I. Narrative Description of the Status of the Discipline from a National Perspective (including emerging issues and trends)
African Studies is always an under-supported and under-represented area in American academia, but faculty within it remain remarkably committed and energetic. The African Studies Association continues to thrive, as does the African Literature Association; numerous smaller, sometimes regionally-focused, sometimes disciplinarily-restricted associations and seminars also flourish. In our own region, the South Eastern Seminar for African Studies continues to meet twice yearly. Flagship journals, such as African Studies Review and Research in African Literatures have been augmented by on-line journals such as the University of Florida-based African Studies Quarterly and other Web-based sources such as various H-Net listservs and Michigan State University’s “Africa past and Present” series of podcasts.

II. Program

a. Mission statement
The African Studies Program at the College of Charleston is committed to providing exemplary teaching across the disciplines about the African continent and to drawing the attention of the campus and wider community to issues affecting the African continent.

b. Program goals and their relationship to the College’s strategic plan
By the end of their minor, students in the African Studies Program at the College of Charleston should have acquired or enhanced the following:

- knowledge of key historical facts, cultural practices, traditions and figures;
- awareness of the internal diversity among the peoples and traditions of Africa;
- ability to read, research, and write about Africa in appropriate and informed ways;
- critical sensitivity to representations of Africa in contemporary discourse;
- habits of attention and responsiveness to events in and voices coming out of Africa

b. Strategies and tactics in the College’s strategic plan your department would place as highest priorities
Sense of place—given the Africanness of Charleston.
III. Narrative Summary and Analysis of Departmental or Program Accomplishments

a. Please discuss any of the following that apply to your department or program over the last year, making reference to any data provided at http://ir.cofc.edu/aadeptdata/ or data that you supply in the Supporting Data section as appropriate. What are your strengths and weaknesses?

The African Studies Program by its very nature contributes significantly to interdisciplinarity and to internationalization/globalization. Because of the relative paucity of courses offered, individual students frequently work independently with faculty, leading necessarily to high impact, personalized education. The annual Model African Union class (POLS 366) that culminates in participation in the Model AU meeting in Washington, DC, gives students a remarkable opportunity for engaged learning. Even in his supposed retirement, Jack Parson accompanies Abdellatif Attafi in an annual study abroad trip to Morocco that is always popular and universally praised.

b. Summary of student and/or graduate accomplishments
Jenna Barker (History), Departmental Honors (History)
Jenna Barker, Outstanding Student (History)
Jenna Barker, URCA award to attend and present at the British Commonwealth & Post-Colonial Studies Conference, February 17-18 2012, Savannah, GA

c. Please provide a brief narrative summary of the curricular assessment activities undertaken by your unit this year, along with plans for improvement. Please attach a copy of your annual assessment report submitted to the Office for Institutional Effectiveness to this report.
Not available

d. Please discuss the diversity among your faculty, including efforts made in recruitment to increase the presence of under-represented groups.
The African Studies program does not have control of its own recruitment. Next year sees the replacement of Kea Gorden by Chris Day in the Political Science department. Simon Lewis (Department of English) will replace Kea as director of the program.

e. Please provide a summary analysis of research and professional development productivity in your department, referring to the
Supporting Data section as appropriate. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
In addition to being active scholars (publishing books and articles, delivering papers at conferences, etc.), faculty have taken on important leadership roles in their respective disciplines: Tim Carmichael has been advancing the study of the Horn of Africa by helping establish the new H-Horn listserv; Simon Lewis has spearheaded the College’s hosting of the 2013 African Literature Association conference in Charleston.

f. Please provide a summary of departmental service contributions to the school, College, community (of a professional nature), or profession. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
Faculty are engaged members of the College and wider community, giving lectures to local community groups and providing expert testimony in asylum cases when called on.

g. Please provide a summary of new or continuing outreach activities in your department. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
This year saw a ministerial-level visit from a delegation from the Republic of Guinea. The visit was mainly coordinated by the University of South Carolina. Our own program does not currently have the wherewithal to build significantly on this visit.

h. Has your department conducted professional development opportunities for faculty?
Only insofar as facilitating some travel to conferences, research sites, etc. Whenever controversy crops up (as in the case of the phenomenal viral circulation of the “Kony 2012” YouTube video), faculty are more than willing to share teaching ideas and resources via e-mail.

i. What success have you had in meeting departmental, school or College goals? What obstacles prevent you from reaching specific departmental, school or College goals? In what way can Academic Affairs support your efforts?
It’s always a struggle to staff sufficient courses to allow students to meet the requirements for the African Studies Minor. Academic Affairs could support our efforts by figuring out a way to compensate home departments for allowing African Studies faculty to teach AFST courses outside the department. Making a designated African Studies hire (possibly within the International Studies set-up) would alleviate this problem somewhat.

j. What curricular development or other major changes in the program are planned for the next three years? Briefly, what resources are required to implement these?
Staffing limitations restrict our ambitions. Ideally we should be adding a (West) African language to the College’s list of language tuition. There
are potential opportunities for working with the International African American Museum and/or the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor. The African Literature Association conference’s presence in Charleston in March 2013 gives us a good opportunity to promote the program both at the College and in the wider academic community. It would be great if we could become recognized as a model feeder-school producing graduates ready to move into the top African Studies graduate programs as well as into the Peace Corps, State Department, and anyone doing business in and with Africa.

Simon Lewis
Program Director
June 2012