. Professor White alongside AFFIRM department colleagues Sam White and Keenan Norris led a panel discussion on

- Nzotake Shange's *For Colored Girls....* as a part of a series of events celebrating Black history month in February 2011.
- *Umoja Conference*, 2009 in San Jose, Ca; presented on a panel called: "Black Male Crisis in Education: Black Boys Fail, while Black Girls Excel"
- *African Americans in Celtic Nations*, 2007 at the University of Wales, Swansea, United Kingdom.

Publications:

"27 Days: Dedicated to Monsieur Monsiagnac, and his fellow Haitain survivors and those passed on". Published online at *Chicken Bones: A Journal for Literary and Artistic African-American Themes*, 2010.

"(Black) Women in Capoeira" from Aniefre Essien's book titled: *Capoeira Beyond Brazil*, North Atlantic Publishing House, 2008.

"Dreaming of Fish" in *It's All Good: How Do You Like It Here Now* ed. Jennifer Joseph and Wendy Shimamura Manic D. Press, 2003.

Ajai Cribbs, AFFIRM Mathematics instructor

Areas of Expertise: Mathematics

How My Position Contributes to Program Success?

Ajai Cribbs is a dedicated college math instructor from very diverse background. As a college student, she had an opportunity to be a part of minority learning community similar to AFFIRM and soon after graduating with her master's degree was hired as a developmental math instructor. Ajai is also a trainer for Pre-Algebra and Algebra teachers in the bay area. During her training sessions, she focuses on helping other math teachers develop important teaching strategies which will assist students in understanding mathematics rather than simply memorizing mathematics.

Professional Development for past six years:

The instructor has attended the California Learning Communities Consortium Workshop where the following items were completed:

- Brought together Northern California community colleges to discuss the need of learning communities and how to initiate the program
- Attended workshops on "Using Elements of Learning Communities in Basic Skills Classes" and "Learning Communities for Beginners"
- Attended workshops on "Designing Integrative Assignments" presented by keynote speaker Gillies Malnarich
- Created a mock learning community program with an English instructor which involved collecting data on unemployment rates in California

The instructor has also attended the Sacramento Valley Community College Mathematics Conference where the following items were completed:

- Mathematics conference of workshops and presentations from colleges throughout Northern California
- Introduced speaker Debra Crumpton of Sacramento City College as she presented "A Student's GPS, a Navigational Tool for Success"
- Attended the following workshops: Ask the Audience, Clickers for Novices; Introducing MyMathLab into your Classroom

The instructor has attended the Umoja Conference for California

- This conference was held to bring together the faculty and staff of the Umoja Programs across the state of California. The students were brought together as well
- Workshops were held to help develop the program on each campus

The instructor is an Intel Math Professional Development trainer.

- Training Instructor for a team for K-8 Teachers from the Silicon Valley area; capitalizing on the idea that Today's Problem Solvers are Tomorrow's Innovators
- Intel Math Initiative is a 80 hour program that enhances the understanding of Mathematics for K-8 teachers
- Training involves facilitating discussions about math discoveries and leading word problems with the group
- The 13 day training involves a pre-test to examine the skill level of the teachers, and concludes with a post-test to advancement that teachers have made through the program

Current schedule for tenure review evaluation.

Ajai Cribbs is working on her 3 year in the 4-year tenure process. She is meeting with her tenure committee (committee of 2 department faculty and the dean) every Fall semester and evaluated every semester in every class until she has completed the tenure process. The tenure process involves self evaluations as well.

Bonnie Brown, AFFIRM Chemistry Instructor

Areas of Expertise: Physical Chemistry with a Master's of Science in Chemistry and emphasis in Teaching in the Community College.

How does the position contribute to the program's success?

Professor Brown has been acting as a positive role model for the AFFIRM Program for the past six years by encouraging students in enrolled in AFFIRM Chemistry 30A and 15. Professor Brown has fostered a respect for cultural diversity through collaborative research project which promotes and develops writing skills. Besides from teaching chemistry for AFFIRM, she also serves a mentor for two AFFIRM students interested in pursuing careers in the medical field. Professor Brown has taught several Bay area institutions as a lecturer to promote excellence and equity for all students.

Professional Development for past six years:

- Attended American Chemical Society National Meeting, San Francisco, CA, Fall 2006
- Participated in Classroom Assessment Technique (CAT), 2006
- Participated in On Line Teaching Conference virtually, June 2007
- Participated in division's CTA Progress report and attended campus wide workshop, 2008.
- Received Diversity training for screening committees, 2008.
- Completed Equivalency Training for screening faculty.
- Participated in equivalency screening committee, 2008.
- Participated in department's screening hiring committee, 2008.
- Received a Certificate of Completion from @One for completing the Using Multimedia Tools for Online Courses Workshop, 2005.
- Completion of —Introduction to Teaching with WebCT CE 6 (Blackboard Learning system, CE) offered by @ONE Project, 2007.
- Completion of Enhanced Podcasting for Teaching offered by @ONE Project, 2010

Walter Adkins, AFFIRM Political Science Instructor

Area of Expertise: Behavioral Science and Public Administration

How does the position contribute to the program's success?

