

Michael Robert Williams: In Memoriam



Michael Robert Williams (1952-2016) was director of Black Studies at Cleveland State University, a public university in downtown Cleveland, Ohio. He was a native of Youngstown, Ohio, a 1974 graduate of Mount Union College in Alliance, Ohio, where he majored in sociology and was an All-American in track and field. He earned a master's degree (1977) in social work from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, a second master's degree (1983) in public health and a doctorate (1985) in social work from the University of Pittsburgh, and he studied for a master of divinity degree at the Ashland Theological Seminary in Ohio (1998-2016). Williams joined the faculty at Cleveland State University in 1985 as an assistant professor of social work. He was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor in 1991. In 2004, he was named director of the Black Studies program at the university and remained in that post until his death. The university awarded its first bachelor's degrees in Black Studies in 2010 which is an interdisciplinary academic program consisting of approximately 89 Black Studies courses in 20 different departments, housed in four different colleges of the University.