Professor Adkins worked for the San Jose Police Department for 29 years before coming to Evergreen Valley College. Since his retirement from the police force, he has taught at number of bay area colleges including San Jose City College, San Jose State University, the College of San Mateo, and De Anza College. His interests beyond education are broad and varied to include long distance bicycle riding, competitive weight lifting, and hiking. Professor Adkins is a strong advocate of the community college system and believes that it played a pivotal role in his educational endeavors. As an adjunct faculty member, he strives to motivate his students based on his own life experiences.

Flora Payne, AFFIRM Program Coordinator

Areas of Expertise: Counseling Education

How My Position Contributes to Program Success?

Flora Payne joined the faculty at Evergreen Valley College community is 2009. She holds a B.A. in Political Science from UC Santa Barbara and a M.A. in Education, Concentration in Counseling and Student Personnel from San Jose State University. Currently, Flora acts as the coordinator for the AFFIRM Program, Language Arts, and LLRC. She also serves on a number of committees including Diversity Action Council and Translation and Interpreter Advisory Committee. As the AFFIRM Coordinator, Flora works to ensure the integrity of the program by providing the AFFIRM students, staff, and faculty with all the assistance they require. Her coordinating duties also include, but are not limited to, acting as the chairperson for the AFFIRM Coordinating Committee, Black History Month Committee and AFFIRM Mentorship Program.

Professional Development for past six years:

- Member and Organizer of the Affirm Coordinating Committee, 2009-present
- Member and Organizer of the Black History Month Committee, 2009-present
- Member of the Black Leadership Kitchen Cabinet, 2010-present
- Member of the Umoja V Conference Planning Committee, 2009
- Member of the Diversity Action Council, 2010-present
- Member of the Translation and Interpreter Advisory Committee, 2010-present
- Member of the Special Programs Awards Celebration committee, 2010-present
- Member of the Deans Retreat Planning Committee, 2011
- Member of the BLKC Community College Subcommittee, 2011
- High School Recruiter for the AFFIRM Program
- Facilitate AFFIRM career discovery workshop
- Participant in Day on the Green for High School Students

- Participant in AFFIRM student orientations
- Mentor for the AFFIRM Mentorship Program

Caritha Anderson, AFFIRM Counselor

Areas of Expertise: Counseling Education and Pupil Personnel

How My Position Contributes to Program Success?

Caritha Anderson has been a counselor since spring 2001 and a counselor for EVC since January 2007. Caritha has an extensive background with assisting the minority student population. She has won an award from the Minority Staff Association at Foothill College for being a major contributor to the Minority Community in 1997. At EVC, she is responsible for assisting African American students with academic counseling and providing them with strategies that will help them succeed. Furthermore, she has developed a Series of workshops that explore majors and careers for the AFFIRM program. Her area of expertise is connecting students with campus resources and providing them with pragmatic educational plans that fit their needs and concerns. Additionally, she teaches the Guidance085 course for AFFIRM.

Professional Development for past six years:

- Member of the Umoja Community (a consortium of educational professionals dedicated to the education and success of the African American student)
- Member of EVC’s Matriculation and Student Success Committee
- Participant in Day on the Green for High School Students
- Participant in new student orientations
- Member of the Affirm Coordinating Committee
- Member of the Umoja V Conference planning committee 2009
- Member of the Black History Month Planning Committee 2007-2010
- Coordinator of the Major Exploration Series
- Member of the end of the year Recognition Celebration committee for special programs
- Assisted with the development of the Early Alert system for the campus
- Member of the San Jose NAACP
- Mentor for the AFFIRM Program
- Mentor for the EVC’s Women for Women program

Current schedule for tenure review evaluation.

Caritha Anderson is now in the second semester of her fourth and last year of the Tenure Review Process. During her first year of full-time employment, she was assigned Harvey Gipson as a mentor. He provided her with the assistance needed to carry out the duties of my assignment as the AFFIRM counselor. Since then, she has been evaluated by the procedures described in ‘Article 20 of the FACBAD.

Jan Tomisaka, AFFIRM Program Specialist

How My Position Contributes to Program Success?

Jan Tomisaka joined the AFFIRM family during the summer of 2011. Jan worked as the Distance Education Program Specialist for 15 years prior to coming to AFFIRM. She now assists AFFIRM students and faculty with a varied of office and campus activities.

Part E: Facilities, Equipment, Materials and Maintenance

The AFFIRM office is located in SC-206 next door to the Oassiss Office and VP of Student Affairs. However, AFFIRM classes are conducted in classroom in both portables and permanent classroom facilities all over EVC. Each class is provided with white board space and computer equipment with a projector.

Part F: Future Needs

AFFIRM would benefit from general influx of funds. This would allow for hiring of full-time staff and faculty and for more work-study opportunities for AFFIRM student tutors. Particularly, AFFIRM would benefit from another full-time counselor. The AFFIRM office should be open continually during the school day but this is, at present, impossible due to the lack of staff members and their cross-employment in non-AFFIRM roles at EVC. Because AFFIRM staff also fulfill duties around campus both for AFFIRM and for the college in general, the office is often unmanned and closed. This would be remedied simply by hiring more staff.

There should also be full-time tenure-track faculty hires in English and Math, and perhaps in Political Science and Chemistry as well. Full-time faculty are able to devote their entire energies to one college and this is especially important for a program such as AFFIRM, which offers not only traditional classes, but also a host of extra-curricular opportunities to students, from notification of and transportation to numerous conferences around the Bay Area, field trips to colleges, universities, museums and historic sites, to academic workshops, Black History Month events, and mentorship opportunities. It asks too much of part-time faculty who are equally involved in their teaching roles at multiple other campuses often located thirty or forty miles apart in wholly different college districts, typically in far-flung geographic zones, to not only teach at EVC but to plan and conduct conferences, contests, workshops, etc. The typical adjunct faculty member at a college teaches one or two classes and does nothing more than that. It is the fullest measure of the dedication, selflessness, skill and unremitting energy of professors such as Sam White, Alexandria White, Darold Ross, and Walt Adkins that they perform so many roles at EVC over and above their extensive teaching responsibilities. Most educators have never encountered adjunct faculty at the CCC, CSU or UC level that are as fully involved in the life of a campus as these wonderful adjunct instructors. As the lone full-time faculty hire in English with a 40% AFFIRM teaching load, Professor Norris finds it challenging to fulfill his general pedagogical, collegial and committee duties and to additionally work on numerous AFFIRM events each year. He often finds himself leaning heavily on the over-worked AFFIRM staff. The hiring of more full-time faculty would work to better apportion faculty and staff duties.

AFFIRM would also benefit from increased funding in a number of other ways: Increased funding would allow AFFIRM to offer more work-study opportunities to student-tutors, and to students seeking to work with the AVID and Urban Champions programs. Increased funding would allow AFFIRM to decrease or eventually even eliminate student-paid expenses for UC, CSU and HBCU tours, registration at conferences such as the annual UMOJA Conference and field trips to expensive plays, lectures, and other events. We would also have the opportunity to expand the number of extra-curricular events that are made available to students via AFFIRM. Increased funding would also help the program provide books for all AFFIRM students in existing AFFIRM courses as well as graphing calculators for AFFIRM math students and dictionaries for AFFIRM English students.

The AFFIRM office also lacks a number of necessities, like a new copier and fax machine, increased office space,

and more office rooms internal to the AFFIRM office for adjunct instructors, counselors and other staff. The current location of the AFFIRM office, nestled deep within the SC building, while acceptable, is not centralized and is not highly visible. Many African-American students at EVC never learn that AFFIRM exists simply because, in their daily route across campus and to their classes, they never walk past the AFFIRM office itself. In this way, a lack of basic visibility leads to a suppression of AFFIRM student membership.

Finally, an increase in funding would allow the program to set up a once-per-annum discretionary fund to bring a noted African-American speaker, scholar, entrepreneur or activist to campus for an AFFIRM-sponsored event. While many speakers already frequent the EVC campus and AFFIRM already facilitates a few speaking engagements, this would be on a higher scale. There are many notable black scholars, activists, etc. with popular name recognition and numerous accomplishments that could attract both a student audience and a community audience coming from off-campus. Many of these people live less than an hour away, in Oakland. Significant black political and economic figures live in the Bay Area, as well as the Los Angeles area. Our environment is hardly barren. Bringing in one such person per year would drive commerce to the campus eatery and surrounding stores and would increase the prestige of AFFIRM and EVC. If necessary, such a funding scheme could be enacted in conjunction with SJ City College and events could be held jointly, sponsored by both colleges, and alternate between the two campuses.

One improvement that AFFIRM could make that would require no extra funding is the implementation of on-line AFFIRM courses. I would like to utilize my experience teaching on-line and hybrid courses and designing curriculum to implement such courses as AFFIRM English 1A On-Line and AFFIRM English 1B On-Line. On-line courses are popular. Demand for them is high and they fill quickly. AFFIRM on-line courses will enhance the notoriety and status of the AFFIRM program and AFFIRM classes with African-American students and with the EVC student body in general. This increase in demand for AFFIRM courses will allow AFFIRM staff and faculty to hold AFFIRM students to higher standards of attendance, punctuality and performance.

In this same vein, a Communication and Ethnic Studies minor sponsored by AFFIRM could and should be set up. Such a minor would involve completion of courses in African American Literature (English 82A and 82B), Communications, Ethnic Studies, Guidance 95 and African American History. This would increase enrollment in these courses and further connect and energize our African American students.